

Chapter Seven:

The Main Event – Round One – 1958-1970

The Contest for Supremacy in Western Australian Commercial Television TVW7 versus STW9.

The actual correlation of Local (Live) Production, Financial Returns and Survey Ratings.

Introduction:

Examination of the relationship between local (live) production, financial returns and audience survey ratings presented two possible main methods. These were ‘thematic’ or ‘chronologic’. I decided to use the latter method, as it made for easier comparison of the three elements, as they influenced each other during specific periods. The comprehensive record of audience survey ratings may prove valuable to future scholars, wanting to pursue other avenues in regard to the various imported (mainly American) fare which found favour with the viewers. Possibly the only complete set of Western Australian ratings survey books to survive intact were lodged with Government Archives in Sydney by the A.C. Nielsen company. The company retrieved them for my examination in September 2000.

During the five years of research for this thesis, no evidence has been uncovered that a similar investigation has taken place. The research commenced from a different starting point, adopting a new slant, in that this work is believed to be the first systematic analysis of three main factors which occurred in Western Australian commercial television, each having a deep relationship to the other. These were the actual programs, both local ‘live’ and outsourced, financial returns as shown in the Annual Reports of the Companies concerned and the regular Television Audience Ratings Surveys. Through their correlation it has been possible to trace the evolution of local ‘live’ production in Perth. This is most probably the first time that an analysis of television has moved from programming and audience to an examination of its structure as an industry. In Australia, prior published work appears in the main to have concentrated on various aspects of actual historical occurrence and theoretical sociological circumstance and in that, almost entirely to the exclusion of Western Australia.

In the first five to six years of commercial television competition in Western Australia TVW7 maintained audience domination over STW9. There was one factor that had to be overcome before competition on an equal footing could be a reality. TVW7 had secured a special place in the lives of the viewing audience. Viewers had adopted a position of local loyalty and regarded TVW7 as ‘their’ local station and they had assumed a sense of imaginative ownership.¹ As can be seen in the first Audience Ratings Survey of 1960² the viewing community had virtually almost immediately adopted TVW7 as their property. This was a natural flow-on effect from the fact that the Station had as its main shareholder, the more than one-hundred-year-old press bastion, whose claim to localism was embodied in its main product banner *The West Australian*. Since its inception TVW7 have always promoted this idea of themselves, which has led to Western Australia’s Channel 7 being the only one of the entire Australian SEVEN Network stations that regularly wins in the News ratings. In other States the winner of news ratings is predominantly the Nine Network.³ Still trying to counter this concept, in January 2003 STW9 adopted a station promotion exercise, in which they actually call themselves ‘Your Local Station’. This was a belated attempt to attack the alternative institutionalized concept.

Initially, local ‘live’ production was regarded by management as not only being necessary for daily program content, but as integral to the obligations of holding a commercial television licence. Local production both video-taped, filmed or ‘live’ to air was considered as part of what can be termed ‘community responsibility’⁴ and was an accepted expense, without having to show obvious monetary returns.⁵ However, as times changed, local ‘live’ production (and its opponent in the form of imported programs) became subject to this theorem.

¹ See Chapter Three.

² See this chapter pp.32-33

³ Graeme Turner, ‘Television news and current affairs: ‘Welcome to Frontline’ in *The Australian TV Book*, Graeme Turner and Stuart Cunningham, (eds), Allen & Unwin, St. Leonard’s, 2000, p.93

⁴ Sir James Cruthers, personal communication taped, Sunday Times, Perth, 3 June 1999

⁵ See Chapter Four Examination of the Growth and Decline of Local ‘Live’ Television in Western Australia. Introduction.

Expenditure on Local Production and Outsourced Programs

**Managerial Attitudes towards
Investment in Social Capital
and Community Responsibility**

**Number and Expertise
of Employees**

Financial Returns

**Quality of Programs
both Produced and
Imported**

Advertising Income

Number of

Viewers

Television Audience Survey Ratings

The substance of this and the following two chapters is a detailed comparison of the ensuing 23 year contest for superiority between the two commercial stations, as revealed by analysis of their programs (both local and imported film or video-tape), their annual reports (including financial statements) and television audience survey ratings. This shows how the fortunes of each affected the amount of money available for local production and imported programs. It also shows the financial returns to shareholders and the way in which Swan Television Limited [the rival Channel 9] eventually became a viable Western Australian operation. It reveals the general philosophy of management and how this was conveyed to shareholders and staff. It describes how TVW Limited maintained an attitude in regard to local production (which it was able to do because of financial superiority) as opposed to Swan Television Limited who, because they didn't have the money to spend, in the early years were forced to constantly change policy on local programming. It explains how the new-comer had great expectations of early equality but underestimated the powerful way in which the viewing community had assumed imaginative ownership of the station and its programming. The facts were that TVW7 had been established for almost seven years and the Western Australian

viewing audience looked on them as being ‘their’ station, while STW9 could be readily characterised as an interloper. It will be shown how local production on TVW7 was, during those early years, always better received by the viewing audience than the efforts on STW9. There is suggestion that better production people were the reason,⁶ but this is a simplification. In reality, many of the staff for STW9 were ‘head-hunted’ from TVW7 and were totally familiar with their method of operation in all areas. Most of STW9 local productions mirrored those at TVW7 but initially suffered from shortage of financial input.⁷

These chapters describe how in the 1960s and 1970s, STW9 gradually caught up with its opponent and finally surpassed TVW7 at certain times in the television survey ratings, even in the sought after area of News domination. Eventually there was an observable sustained levelling between the two commercial telecasters in the ratings. It explains how some respondents thought this to be due to in-house methods of self-promotion by using saturation messages in a high-rating telecast to ‘sell’ another specific program.⁸ Others viewed the passage of time as the leveller. In the end it was very likely a combination of both. Another important consideration is that of the evolving youth audience. The ten year-old of 1965 doing what he was told was a totally different twenty year-old with his hand on the channel controller in 1975.

The chapters conclude by describing the events that led to the demise of TVW Enterprises Ltd., which disappeared from public ownership when subsumed by the corporate activities of Robert Holmes a Court. Similarly, it will be shown how in 1984 Swan Television and Radio Broadcasters was swallowed by the Bond Corporation and how the failure of both those corporate giants returned the two channels respectively to public and private ownership. Although in line with general trends towards a more global economy, these challenges to local ownership were mounted by local entrepreneurs. Following these developments there was an observable diminution of both local ‘live’ production and community responsibility.

⁶ Jeff Newman, personal communication, interview, 1999.

⁷ See Chapter Nine of this thesis Examination of the Growth and Decline of Local ‘Live’ Television in Western Australia.

⁸ Bill Bowen, personal communication, interview, 1999.

It will be found that the earlier Annual Reports of both companies made good use of photographs to promote station personalities and the various local productions with which they were associated. Photo-copies of the original material can be examined in the Appendices to this work. The format continued till the late 1970s, after which time there was a discernable swing towards the promotion of station executives and technical equipment. In the 1980s, station ‘personalities’ all but disappeared and the ‘Logie’ presentations for ‘most popular’ thenceforth went to newsreaders, the only remaining representatives of local ‘live’ production. News was left as the last bastion of local production and indications are that this too will become ‘national’, sourced in the Eastern States, with a small local input.⁹

Investigation and analysis of annual reports and balance sheets has provided much historical information and the following illustrates the progress of TVW Limited in the first seven years of their monopoly operation. The Annual Directors’ reports grew from a typical company balance sheet, to a booklet which made use of photographs to promote the activities and station personalities. The first report was written and edited by James Cruthers.¹⁰ They were specifically designed to impress some three hundred shareholders who were invited to attend the Annual General Meetings. They were treated to tours, entertainment and refreshments. They were always attended by the greater number of those invited.¹¹

TVW Limited First Annual Report:

The first annual report and balance sheet was delivered on Monday 7 September 1959. TVW Limited had purchased 10 acres of land on Yokine Hill¹² and the building of the studios was proceeding. 4 acres of land was purchased at Bickley Hill and the transmitting tower was expected to be finished during September 1959. The anticipated opening date was 16 October 1959. On 13 October 1958 the company was granted Western Australia’s first commercial TV licence. Tenders for equipping the station were invited from the world’s six major suppliers; three British; one United States; one German and one Dutch. The British company

⁹ See Chapter Eight of this thesis, This is The News:

¹⁰ Sir James Cruthers, personal communication, interview, Perth, 27 March 2003.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., the site was 260ft above sea level.

Pye Limited of Cambridge was successful and most of the required equipment was on hand and being installed. The accounts covered a period of development without trading and consequently there was a reported loss of £39,405.¹³

Although being the sole commercial outlet, the management of TVW7 supported McNair (the company who conducted ratings surveys in the Eastern States) in providing a survey service for Western Australia. The main reason for this was to be able to check the popularity of certain programs. A little known fact concerning this area of TVW7's activities is that James Cruthers personally controlled the placement of programs and station promotions.¹⁴ This happened from the instigation of transmission until his resignation in 1982.¹⁵ The ratings surveys were a useful guide for advertisers in deciding the placement of commercial content. The first survey was conducted in June 1960, when TVW7 was the only commercial station opposed to the National Televiser ABW2. In all areas including local 'live' production, the commercial station was dominant. The survey produced these highlights:

Number of homes surveyed	806	
Estimated homes with TV compared to all homes in viewing area	37.3%	
[A surprising instance of class-consciousness was recorded in this grading of homes.]		
Grade AB	Upper and middle class	50.2%
Grade C	Middle class	41.3%
Grade D	Lower or industrial class	34.3%
Grade E	Poorer class	23.1% ¹⁶

The above classification of viewers was graded by the survey companies and accordingly placement of the ratings booklets in various areas. Grade AB included such suburbs Nedlands, Dalkeith, Claremont and Peppermint Grove. Grade C was headed by the new areas of Floreat Park, City Beach, Mt. Yokine and Mount Pleasant. Grade D included the older areas such as Victoria Park, Subiaco and Mt. Lawley. Grade E included the even older areas of East Perth, North Perth, parts of Fremantle and Midland Junction.

¹³ Designated in continuance as AP.

¹⁴ Sir James Cruthers, 27 March 2003.
Bill McKenzie, personal communication, interview, Cottesloe, 30 September, 2003. Confirmation of this information.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ *The McNair Survey*, 40 Miller Street, North Sydney, June 1960, p.5

Peak Viewing Times (average 7 days)

8.00 – 8.30pm 89%

Distribution of total viewing times by stations

ABW2	53	hours transmission	23.1%
TVW7	46.5	hours transmission	76.9%
Average time tuned into TV per day =			4 hours 40 minutes
(Daytime = 11.30am – 6pm			50 minutes
(Evening = 6pm – 11.30pm			3 hours 50 minutes.

Leading Brands Sales of TV Sets

Philips	13%
Admiral	10%
Motorola	10% ¹⁷

Almost all television sets were manufactured in Australia and other major brands were AWA (which were also sold as Westinghouse) and Astor.

Leading programs Sunday Theatre (TVW7); *Leave It To Beaver*; *Sea Hunt*

		% All homes	% tuned in
Sunday Movie	<i>Notorious</i>	26.6	71
Peak Viewing	8.15pm		
News and Weather			
TVW7	6.45-7.05pm ¹⁸		82

Tuesday 28 June 1960

		% All homes	% Tuned in
3.00pm – 4.00pm			
ABW2			
[Off air]			
TVW7			
3.00pm	Dr. Hudson's Secret Journal	7.1	19
3.15	Televisit (local live)	6.3	17
3.30	“	6.3	17
3.45	“	6	16
4.00		5.6	15
ABW2			
5.15pm	Kindergarten Playtime	1.1	3

¹⁷ Ibid..

¹⁸ Ibid.,

5.30	Children's TV Club	1.5	4
5.45	“	1.1	3
6.00	“	0.7	
2	TVW7		
5.15pm	Children's Channel Seven (Local live)	17.5	47
5.30	“	17.5	47
5.45	Cartoons and Mouseketeers	20.5	55
6.00	“	22	59 ¹⁹

As TVW7 had the air-waves to themselves until 5.15 pm and considering the short time that television had existed, their management was pleased with the viewing audience for the women's program *Televisit* and highly delighted with the figures for what was considered to be the children's hour.²⁰ ABW2 had a hosted program with a 'live' audience segment but suffered badly in comparison.²¹

Thursday 23 June 1960

[no time]

ABW2	The Critics	6.7	18
TVW7	Football Preview	19.4	52 ²²

As in other areas, the commercial station dominated in similar types of sporting programs. The 'old' perception of the ABC being for a particular type of listener persisted with the introduction of the visual medium.

Saturday 25 June 1960

6.00	ABW2	6 O'Clock Rock	4.8	13
	“	TVW7	Teenbeat (local live)	19.4
				52 ²³

The ABW2 program *Six O'Clock Rock* starring Johnny O'Keefe was very popular in Eastern States, but was out-rated by a factor of four by the locally produced 'live'-to-air *Teenbeat*. This program was variously hosted by various station employees including David Farr, Gary Meadows and Gary Carvolth.²⁴ The program featured local bands and performers. Both

¹⁹ Ibid., p.21

²⁰ Sir James Cruthers, 31 March 2003.

²¹ See Chapter Six.

²² Ibid., p.41

²³ Ibid., pp.28-29

²⁴ Gary Carvolth, personal communication, interview, July 2000.

programs were similar in content with an audience ‘jiving’ and being featured on-camera. It produced such well known Australian artists as Johnny Young and Jeff Phillips.

Monday 27 June 1960

6.45 – 7.05	TVW7	News and Weather	28.3	76 ²⁵
7.00	ABW2	“	6	16

In 1960 the second Directors’ Report, TVW7 recorded a loss of £65,221 including £36,265 provided for depreciation.²⁶ The cumulative loss was therefore £104,626 and the total revenue was £305,489.

This was for 8.5 months which was the length of time that the station had been on air for the financial year. In January or February 1960 the Board of TVW7 seriously considered ‘handing back the licence’ due to these adverse results.²⁷ It was reported that technical equipment and plant (which consumed a large amount of investment capital before transmissions began) at both the studios and transmitter had ‘...proved to be both adequate and functional.’²⁸ There was no comment on studio activities and TVW7 was content to let their ratings speak for themselves. The ratings indicated that no matter what the commercial station put to air, the public watched and accepted it without question. Even commercial content (much of it ‘live’ from TVW7’s studios) was viewed with enjoyment.²⁹

In 1961 the Directors were ‘pleased’ to announce a net operating profit of £22,384, subject to the deduction of a 5% interim dividend to shareholders on 21 June 1961 of £18,749 and a final dividend of the same amount.³⁰ This left £84,886 to be applied to accumulated losses, reducing them to £19,740. It was reported that before television started in Western Australia

²⁵ Ibid., pp.34-35

²⁶ *TVW Channel 7 Second Annual Report and Balance Sheet of TVW Limited 1960*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 17 August 1960.

²⁷ Sir James Cruthers, interview, 31 March 2003.

²⁸ *TVW Channel 7 Second Annual Report and Balance Sheet of TVW Limited 1960*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 17 August 1960.

²⁹ Sir James Cruthers, 31 March 2003.

³⁰ *TVW Channel 7 Third Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited 1961*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 16 August 1961

the projection of numbers of sets in operation after 2 years was 50,000. However, within that time frame 70,000 sets were licensed and more than half of metropolitan homes had television. It was necessary to purchase a licence from the Post Master General's Department to legally view television of any kind and the cost for this privilege was £5. Hire Purchase had become increasingly popular with the advent of television and sets ranged from about £180 upwards. With average weekly wages at about £22, nine weeks pay translates into current (2003) terms of more than four thousand dollars for a black and white television set. Television in Western Australia was proving to be more than a status symbol. It was a necessity for most of the population.

The first acknowledgement of the importance of local 'live' production was the last page of the TVW7 1961 report, a black and white photograph of Station Presenter Lloyd Lawson in Studio 3.³¹ As with the rest of the Annual Reports content, the photographs were chosen by James Cruthers. This was the first pictorial evidence of station self-promotion and chosen because of its interesting and 'glamorous' appeal.³² There was always a 'stand-by' personality in a special studio, ready to 'go to air' immediately in the event of a film breaking or other technical fault. Such presenters would refer to programs still to come for that day or evening; possibly read some News items or give out a weather forecast. When the emergency was rectified it was a simple case of 'We now return you to our normal program.'³³

In 1962 TVW7 had a net profit of £120,868 after income tax and working expenses.³⁴ It wrote off the previous carried forward loss of £19,740 and an intangible asset (preliminary expenses) of £5,648. An interim dividend of 6% was paid on 5 March 1962 being £32,276, and £48,414 was appropriated for a final dividend of 9%. The shareholders would have been more than pleased with their return of 15% per annum. This was at a time when bank savings interest rates were at about 3.5% and W.A. Newspapers Limited were returning about 8% to

³¹ See Appendices for photographs.

³² Sir James Cruthers, 31 March 2003.

³³ Peter Harries, personal experience.

³⁴ *TVW Fourth Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited 1962*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 8 August 1962.

shareholders.³⁵ It was noted that the influence of the ‘...national economic situation...’³⁶ had had a negative effect but business was improving. Nationally there had been a slight rise in inflation and there were Government concerns expressed about increases in unemployment.³⁷ During the year it had been announced by the Commonwealth Government that a public hearing would be held in Perth in late 1962, to consider applications for a second Commercial Television Station. At TVW7 plans were being formed to counter this contingency.³⁸

The TVW7 contribution to daily local ‘live’ production in the form of *Childrens Channel Seven* continued to attract good ratings figures. The Annual Report’s back page was a photograph of compere Carolyn Noble talking to children in a studio setting.³⁹ The picture was carefully composed to show her remarkable face which reflected the expressions of adulation so evident on the countenances of the entranced children in a studio audience. The careful placement of a large television camera provided an element of glamour and excitement. James Cruthers recalled choosing that particular photograph because it embodied all of the wonder of ‘live’ television production.⁴⁰

In 1963 the fifth Directors’ Report of TVW7⁴¹ showed that during the year the hours of transmission were increased from 60 to 68 hours. About one quarter of all TVW7’s programs came from their own studios. This was a major contribution to low-cost program content and also the policy of management to promote the station as being first and foremost as being Western Australian in character.⁴² A further 27% was Australian content from the Eastern States and this was claimed to be one of the highest percentages in all of Australia.⁴³ The

³⁵ Sir James Cruthers, 31 March 2003.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ *The West Australian*, Perth, 12 October 1962.

³⁸ See Chapter One.

³⁹ See Appendices for photographs.

⁴⁰ Sir James Cruthers, 31 March 2003.

⁴¹ *TVW Fifth Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited 1963*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 21 August 1963.

⁴² Sir James Cruthers, 1999.

⁴³ Sir James Cruthers, 2003.

biggest project for the year was the successful ‘...coverage of the 7th British Empire & Commonwealth Games.’⁴⁴ For the first time TVW7 conducted an Outside Broadcast of a major sporting event. The signal was transmitted from the purpose built stadium at Floreat Park back to the station at Tuart Hill. The Games were recorded on kinescope film, processed and edited at TVW7 studios for overseas dissemination.

According to Howson,⁴⁵ Hudson,⁴⁶ Noble⁴⁷ and others (and to my personal knowledge) in Western Australia, the general promotion of particular ‘personalities’ was considered by management of both commercial stations to be undesirable. Such people had shown in the Eastern States that they could wield power (through their fans and celebrity status) leading to demands for higher remuneration and conditions. It had been accepted in Sydney and Melbourne in particular as a ‘Star’ thing in terms of its local audience and the creation of local allegiances through the identification with station personalities.⁴⁸ Eastern States management saw this as similar to Hollywood and as being good for the particular station’s public image.⁴⁹ Perhaps it was part of the observable overall conservatism of Western Australia that a different view of personalities was taken. While making very good use of these ‘on-camera’ employees for their own station promotion, the ‘Star’ concept was usually discouraged.⁵⁰ Coincidentally, the back-page photograph this year was of technicians in the Telecine Department. The use of this photograph was intended to convey to the shareholders that TVW7 was constantly upgrading its technical facilities and the picture of a ‘huge film projection unit’ was meant to impress the beholder with this fact.⁵¹

⁴⁴ *TVW Fifth Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited 1963*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 21 August 1963.

⁴⁵ Denzil Howson, personal communication, interview Melbourne November 2002.

⁴⁶ John Hudson, former STW9 Presenter, written communication, 2001.

⁴⁷ Carolyn Noble [now Tannock], personal communication, interview, 2001.

⁴⁸ Graeme Turner, Frances Bonner and P. David Marshall, *Fame Games The Production of Celebrity in Australia*, Cambridge University Press, Oakleigh Vic., 2000.

⁴⁹ Former GTV9 Melbourne Producer Denzil Howson, telephone communication, 20 March 2003.

⁵⁰ Peter Harries, personal experience.

⁵¹ Sir James Cruthers, 31 March 2003. See Appendices for Photograph.

Net profit for the year had increased to £173,439 plus profit brought forward of £14,790 and overprovision for tax 61/62 of P£5,426. An interim dividend of 7.5% was paid on 6 March 1963, £50,000 was retained for General Reserve and the balance of £79,733 was appropriated for a final dividend of 12.5%, an annual return to shareholders of 20%. This was an excellent dividend for those who bought the original shares at their par value of ten shillings but it should be looked at in the light of TVW7 shares being valued at 34/- on the Stock Exchange.⁵² At that time the Commercial Bank of Australasia was offering 4.25% interest on money invested for 19 to 24 months.⁵³ The Western Australian finance firm Norman L Payton was offering 8% at 7 days call.⁵⁴ Such good results ensured that there was fiscal provision for televised content which contributed to the wider community.⁵⁵ .

In 1964 the staid look of the Directors' Report was changed to show a photograph of 'TVW produces a Hootenanny', and on the second page the 'TVW News prepares for an assignment' and 'Art Linkletter and Lloyd Lawson' photographs.⁵⁶ Linkletter was a high-profile American television personality and one of his shows *Kids Say The Darndest Things* was shown on TVW7. He had extensive investments in the agricultural development at Esperance and visited Western Australia several times. A one-hour live production entitled *Invitation to The Dance* was sold to Melbourne and Sydney. The Station's News Department won the Television Society Award for its '...on the spot coverage of the events surrounding the Robinson murder case.'⁵⁷ The Channel introduced a claimed first in electing a female newsreader to present a lunch-time news session.⁵⁸ There were two pages of photographs at the back of the report. 'Miss Googie Withers and Keith Michell talk with Hew Roberts;

⁵² *The West Australian*, Perth, 2 October 1964.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ See Chapter Three 'The duty of Commercial Television Stations in regard to fostering Social Capital and Responsibility to the Community and an analysis of what *Telethon* and *Appealathon* were and meant to those who were involved:'

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ *TVW Sixth Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited 1963*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 28 August 1964.

⁵⁸ Sir James Cruthers, personal communication, Sunday Times, 3 June 1999. The Newsreader was Pamela Leuba

Captain Jim aboard his “ship”⁵⁹; ‘Carolyn talks with the children’⁶⁰; ‘Newsreader Pam Leuba awaits her cue’; ‘Crane camera shot during Invitation To The Dance’ and ‘Scene from dream sequence in Nutcracker Suite’.⁶¹ Sir James Cruthers explained that the advent of a new commercial station in 1965 may have been an impetus to increased local production, but he was more inclined to think that the very good financial results being enjoyed by the station were responsible for pursuing the policy of ‘giving back to the community.’⁶² TVW7 management already saw the importance and benefits of stressing their ‘local’ identity by promoting the local ‘live’ productions but not intentionally as vehicles for station ‘personalities’.

Directing money towards production did not pose any problem when the station showed a total profit for the year of £188,009, which provided another 20% return to investors and £54,873 transferred to General Reserve. In February it was announced by the Postmaster General that

Swan Television Limited had gained the second licence and would begin transmitting in June 1965. By now there were 110,000 television sets operating in roughly 75% of houses covered by transmissions. TVW7 was still telecasting 68 hours and the Anderson Analysis showed that they had 83.6% of the viewing audience.⁶³

There is a gap in the survey records until June 1964 but there was little change in results. By then the format had changed. A sampling of programs showed:⁶⁴

Sunday Averages for 7 June and 14 June:

12.00	ABW2	Four Corners	(by quarter hour)	5-6-7-10
	TVW7	World of Sport	“ (local live)	27-24-22-20

Monday Averages for 8 June and 17 June:

⁵⁹ Jim Atkinson of Childrens Channel Seven.

⁶⁰ Carolyn Noble of Childrens Channel Seven.

⁶¹ See Appendices for photographs.

⁶² Sir James Cruthers, 31 March 2003.

⁶³ *TVW Fifth Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited 1963*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 21 August 1963.

⁶⁴ *The Anderson Analysis of Advertising Media*, Perth, No. 1 of 1964, 7-20 June.

Total sets in use [of those available]		%	%
5.00	ABW2 Roundabout etc.,	last survey 2	this 2
	TVW7 Children's Channel Seven	26	28
5.15	ABW2 Storybook	1	1
	TVW7 Ch. Ch. 7	31	31
5.30	ABW2 Partyland	3	1
	TVW7 Ch. Ch. 7	33	33
	ABW2 Wonderbox	2	1
	TVW7 Ch. Ch. 7	35	34
6.30	ABW2 Cricket Highlights (by quarter hour)	6	6
	TVW7 News and Weather	62	65

Thursday Averages for 11 June – 18 June:

6.30	TVW7 News and Weather	58	
59	7.00 ABW2	23	23
10.30	ABW2 Ballet	3	3
	TVW7 Football Preview (local live)	26	26

Saturday Averages for 13 – 20 June:

6.30	TVW7 News and Weather	60	50
7.00	ABW2	8	19
	TVW7 Sport at Seven	53	52

Ratings surveys showed that the TVW7 local 'live' program for women *Televisit*, shown mid-afternoon, attracted a modest viewing audience but it was considered to be a necessary service and part of community responsibility. It must be remembered that at that time there were not great numbers of women in the work-force. The provision of a television program which informed women in matters of education, health and family care, as well as general entertainment segments was reckoned to be part of the duty of a telecast licence holder.⁶⁵ It would not have been a popular time-slot for advertising. The children's 'live' which followed boosted the percentage of sets in operation by a factor of four, which would also have boosted revenue. Likewise, the late night *Football Preview* showed good viewing figures and there would have been no trouble in finding a willing main advertiser. For many years that sponsor was Walsh's Clothing Stores. The dominance of parochialism (as contained in the viewing audience's sense of proprietorship) demonstrated by *Teenbeat* the TVW7 local 'live' program

⁶⁵ Sir James Cruthers, 31 March 2003.

for teenagers, which continued to attract four times as many viewers as its counterpart, the Sydney produced *Six O'Clock Rock* on ABC Television. The longevity of both programs is notable. In the case of the ABC program, *Six O'Clock Rock* survived locally in Western Australia because of national programming. With *Teenbeat* it was a simple matter of popularity. The performers were available to the local audience by way of concert performances and appearances in hotels. The legal drinking age was still 21 but acceptance and acknowledgement of this law was under threat.⁶⁶ Younger viewers were part of the world-wide emancipation of teenagers, although it occurred a few years later in Western Australia than in the rest of the western world. TVW7 News, Weather and Sport were absolutely dominant over ABW2 and contained the maximum permissible amount of advertising.

With the prospect of competition in 1965, TVW7 maintained its self-promotion. 'TVW invites Mavis Bramston to Perth' was the picture on the front of this year's report.⁶⁷ *The Mavis Bramston Show* was a Sydney program produced by Channel Ten. It contained satirical and risqué comment in sketches and songs, aimed at government and society in general. The 'stars' were Gordon Chater, June Salter, Carol Raye and Barry Creighton. The inside cover had three more photographs with the captions 'This large set was built in Studio 1 for the TVW production THE GOOD OIL' which was a musical play based on the discovery of that commodity at North-West Cape in 1953. It was written and produced by Coralie Condon TVW7's un-named original Production Manager.⁶⁸ 'Back in Perth on Holiday, Rolf Harris appears on TVW' and 'At a dinner in TVW's Studio 1, Eric McKenzie talks with his son, Sportsman of The Year Graham McKenzie, in the West Indies'. Rolf Harris had enjoyed continued success on his return to London and Graham McKenzie was an international cricketer of high repute. Both were pioneers in the promotion of Western Australia on the world stage. The back page showed photographs entitled 'Eartha Kitt appears on VIEWPOINT' [a regular local feature with highly respected journalist, the late Syd Donovan as moderator] and 'Bonanza star Lorne Greene visits Channel 7'.⁶⁹ Both of these big stars had

⁶⁶ The Law was not changed to allow drinking at 18 years on licensed premises till 1970.

⁶⁷ *TVW Channel 7 Seventh Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited- 1965*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth

⁶⁸ Coralie Condon, personal communication, interview, 1999.

⁶⁹ See Appendices for photographs.

been visiting the Eastern States as part of promotional tours. TVW7 paid for them to make short trips to Perth.⁷⁰ There was also a drawing of ‘TVW’s newest personality – Uncle Otto’, a cartoon character based on a television vacuum tube.⁷¹

For their last year as a monopoly the Board reported a net profit of £231,197 and once again paid a total dividend for the year of 20%. By comparison Home Building Society was offering 4.25% interest on pass-book deposits; The Commonwealth Bank of Australia’s rate for 12 months fixed deposit was the same amount; Industrial Acceptance Corporation was advertising 5.75% for 12 months; Rural and Industries Bank’s rate was 4.5% for the same period and Esanda was offering 6% for a three year investment.⁷² On the Stock Market the shares of TVW7 were quoted at thirty shillings, while W.A. Newspapers Limited were thirty-three shillings and eight pence. £87,874 was transferred to general reserve. In November 1964 the Postmaster-General indicated that licences for two country areas would become available and TVW7 intended to make application for the one covering the Central Agricultural Area. The number of licensed sets had now risen to 120,000. A Staff Pension Scheme was inaugurated and an amount of £18,400 was contributed by the Company. Returns to the shareholders were described as being ‘more than satisfactory’⁷³ and whilst the Directors did not draw attention to the fact, the era of the monopoly was past.

In 1966, TVW7 was telecasting about 80 hours per week and more than 50% of programs were made in Australia.⁷⁴ This appears to be at variance with the Eastern States experience, as Turner said, ‘In prime time up to 1963, virtually all program material was of foreign origin, of which 83 per cent was American and the rest British.’⁷⁵

⁷⁰ Sir James Cruthers, 31 March 2003.

⁷¹ A cartoon character being a stylized electronic valve with a large moustache and TV Antenna on its head.

⁷² *The West Australian*, Perth, 4 October 1965.

⁷³ *TVW Channel 7 Seventh Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited- 1966*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 22 July 1966.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ Graeme Turner, ‘Studying television’, in *The Australian TV Book*, Graeme Turner and Stuart Cunningham, (eds), Allen & Unwin, St. Leonard’s, 2000, p.17

Unfortunately, no breakdown of local 'live' production was given although the established pattern was evident by photographic representation of various activities in that field. The inside cover this year showed photographs of 'Famous cricketers make a TVW Viewpoint From left: Mike Smith, Billy Griffiths, Richie Benaud and Sir Donald Bradman'; 'Coles \$6000 Quiz personalities Roland Strong and Beverley Robbins at TVW'⁷⁶ reflected the high ratings of this 'imported' production and 'Billy Walker gets his 1965 Sandover Medal at TVW Studios'⁷⁷ Inside the back cover were two more photographs. One was 'The Stock Exchange of Perth conducts a dummy decimal call at TVW7's studios' and the other 'TVW's new one-camera outside broadcast unit'.⁷⁸ All of the photographs had an emphasis on local [Western Australian] production.⁷⁹ An innovation of note was the provision of an Outside-Broadcast Van fitted with a portable videotape unit, 'to be used for on-the-spot programmes and commercials.'⁸⁰ This was again an encouraging development for local 'live' production and a worthwhile investment. TVW7 ratings were excellent and there was plenty of money to spend without depriving the shareholders.

After one full year of competition the Channel 7 directors reported a net profit after tax of £300,928 plus £22,097 over-provision for taxation 1964-65. Once again they were in the position to pay a dividend of 20% and transfer £53,032 to general reserve. Comparative interest rates being offered were Mercantile Credits, 6.5% for twelve months. Treasury Notes for three months were paying 4.58%. On the Stock Exchange TVW Limited shares were \$2.57 and W.A. Newspapers Limited were \$3.22. The sound financial situation ensured a continuance of expenditure on local 'live' production.⁸¹ It was reported that although some income had been lost to STW9, this had been made up in part by a reduction in operating

⁷⁶ Local personality Gary Carvolth was also in the picture but not named.

⁷⁷ At that time Channel 7 had a monopoly on that particular telecast.

⁷⁸ *TVW Channel 7 Eighth Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited – 1966*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 22 July 1966.

⁷⁹ See Appendices for photographs.

⁸⁰ *TVW Channel 7 Eighth Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited – 1966*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 22 July 1966.

⁸¹ See Chapter Six p.?

costs.⁸² The licence application for the central agricultural area was withdrawn as research had indicated that the potential income would not cover the costs. The number of licensed television sets was up by 30,000 for the year to 150,000, which meant that about 83% of homes in the TVW7 viewing area were so equipped.⁸³ That meant that on any typical night of viewing approximately 76,500 Western Australian households would be watching TVW7.⁸⁴ On 29 April 1966 the Board appointed Mr. J.W. Cruthers managing director of the company and Mr. B.S. Treasure was appointed General Manager. The latter was also proposed to be elected as a director of the company.⁸⁵ By this time both men had built up substantial shareholdings. Cruthers was the absolute 'boss' and Treasure continued in his role controlling the area of advertising and outside expansion into various fields of private enterprise.⁸⁶

As noted by Tunstall⁸⁷ every television station has an *audience* goal, which stressed raising the sales of total attending audience size. In the case of TVW7, as there was no commercial opposition for almost six years the audience did not have to be wooed nor won. However, the original commercial station had adopted the role of the caring parent, with a continuing policy of looking after their audience. It worked and the community responded by considering TVW7 to be then (and still in 2003 in the case of *TVW7 News*) 'our station'.

With an estimate that there would be 50,000 sets in use after two years, the actual number was 70,000⁸⁸ and by 1965 when the second Western Australian commercial station went on-air the number had risen to 120,000.⁸⁹ Prior to the introduction of STW9 the Anderson Analysis showed the TVW7 audience to be 83.6 % of the viewing public.⁹⁰ Before the start of

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ From Audience Ratings Survey results

⁸⁵ Ibid

⁸⁶ Sir James Cruthers, telephone communication, April 2003.

⁸⁷ Jeremy Tunstall (ed.), *Media Sociology A Reader*, Constable, London, 1970.

⁸⁸ TVW Channel 7 Third Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited 1961, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 16 August 1961.

⁸⁹ *TVW Channel 7 Sixth Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited 1964*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 28 August 1964.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

transmission by STW9 the feeling at that station was that the audience would begin to equalize after the new station had gained an advantage through novelty value.⁹¹ However this did not occur when STW Channel 9 went on air, 12 June 1965. One month later, ratings survey results were devastating for the new station. Despite the competition TVW7 maintained its commanding position.⁹²

Wednesday 14 July:			TV%	Homes '000
2.30	TVW7	Televisit (local live)	11	14
4.30	“	Ch. Ch. 7 “	19-25	21-27
	STW9	Magic Circle Club ⁹³ (Melbourne produced)	6-7	6-8
Thursday 15 July				
4.30	TVW7	Ch. Ch. 7	23-26	25-40
4.30	STW9	Magic.C.C.	5-5	6-6
5.00	“	Under The Coolabah Tree. ⁹⁴ (local live)	4-5	5-6
Friday 16 July:				
4.30	TVW7	Ch. Ch. 7	20-32	22-36
4.30	STW9	Magic.C.C.	5	6
5.00	“	On The Wharf ⁹⁵ (local live)	6	6
Saturday 17 July:				
5.30	TVW7	Club 7-Teen (local live)	36-37	40-41
	STW9	Go! ⁹⁶	6-7	6-8
	ABW2	Cartoons	6	6-7
Sunday 18 July:				

⁹¹ Personal knowledge from conversations with STW9 General Manager Bob Mercer in May 1965.

⁹² *Anderson Analysis No 2 of 1965 August 1965*, Sydney, 1966.

⁹³ *The Magic Circle Club* was produced in the Melbourne Studios of Ansett's Channel 0 by Godfrey Phillip. It was a source of regular work for six actors and several musicians. Written by John Michael Howson who also played one of the characters, FiFi Bear. In 1967 Channel 0 'canned' the show and it then re-surfaced on the A.B.C., as 'Adventure Island'.

⁹⁴ Studio presentation with Peter Harries and children's audience in an outdoor Australian setting. Minimum production costs. See Running Sheet in Appendices.

⁹⁵ A cartoon hour presented by Peter Harries. Minimum production costs. See Running Sheet in Appendices.

⁹⁶ Another production from Channel 0 Melbourne, aimed at the teenage demographic.

1.00	ABW2	Four Corners	8-11	9-12
	TVW7	World of Sport ⁹⁷	14-18	15-20
		(local live)		
		STW9	(Not on air)	

Monday 19 July:

5.00	TVW7	Ch. Ch. 7	32	35
	STW9	Magic.C.C.	11	12
5.30	TVW7	Ch. Ch. 7	31	34
	STW9	Bomba the Jungle Boy	20	22

Tuesday 20 July:

2.30 –				
4.00	TVW7	Today (local live)	19	23
	STW9	(Not on air)		
5.00	TVW7	Ch. Ch. 7	31	34
	STW9	Magic.C.C.	1	1
5.30	TVW7	Ch. Ch. 7	31	34
	STW9	Charlie, Punch and Me (local live) ⁹⁸	3	3
	ABW2	Children's	1	1

Evening programs continued in the same vein with Channel 7 dominant in all areas.

Wednesday 14 July:

6.30	TVW7	News and Weather	51	56-57
	STW9	“	17-16	19-18
7.00	ABW2	“	21-20	23-23

Thursday 15 July:

6.30	TVW7	“	60	67
	STW9	“	8	8
7.00	ABW2	“	22-24	25-27
10.15	TVW7	Walsh's Football Teams (local live) ⁹⁹	28	32

⁹⁷ Primarily an analysis of Western Australian Football League played the previous day.

⁹⁸ A cartoon half-hour hosted by Peter Harries. Minimum production costs.
See Running Sheet in Appendices.

⁹⁹ A team run-down with ex-football stars Austin Robertson (Snr) and Jack Sheedy.

	STW9	Twilight Zone	16-17	18-19
	ABW2	Royal Canadian Mounted Police	1	1
Friday 16 July:				
9.30	TVW7	Football Preview (local live)	48-51	53-57
	STW9	Barbara Stanwyck	15-12	17-14
10.00	TVW7	In Perth Tonight ¹⁰⁰ (local live)	50-56	56-60
10.15	STW9	All My Eye and Betty Martin Too (local taped) ¹⁰¹	3-3	3-3
10.45	STW9	Down Under ¹⁰² (Local taped)	3-1	3-1
Saturday 17 July:				
6.00	TVW7	Club 7-Teen	42-47	46-52
	STW9	Pad 9 ¹⁰³ (local taped)	4-5	4-6
	ABW2	Cartoons	6-4	5-4
6.30	STW9	News and Sport	7	8
7.00	TVW7	News and Weather	59-65	67-73
		Sport at Seven (L.L.)	50-47	55-52
	ABW2	News	16	18

Two months later the next survey from 8 – 21 September offered no more encouragement to the fledgling station, especially in the critical News area. The leading program was *TVW7 News* on Monday night, which attracted 50,000 viewers, 54% of the available audience.¹⁰⁴

Monday Average 13 & 20 Sept.

¹⁰⁰ A live variety show with host Gary Carvolth.

¹⁰¹ A local 'live' 30 minute adult satirical program described in Chapter Two.

¹⁰² A program about skin-diving hosted by WW2 hero Jackie Sue.

¹⁰³ A program for teenagers with local bands. Hosted by Jeff Newman.

¹⁰⁴ *Anderson Analysis No 3 of 1965 8-21 September*, Sydney, 1965.

4.30-			
6.00	TVW7	Ch.Ch.7	15-30
	STW9	Bomba the Jungle Boy	10-12
		Magic Circle Club	10-10
	ABW2	Aquanauts	8-8

Tuesday 14 & 21

2.30-			
4.00	TVW7	Today (L.L.)	16-14
	Ch.Ch.7		10-22
	STW9	Bomba	11
		M.C.C.	11-10
		National Velvet	11-12
	ABW2	Various	1-2

Wednesday 15 & 22

	TVW7	Ch.Ch.7	11-24
	STW9	Bomba	10-12
		Magilla Gorilla	9-10

Thursday 9 & 16

	TVW7	Ch.Ch.7	12-22
	STW9	Bomba	11-13
		M.C.Club	12-11
		Under The Coolabah Tree (L.L.)	8-8

Friday 10 & 17

	TVW7	Ch. Ch.7	11-21
	STW9	Bomba	8-11
		M.C.Club	9
		On The Wharf (Cartoons and L.L.)	6-6

Saturday 11 & 18

5.00	TVW7	Sing Sing Sing	22-25
	STW	Down Under (L.L.)	2-3
5.30	TVW7	Club 7'Teen (L.L.)	26
	STW9	Go!	5-6
	ABW2	Sportsview	3-4

Monday 13 & 20

6.30	TVW7	News	51-54
	STW9	News	8-8
7.00	ABW2	News	15

Wednesday 8 & 15

	TVW7	News	52-54
	STW9	News	7-7
	ABW2	News	18
7.30	TVW7	Sandover Medal	52-58
	STW9	Addams Family	
		Peyton Place	24-22
Thursday 9 & 16			
10.00	TVW7	Football Teams (L.L.)	17
	STW9	Duel in the Sun	24
Friday 10 & 17			
	TVW7	News	50-51
	STW9	News	8-7
	ABW2	News	19-18
9.30	TVW7	Football Show (L.L.)	36
10.00-			
10.00	TVW7	In Perth Tonight (L.L.)	34-24
	STW9	Ray Taylor Show (From Sydney-taped)	19-7
Saturday 11 & 18			
6.00	TVW7	Club 7'Teen (L.L.)	30
	STW9	Go!	7-9
	TVW7	Football Playback	36-40
		News	44
7.00		Sport at Seven	41-40
	STW9	Baileys of Balboa	15-16
	ABW2	News	16
11.00	TVW7	Highway Patrol	19
	STW9	All My Eye and Betty	
		Martin Too! (L.T.)	7-2-1
	ABW2	(Closed down)	
Sunday 12 & 19			
6.00	TVW7	Vox-Adeon Nicholson Show (L.L. Quiz)	37-39
6.30	STW9	News	9
7.55	TVW7	News	46
	10.45	Viewpoint (L.L.)	13-10

These results had an immediate effect upon local 'live' production at STW9. As a direct result of these ratings the Saturday afternoon teenage show *Pad 9* hosted by Jeff Newman was cancelled, as was the adult satirical program *All My Eye and Betty Martin Too*, hosted by Buddy Clarke. *Under The Coolabah Tree*, a live production for children with a studio audience hosted by Peter Harries was struggling, but as production costs were minimal the weekly program survived.

Permanent staff 'casualties' included Margaret Hammond (Children's and *All My Eye* cast); Bill Barber (floor manager) whose duties were allocated to the set-maker and painter Chaz Broughton; Walter Pym (live presenter and *All My Eye* cast member), Graham Bowra (live presenter) and George Manning (live presenter). Former administration secretary said that her worst experience was 'Having to stay back on Friday nights to make out redundancy cheques for sacked TV personal, and the shock to their systems, as no warning was given.'¹⁰⁵ The rostered 'on-air' duties of these last three were then shared by the station's news-reader Alan Graham, Jeff Newman and Peter Harries; The Production Manager Geoffrey Stephenson and his secretary Colleen McDougall were both dismissed as well as three cameramen. In all the staff of STW9 was reduced by about thirty to about eighty-five persons.¹⁰⁶

The first 'operating year' Annual report of Swan Television Limited¹⁰⁷ in 1966 was a glossy quarto booklet featuring on the front cover a photograph of the daily *Channel Niners Club*.¹⁰⁸ Wednesday being 'dress-up' day for the cast and the sixty children who comprised the studio audience, they were dressed in Japanese costume. The participants were musician Peter Piccini, Veronica Overton, Station News-reader Alan Graham (Useless Eustace) host Peter Harries, Pixie Hale and Ron Blaskett with ventriloquist doll Gerry Gee. Cameramen Bob Finkle and Kevin Mohen were also in the photo with Floor Manager Chaz Broughton. The back cover had three photographs. 'Jeff Newman – Star of the "Jeff Newman Show", Ron

¹⁰⁵ Joyce M. Leigh, former STW9 employee 1965-68, written communication, 1 September 2003.

¹⁰⁶ Personal recollection from time of happening.

¹⁰⁷ *STW Swan Television Limited Annual Report 1966*, Hayes Avenue, Nollamara, 8 September 1966, p.2

¹⁰⁸ See Appendices for photographs.

¹⁰⁹ Former STW9 Production Manager Denzil Howson said that Gerry Gee was sold at auction in 2000 for \$18,000 to former Perth and now Melbourne radio personality Keith McGowan.

Blaskett and Gerry Gee in “The Channel Niners” and “Peter Harries Channel Niners Compere and Veronica Overton in a scene from the pantomime “The Golden Hind” ’.¹⁰⁹ In 1966 STW9 became BIG CHIEF CHANNEL NINE. All logos were adorned with a feathered head-dress. It was a bit of fun, but after a particularly bad Ratings Survey for STW9, TVW7 Management took out a full-page advertisement that stated HOW THE WEST WAS WON! It showed dozens of ‘dead’ 9s complete with feathers, pierced with ‘7’ shaped arrows. The head-dress disappeared!¹¹⁰

Despite claims that STW9 was operating in a ‘loss’ situation,¹¹¹ in this period the station Manager Bob Mercer was optimistic that there would be a sudden turn-around in rating survey results. He had a liking for ‘show business’ and on many occasions I was summoned to the Boardroom to participate in some liquid refreshment and entertain the ‘boss’ and his guests, playing the piano and singing.¹¹² In the early days Mercer was at times keen to promote its local personalities and ‘live’ productions. In 1965 *TV Times* said that ‘Peter Harries was working under the watchful eye of his personal manager Bob Mercer and could be the next international star to emerge from Western Australia’, but at a later time he distanced himself from any such intentions or likelihood.¹¹³ In 1967 there was talk of a special ‘personal’ caravan for Jeff Newman and once again promised ‘stardom’ akin to that experienced by Melbourne’s Graham Kennedy.¹¹⁴ It remained as only talk! ‘Stars’ of television, or ‘personalities’ as they were known, were at the time more than ‘celebrities’, ‘... the objects of an interest over which they have no control.’¹¹⁵ In 1969 I had enough self-control to remove myself from a sphere which had, because of public pressure, become intolerable. Few others did!

¹⁰⁹ See Appendices for photographs.

¹¹⁰ Sir James Cruthers, personal communication, June, 2003.
Gordon Leed, former STW9 News Director, written communication, 28 October 2003.

¹¹¹ Personal recollection from the time of happening.

¹¹² Ibid. Bob Mercer’s favourite song was ‘Please Don’t Talk About Me When I’m Gone!’ He died in 1970.

¹¹³ *TV Times*, June 1965 and personal experience.

¹¹⁴ Jeff Newman, personal communication, 2001.

¹¹⁵ Graeme Turner, Frances Bonner and P. David Marshall, *Fame Games The Production of Celebrity in Australia*, Cambridge University Press, Oakleigh Vic., 2000.

The result for the twelve months for STW9 was a loss of \$327,200 after providing \$139,182 for depreciation.¹¹⁶ Company shares with a par value of one dollar were quoted on the Stock Market at \$1.20.¹¹⁷ The Annual Report said that the directors considered ‘this result to be satisfactory for the first year of telecasting’ and that ‘the Station’s share of the estimated State Television Revenue increased significantly during the year. The Industry revenue growth rate in Western Australia was also most encouraging and it is anticipated that this trend will continue during the current financial year.’¹¹⁸ The Chairman (Dennis M. Cullity) recorded his appreciation for the enthusiasm and interest shown by ‘...the General Manager, Mr. R.J. Mercer, and Staff,...’¹¹⁹ It was noted that of a ‘...total of 2,000 shareholders, 1962 resided in Western Australia, 34 in the Eastern States and 8 overseas.’¹²⁰ Despite the shaky start, there was a general air of enthusiasm and optimism throughout the whole station building and there was a strong sense that it would be only a short time before the viewing public realised what a great alternative the new station was offering. This view was strongly expressed in the Chairman’s 1966 report,

Channel Nine continues to provide a comprehensive range of programme material. Favourable comment on the programmes has been received from many viewers while growing support is being registered by the younger age groups for the children’s programmes and teenage series. The Station is currently transmitting an average of 78 hours per week and an increasing proportion of the Station’s telecasting consists of Australian programmes. It is considered that the increase of approximately 15% in licensed sets in Western Australia during the year is largely attributable to the advent of Channel Nine and the wider choice of programmes now available to viewers.¹²¹

The 1966 STW9 Balance Sheet showed:

After charging Audit Fees	740
Depreciation	139,182
Director’s Fee	7,000

¹¹⁶ *STW Swan Television Limited Annual Report 1966*, Hayes Avenue, Nollamara, 8 September 1966,

¹¹⁷ *The West Australian*, Perth, 4 October 1966.

¹¹⁸ *STW Swan Television Limited Annual Report 1966*, Hayes Avenue, Nollamara, 8 September 1966, p.8.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, p.3

¹²⁰ *Ibid*.

¹²¹ *Ibid*, p.2.

Interest of Fixed Term Loans	52,574
After Crediting Interest from Deposits	5,931
1965 Loss brought forward	56,507
Accumulated Losses	
\$383,707 ¹²²	

The first *Anderson Analysis* of 1966¹²³ showed that the Top Ten rating programs were all on TVW7.

		Rating %	People
1	<i>Combat</i>	43	113,000
2	<i>Bonanza</i>	46	134,000
3	<i>Gomer Pyle</i>	45	130,000
4	<i>The Fugitive</i>	44	121,000
5	<i>Sunday Movie</i>	43	126,000
6	<i>Pick-a Box</i>	43	118,000
7	<i>TVW7 News</i>	42	120,000
8	<i>Dick Van Dyke</i>	41	119,000
9	<i>McHales Navy</i>	41	119,000
10	<i>The Saint</i>	40	118,000

[The variance in percentages to people depended upon total audience]

Apart from *News* these were all imported programs and predominantly sourced from the United States of America.

In 1966 (having existed in the Eastern States since 1957)¹²⁴ there were two systems of ratings in Australia. They were the *Anderson Analysis* and *McNair TV Audience Surveys Pty. Ltd.*, of 40 Miller Street North Sydney. The latter produced a list of the leading twenty programs which was at variance with the *Anderson Analysis* which examined ten programs.

1	<i>BP Pick-a-Box</i>	TV Homes	56%	(Sydney Taped)
2	<i>Dick Van Dyke Show</i>		54	
3	<i>McHales Navy</i>		49	
4	<i>My Name's McGooley [STW9]</i>		48	(Sydney Taped)
5	<i>Bonanza</i>		47	
6	<i>Perry Mason</i>		45	
7	<i>TVW7 Sun. Movie 'Titanic'</i>		44	
8	“ “ <i>The Sins of Rachel Cade</i>		44	
9	<i>Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea</i>		44	

¹²² Ibid, p.7

¹²³ *Anderson Analysis No 2 of 1966 27 April-17 May*, Sydney, 1966.

¹²⁴ Brad Neemwell, A.C. Nielsen supervisor, personal communication, North Sydney, September 2000.

10	<i>Showcase [STW9]</i>	43	(Melbourne Taped)
11	<i>Steptoe and Son [ABW2]</i>	41	
12	<i>No Time for Sergeants</i>	39	
13	<i>Football Playback</i>	38	(Melbourne Taped)
14	<i>Combat</i>	38	
15	<i>Sun. Movie Pillow Talk [STW9]</i>	38	
16	<i>Fred Astaire's Premiere Theatre</i>	38	
17	<i>The Farmer's Daughter</i>	37	
18	<i>The Man From Uncle [STW9]</i>		
19	<i>The Dean Martin Show [ABW2]</i>	37	
20	<i>The Twilighters in Concert [STW9]</i>	37 ¹²⁵	(Local Taped)

All programs not designated were those of TVW7. The highest rating show was BP *Pick A Box* produced in Sydney and headed by ex-American comic Bob Dyer who had made the successful transition from radio to television. A situation-comedy produced in Sydney, *My Name's McGooley* starring Gordon Chater and John Meillon provided a welcome representation for the struggling STW9. *Showcase* was still doing well and the new station had success with a Sunday movie and a new American series in the James Bond genre, *The Man From Uncle*.

STW9 Rating Success for Local Production:

One surprise at No 20, was a local production featuring the folk-singing group 'The Twilighters', female folk-singer Patsie Biscoe and Peter Harries compering as Entertainment Host. [I still use that appellation thirty-seven years later.] This program was the only example of local 'live' to get into the Top Twenty. The success of this particular program illustrates that the viewing public was not unaware of the programs offered by STW9. The press advertising and station promotion resulted in the ratings support. Because 'The Twilighters' were Western Australian with a big following, the same phenomenon which successfully rated *Showcase* was evident. In this case the television viewing community recognised that the program was local content. The viewer would not be able to differentiate between 'live' and 'taped'. The figures showed that in a majority of instances, after choosing to view certain specific programs, the audience returned to TVW7 offerings.

¹²⁵ McNair Television Audience Survey Sept. 1966, Sydney 1966.

TVW7 still mounted a daily *Childrens Channel Seven* ‘live’ show with Captain Jim Atkinson, Taffy the Lion and Seaman O’Dougherty. They had a daily studio audience of about 60 children as did STW9.

Children’s Channel Seven: Cartoons and Films with live links and studio audience 20,21,23,24,33,32,35,35,20,17,17,20,20,28,27,29,30

Peter Harries Presents: Live linking of Cartoons and Films with The Channel Niners Club and studio audience 19,19,19,21,21,21,21,21,18,22,20,16,16,-17,18,16,19¹²⁶

This survey showed an improvement of the figures for STW9’s afternoon programs. The above figures represent quarter hour breakdowns with closely contested first and third hours. However, whereas the STW9 results remain constant for about three hours for no apparent reason, the second and fourth hours both showed big increases in TVW7’s viewing audience.

In terms of photographic station promotion in the Ninth Directors’ Report TVW7 1967¹²⁷ the majority of attention was still focussed on local ‘live’ production. The front and inside cover depicted a close-up of TVW7 News Cameraman Dave Gordon, ‘Tommy Hanlon takes part in TVW’s seventh anniversary programme’, ‘Miss Claire, compere of TVW’s kindergarten programme Romper Room’ and ‘Beauty and The Beast panellist Maggie Tabberer receives a warm welcome at Perth Airport.’ Sometimes ‘Bad Boy’ Bon Maguire, the advertising ‘face’ of Tom the Cheap Grocer, [who dressed as a convict character, much the same as the present day W.A. Salvage character Luigi Savadamony.] met her but was not named in the caption. The back cover had photographs of ‘Children’s Channel 7 compere Taffy The Lion with several small Taffys.’ and ‘cameras close in on a performer during production of TVW’s teenage programme *Club Seventeen*’¹²⁸

Shareholders would have been elated to learn that the net profit for the year after providing for income tax and working expenses was \$452,061 plus \$2,143 for over-provision of 1965/66 tax. Of this amount the Directors paid a dividend of 20% after providing \$10,000 for

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ *TVW Channel 7 Ninth Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited – 1967*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 7 August 1967.

¹²⁸ Ibid. See Appendices for photographs.

long service leave and placing an amount of \$174,211 into General Reserve.¹²⁹ At that time Custom Credit was offering 7.5% for a five year investment; Industrial Acceptance Corporation 6% for twelve months; Payton Finance was still offering 8% at 7 days call; Home Building Society 6.5% for 24 months and Perth Building Society 5.5% for 12 Months. TVW Limited shares were \$3.90 and W.A. Newspapers Limited shares were \$3.52. Bearing in mind that the parent company shares had a par value of \$2, the television venture was showing a superior return.¹³⁰

There was an important development in October 1966 when TVW7 proposed to the Australian Broadcasting Control Board that it be permitted to establish commercial package stations at Kalgoorlie and Geraldton on the basis that neither would constitute a second licence under the provisions of the Broadcasting and Television Act. The Control Board would not accept that provision and the proposal was allowed to lapse. The motivation for the application came from West Australian Newspapers Limited boss James Macartney. He was interested in providing the television services because of traditional attitudes to looking after country Western Australia. Fear of the 'new' commercial station was not a consideration.¹³¹ The number of TV sets licensed in Western Australia had increased to 158,000 and the first country station BTW3 had started up in Bunbury in 1967 under the direction of ex-American business entrepreneur Jack Bendat. This did not cause TVW7 Directors any concern as '... about 145,000 of the sets licensed in WA can receive TVW7.'¹³² TVW7 was telecasting for 90 hours per week and acknowledged a 60/40 split of the commercial viewing audience in that station's favour.¹³³ One respondent alleged that Cruthers had said that he would be happy with such a result and strove to maintain that imbalance for many years.¹³⁴ Cruthers himself said that his intention was always to remain ahead by the greatest possible margin.¹³⁵

¹²⁹ Ibid, p.1.

¹³⁰ *The West Australian*, 3 October 1968.

¹³¹ Sir James Cruthers, 31 March 2003.

¹³² *TVW Channel 7 Ninth Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited – 1967*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 7 August 1967, p.2

¹³³ Ibid, p.3.

¹³⁴ Eric Fisher, personal communication, telephone conversation, 2002.

¹³⁵ Sir James Cruthers, 31 March 2003.

This Report contained a current breakdown of Company assets. These figures are of course based on methods of accounting for taxation purposes. Whereas full benefits for depreciation had been claimed, in actuality the investment in both building and equipment remained as tangible assets.

The Fixed Assets of TVW Limited were:-

Note 1- Fixed Assets	1967	1966
Freehold Land – at cost	41,872	<u>41,872</u>
Buildings – at cost	654,676	649,921
Less- Aggregate depreciation	<u>77,615</u>	<u>61,865</u>
	<u>577,061</u>	<u>588,056</u>
Technical Equipment-		
At cost	1,187,295	1,139,465
Less- Aggregate depreciation	<u>1,003,803</u>	<u>907,449</u>
	183,492	232,016
Fixtures, fittings and motor vehicles – At cost	<u>466,537</u>	<u>459,57</u>
Less Aggregate depreciation	<u>197,174</u>	<u>171,245</u>
	<u>269,363</u>	<u>288,332</u>
As per balance sheet	<u>1,071,788</u>	<u>1,150,276</u>

The third Annual Directors' Report STW9 Limited 1967¹³⁶ reported that the station was transmitting an average of 85 hour per week and was fulfilling its obligations to Australian content. STW9 had continued to provide opportunities for local 'live' programming with beneficial results to local artists and sponsors had been supportive. Although not supported by ratings surveys it was stated that [STW] 'News Service has continued to receive favourable comment.' There was no qualification of this statement and it might have come from a remark made in the Press or just been concocted. News-readers Lloyd Lawson and Peter Dean at the News-desk graced the cover. Photographs of Station personalities were used to illustrate the inner pages including 'Keith Smith and Perth Friend in "the Pied Piper" and

¹³⁶ *STW Swan Television Limited Annual Report 1966*, Jubilee Print, Perth, 7 September 1967, p.3.

‘Lloyd Lawson and Veronica Overton meet a contestant in “The Money Machine”. A photo of the STW9 News-van in operation at Perth Airport adorned the back cover.¹³⁷ An acknowledgement was given to Station Graphic Artist George Liddle and Station Photographer Michael Goodall for their work in compiling the report. This can be interpreted as gratuitous reward – acceptable, but easy to bestow as it costs nothing.

The Chairman announced STW9’s first profit of \$12,783 after providing \$144,093 for depreciation.¹³⁸ There was still no dividend and the Company shares were selling for \$1.60.¹³⁹ Although the close-knit circle of owner/investors would have preferred a return on their investments, there was now confidence that the company’s financial situation would continue to improve. It was noted that there was difficulty in procuring suitable programs and there was an upward trend of expenses. Licensed TV sets were up 11% to 159,000. This was in no small way attributable to the introduction of ‘choice’ which came with the second commercial station.¹⁴⁰

The third ratings of 1967 produce a slightly better result for STW9 when the *Showcase* '67 program, produced in Melbourne by Crawford Productions [Producer Natalie Raine] appeared at No. 5. Another Crawford production, *Homicide* [a cops and robbers series] on TVW7 was No. 1.

1	<i>Homicide</i>	47	144,000	(Melbourne Taped)
2	Coles’ <i>\$6000 Question</i>	43	140,000	(Ditto)
3	<i>Ben Casey</i>	41	140,000	
4	<i>Sunday Movie</i>	40	150,000	
5	STW9 <i>Showcase</i> '67	40	144,000	(Ditto)
6	<i>Expo '67/Gomer Pyle</i>	40	136,000	
7	<i>TVW7 News</i>	39	138,000	
8	<i>Lost in Space</i>	38	166,000	
9	<i>Bonanza</i>	37	165,000	
10	<i>Walsh’s Football</i>	36	145,000 ¹⁴¹	(Local ‘live’)

¹³⁷ See Appendices for photographs.

¹³⁸ *STW Swan Television Limited Annual Report 1966*, Jubilee Print, Perth, 7 September 1967, p.3.

¹³⁹ *The West Australian*, Perth, 3 October 1967.

¹⁴⁰ Personal knowledge from the time.

¹⁴¹ *Anderson Analysis No 3 of 1967 7 –27 June 1967*, Sydney, 1967.

Showcase went to air at 7.30 p.m. on Monday evenings against *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* on TVW7 which rated 27-28 and *The Magic of Music* or *Eric Sykes* on ABW2 which rated 14-15. This indicated that the public was totally aware of the newcomer but as soon as *Showcase* had ended, many switched back to TVW7. By the next ratings period *Showcase* had risen to No.4 with 41% of the audience at 164,000. STW9 now had two programs with *The Andy Griffith Show* at No.10 with 37% audience. Once again the other nine programs were all on TVW7. The final ratings for 1967 showed that STW9's *Showcase* was No.1 with 46%.¹⁴² It was a particularly well produced show with the best that Australia had to offer by way of singers, dancers and novelty acts and always had one act from Western Australia. This essence of representing 'localism' contributed to the program's popularity. However, STW9 management could not work out why the viewers did not stay tuned for following programs. The *McNair Television Audience Survey of 1967* showed the twenty top programs as being,

1	<i>Homicide</i>	53
2	<i>You Can't See Around Corners</i>	47
3	<i>Showcase STW9</i>	46
4	<i>Dick Van Dyke</i>	41
5	<i>Mission Impossible</i>	40
6	<i>Sunday Movie</i>	40
7	<i>The Saint</i>	39
8	<i>Gunsmoke</i>	36
9	<i>TVW7 News</i>	35
10	<i>Star Trek [STW9]</i>	34
11	<i>The Andy Griffith Show</i>	34
12	<i>Pick-a-Box</i>	33
13	<i>Flipper</i>	31
14	<i>The Man from Uncle [STW9]</i>	31
15	<i>TVW7 Movie</i>	31
16	<i>Bewitched [STW9]</i>	31
17	<i>Ben Casey</i>	30
18	<i>Arrest and Trial</i>	30
19	<i>In Perth Tonight</i>	28 (Local 'live')
20	<i>Till Death Us Do Part [ABW2]</i>	27

¹⁴² *Anderson Analysis No 5 of 1967 18 Oct-7 Nov. 1967*, Sydney, 1967.

¹⁴² *McNair Television Audience Survey Sept. 1966*, Sydney 1966.

With *In Perth Tonight* rating very well and appearing in the Top Twenty, STW9 ventured into world of local 'live' studio production with a 'Tonight' styled variety program, *The Jeff Newman Show*. It was aired at 9.30 p.m. on Thursdays for about four months. It featured pianist/arranger Peter Piccini with a four piece band, 'advertainment' segments, local guest artists and studio audience participation. The show made great use of station personalities Veronica Overton, Lloyd Lawson and Peter Dean who appeared in situation sketches produced by Denzil Howson. The notable exception was myself, as I 'spat the dummy' refusing to appear, considering that I should have been the co-host of an extended version of *Shoes and Ships and Sealing Wax*, the afternoon program which I had formerly been conducting with Newman. The *Anderson Analysis* for 9-29 August showed the quarter hour breakdown of the *Jeff Newman Show* to be 17,16,13,12,9,7 against movies on TVW7 which showed figures of 30,29,25,24,24,16.¹⁴³ One of the movies was *The Old Man of The Sea* with Spencer Tracey. ABW2 showed¹⁴⁴ *My Brother Jack* for a rating of 7,6 and *Z-Cars* for 5,5,3,1. A 'running sheet' of *The Jeff Newman Show* is included in the Appendices. The *Jeff Newman Show* was produced by Ron Blaskett and amounted to being not much more than an evening version of *The Channel Niners Club*. The budget was restricted to \$800 per show.¹⁴⁵ A kinescope copy of the *Jeff Newman Show* indicates that after about three months there was only one sponsor, Tom the Cheap Grocer. Lack of advertising income forced the cancellation of the program after about four months.

Early in August 1967, the Production Manager at STW9 Denzil Howson instructed me to produce and host a 'pilot' program not to exceed \$500 in costs, to be aired at 9.30 p.m. on Tuesday nights. The budget included provision for studio crew wages, lighting costs, musicians, guests, design and construction of sets. I employed three friends in pianist Terry Ingram, bass-player Brian Bursey and drummer Bill Tattersall at minimal cost; 'conned' other entertainment associates into performing with promises of 'stardom' and greater things to come; 'scrounged' prizes for competitions from potential advertisers and with the aid of other STW9 personalities including Jeff Newman (to do voice-over announcements)

¹⁴³ *Anderson Analysis No 4 of 1967, 9-24 August 1967*, Sydney, 1967.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Denzil Howson, personal communication, interview, 21 October 2003.

announcer Peter Dean and News Editor Terry Spence (panellists on a ‘Who Am I?’ segment, to find out by twenty questions the identity of a visiting celebrity). *Sunday Times* journalist Peter Finn provided an ironic comment on three items of public interest. He later went on to become a leading News reporter for TVW7. On 17 August 1967 the ‘pilot’ was video-taped. It was accepted for transmission, but then along with the *Jeff Newman Show*, the program was ‘canned’.¹⁴⁶ The reason was given as ‘financial losses’ but the next Annual Report does not support this as the station made a profit. It is more likely that the concept of Community Responsibility in providing local ‘live’ productions was beaten by the Ratings Survey evidence recorded above, that cheaper to buy, older American films would rate just as well.

In 1967, Swan Television recorded the status of assets as:

Freehold Land	73,489
Buildings and siteworks	290,601
Plant, equipment, vehicles and furniture	<u>1,098,185</u>
	1,388,786
Less provision for Depreciation	<u>141,389</u>
	<u>1,320,886</u> ¹⁴⁷

In the Tenth Directors’ Report TVW7 1968¹⁴⁸ the importance of local ‘live’ was again acknowledged in photographs. The cover depicted the studios of TVW7 much the same as they are today and within the booklet pictures of ‘Humphrey B. Bear and Taffy the Lion visit the South Perth Zoo’ and ‘During a Perth visit, Ena Sharples [British Actress] calls at another Coronation Street’. Back cover pictures were ‘Walsh’s Miss West Coast 1968 finalists parading through the city’, ‘Caltex Sports Star of the Year award winner, Miss Lynne Watson, at Channel 7’s studios.’ And ‘Rothman’s State Manager, E.Burgoyne presents a TVW film of last year’s football grand final to WANFL President K. Miller’.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Copies of ‘running sheets’ for *The Jeff Newman Show* and *Peter Harries Presents* in Appendices.

¹⁴⁷ *STW Swan Television Limited Annual Report 1966*, Jubilee Print, Perth, 7 September 1967

¹⁴⁸ *TVW Channel 7 Tenth Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited – 1968*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 5 August 1968.

¹⁴⁹ See Appendices for photographs.

The Company had another good financial year and paid another two dividends totalling 20% to the shareholders as well as retaining \$5,000 for long service leave and \$169,191 for General Reserve. Comparative investment rates were Perth Building Society 6% for 12 months; Home Building Society 5% for pass-book savings and The W.A. Building Society was paying 4.5%.¹⁵⁰ TVW Limited shares had risen to \$6.10 and W.A. Newspapers Limited were \$4.30. Although expenditure rose, so did profit to \$498,183. During the year the studio buildings were enlarged to provide a separate studio for news telecasts, a new master control area, additional outside broadcast equipment storage and a larger staff cafeteria. 'Technical facilities have been improved by the installation of telecine, videotape and switching equipment designed for semi-automated operation. Transmitter remote control equipment is being installed to release operational staff for other duties.'¹⁵¹ Continued expansion meant that there were requirements for additional studio staff and advances in technology had not yet led to redundancy.

The company offered to purchase all of the issued shares in the Whitford Broadcasting Network which included 6PM Perth, 6AM Northam, 6KG Kalgoorlie and a controlling interest in 6GE Geraldton. The deal was pending approval from the Postmaster-General. Licensed sets were now 170,000 and it was estimated that 89% of homes in the TVW7 viewing area had T.V.¹⁵² The transmission time was 90 hours per week and they claimed a 50% Australian content.¹⁵³

Local 'live' production was ignored in a more frugal edition of the Fourth Annual Directors' Report STW9 Limited 1968.¹⁵⁴ Restriction of expenditure on local 'live' became more evident with a reduction in the content of local product, although Children's and Women's areas survived. Expenditure had been reigned in and it was disclosed that the result for the year was 'pleasing'. This pleasure would have been mainly enjoyed by the shareholders as

¹⁵⁰ *The West Australian*, Perth, 24 September 1968.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*, p.4.

¹⁵² *Ibid*.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, p.5.

¹⁵⁴ *STW Swan Television Limited Annual Report 1968*, Jubilee Print, Perth, 13 September 1968.

the Production staff had become more pessimistic regarding the future.¹⁵⁵ The station's graphic artist saw more opportunity for advancement and resigned to take a position at the ABC station ABW2.¹⁵⁶

In the third year of operation the STW9 had made a net profit of \$327,200 after providing \$139,182 for depreciation. The Station's share of the estimated State Television Revenue increased significantly during the year and 'Industry revenue growth was expected to continue to grow in the following year, reflecting the generally buoyant conditions of the State.'¹⁵⁷ Swan TV shares were now priced at \$2.23.

The claim was that STW9's share of the market was improving and an independent survey in April/May showed that '...91.2% of all television families in the viewing area saw one or more programmes on Channel 9.' This claim was arrived at by a detailed examination of the ratings figures which gave the individual percentage of viewers (by station designation) for each time zone and program. STW9 was transmitting for an average of 87 hours per week and claimed to be using 50% Australian content including "Showcase", "Skippy", "Pied Piper", "Blind Date" and "Hunter".¹⁵⁸ Unfortunately these programmes were all produced in the Eastern States.

The prospect of colour television was already occupying the thoughts of management and it was recorded that the Post-Master General had implied that plenty of warning would be given for that change-over. The Station was making contingency plans for this happening.¹⁵⁹ This was by way of overseas investigation of equipment and operational procedures, as well as budgetary considerations.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁵ George Liddle, personal communication, interview, Sydney, November 2002.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ *STW Swan Television Limited Annual Report 1968*, Jubilee Print, Perth, 13 September 1968.

¹⁵⁸ *STW Swan Television Limited Annual Report 1968*, Jubilee Print, Perth, 13 September 1968.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Tom Warne, former STW9 Program Manager, telephone interview, 2002. See 'Colour Television' Reports in Chapter Eight.

The *McNair TV Audience Survey Perth No.1 May 1968* saw *Children's Channel Seven* still leading *The Channel Niner's Club* 19,19 to 7,8, with *ABW2 Cartoons* and *Adventure Island* matching the latter with ratings of 7,8. In the 5.30 p.m. spot STW9's Sydney produced game show *Blind Date* with Graham Webb was showing 20,19 to *Sword of Freedom* on TVW7 with 20,19. *Hey! Presto It's Rolf* on ABW2 was performing creditably with 10,19. On some nights the latter program was dominant with 23. On Saturday afternoons from 2-6 p.m. the figures showed:

<i>TVW7 Various</i>	3,4,12,12,12,17,17,16,16,16,15,17,26,27,27
<i>STW9 ditto</i>	9,9, 8, 8, 8, 7, 7, 7, 8, 8, 7, 8, 8, 8, 9
<i>ABW2 Sportsview</i>	8,6, 6, 6, 5, 5, 4, 4, 4, 4, 5, 4, 5,11,11
<i>TVW7 News</i>	Top Rating for Week: 49,50 Tues.
<i>STW9 News</i>	21,22 Mon.
<i>ABW2 News</i>	37,37 Fri.
<i>Today Tonight</i>	37,3

These figures were almost disastrous for the future of STW9 and certainly meant that apart from maintaining a presence in the children's afternoon time-spots, there would be no money available for other local 'live' programming. The most unusual outcome of this survey was that ABW2 had No.1 on the Top Twenty with the British comedy *Till Death Us Do Part* on Monday night scoring 43% of TV Homes,

1	<i>ABW2 Till Death Us Do Part</i>	43 % of TV Homes
2	<i>STW9 Showcase '68 Mon.</i>	38
3	<i>TVW7 Movie</i>	38
4	<i>TVW7 News Mon-Fri</i>	34
5	<i>STW9 Mission Impossible</i>	33
6	<i>TVW7 Pick-a-Box Mon.</i>	32
7	<i>TVW7 Laredo Tues.</i>	31
8	<i>STW9 Bewitched Tues.</i>	31
9	<i>TVW7 The Saint Thurs</i>	30
10	<i>STW9 Cowboy in Africa Thurs.</i>	30
11	<i>TVW7 Movie</i>	30
12	<i>STW9 Pied Piper Mon.</i>	29
13	<i>STW9 Star Trek Wed.</i>	29
14	<i>STW9 Hogan's Heroes Wed.</i>	28

15	<i>TVW7 Football Playback</i> Sat.	28
16	<i>TVW7 News</i> Sat. Sun.	28
17	<i>STW9 Ironside</i> Thurs.	26
18	<i>TVW7 Reach For The Stars</i> Sun.	26
19	<i>TVW7 The Lucy Show</i> Mon.	25
20	<i>TVW7 McHales Navy</i> Wed.	25
	<i>TVW7 Coles \$6000 Question</i> Wed.	25
	<i>TVW7 Dick Van Dyke</i> Thurs.	25
	<i>ABW2 News</i> Mon-Fri	25
	<i>ABW2 Today Tonight</i> Mon-Fri	25

The acceptance of local 'live' programs which appeared on TVW7 was again demonstrated when the Coralie Condon produced talent quest *Reach For The Stars* was equal Number 13 reaching a high percentage of the advertising-ratings public. The executives at STW9 could only scratch their heads and wonder why? Once again the reason appeared to be that TVW7 was widely accepted as 'our local station'. In the 4 p.m. timeslot *Peter Harries Presents* was showing 18 against *Children's Channel Seven* with 25. *Superman* on TVW7 with 30 was beating *Blind Date* with 21.

Despite STW9 having eight of the Top Twenty in the McNair survey, the advertisers favoured the results produced by the *Anderson Survey* and this anomaly is discussed in Chapter Nine.¹⁶¹ By June 1968, the Anderson Survey showed that *Showcase* was once again the only STW9 program in the Top Ten. It was running No.7 with 35% and 128,000 viewers.¹⁶² By survey No.4 it had disappeared from the Top Ten.¹⁶³ leaving the field to TVW7. Survey No.5 saw the return of STW9's *Mission Impossible* to No.5 with 35% and 132,000 viewers.¹⁶⁴

Local 'live' was still of paramount interest at TVW7 as evidenced by the Eleventh Directors' Report TVW7.¹⁶⁵ For the first time the front cover bore a full-page colour photograph. This was a foretaste of things to come, when Australian television would change from monochrome to colour in 1975. The photograph was of the first *Telethon* with presenter Gary

¹⁶¹ *McNair TV Audience Survey, Perth No.1 May 1968.*

¹⁶² *Anderson Analysis No 3 of 1968, 5-25 June 1968, Sydney, 1968.*

¹⁶³ *Anderson Analysis No 4 of 1968, 31 July-20 August 1968, Sydney, 1968*

¹⁶⁴ *Anderson Analysis No 5 of 1968, November 1968, Sydney, 1968*

¹⁶⁵ *TVW Channel 7 Eleventh Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited – 1969, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 15 August 1969.*

Meadows at the anchor-desk. The inside cover depicted ‘Car No 12, the TVW-Daily News entry, which finished 11th in the London-Sydney car rally’; Garry Meadows with Miss West Coast 1969 finalists.’ and ‘A high camera pictures some of the 10,000 people who attended a charity day at the TVW studios in March.’ The back inside cover showed a picture of rock-star Johnny O’Keefe in the *Telethon* phone-room and another of the State Premier Sir David Brand, who was *Telethon* Patron, on-camera with O’Keefe, Graham Kennedy, Bobby Limb and Stuart Wagstaff.¹⁶⁶ These photographs once again subtly (albeit very strongly) conveyed the impression that TVW7 was a supporter of events which openly displayed their commitment to Community Responsibility.¹⁶⁷ The back cover showed American golfer Arnold Palmer ‘swinging’ at the TVW7 sponsored Australian Open Golf Championship at Karrinyup. It was recorded that this was the first time that this sponsorship had occurred. There were two photographs of the new master control and central technical area in Tuart Hill and the operating centre at Mount Goldsworthy. Compere Jeff Newman was shown with the St. Louis School team which won the first series of *It’s Academic*.¹⁶⁸

A major advance in ‘outside broadcasting’ occurred in June 1969 when TVW7 was commissioned to produce a record of the official opening of the \$200 million iron ore development at Mt. Whaleback near the township of Mt. Newman. Chief Engineer John Quicke took a ten-man Outside Broadcast crew to the Pilbara and the project was recorded by director Keith McKenzie on videotape. The finished product was air freighted to Adelaide for transmission to Sydney by landline then sent to London, New York and Tokyo by satellite.¹⁶⁹ In a rare display of joint co-operation between STW9 and TVW7, a local ‘wired’ television service was provided to the townspeople of Mount Goldsworthy. The content was provided on videotape by both stations for viewing throughout the company town. This was done at the request of the iron-ore mining company who paid for the infrastructure. It was the first example of ‘cable’ television in Australia.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶ See Appendices for photographs.

¹⁶⁷ See Chapter Three.

¹⁶⁸ See Appendices for photographs.

¹⁶⁹ *TVW Channel 7 Eleventh Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited – 1969*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 15 August 1969.p.3.

¹⁷⁰ Sir James Cruthers, 31 March 2003.

Net profit was \$499,506 after realisation of some investments for \$64,679 and providing for income tax and working expenses. Shares prices were down a little on last year to \$5.56.¹⁷¹ TVW7 transmission time was now up to 120 hours per week and there were 179,000 licensed TV sets in operation.

The Fifth Annual Directors' Report STW9 Limited 1969¹⁷² showed that there had been a return to local 'live' production, mainly through an association by Station Manager Bob Mercer with N.L.T. Productions from Sydney and the newly imported 'personalities' were given prominence.¹⁷³ The back cover of the Annual Report was entitled 9's "Live" Highlights and were photographs of 'Don Spencer – from the "Tonight" show.', "Bruce Allan doing his famous mime act", 'Veronica Overton and Tim Connor – "Today" and "Anything Goes" shows', and 'A winner with the compere and panel from "Spotlight"'.¹⁷⁴ A further analysis of these programs is given following the Ratings Survey results for this period.

Although a net profit of \$170,186 came from the fourth year after depreciating \$164,069 (up only \$34,023 on 1968) the directors held back on a dividend until the accumulated loss had been wiped out. Swan TV shares were recorded as Last Sale 54cents.¹⁷⁵ Lack of returns meant an unwillingness by investors to support the Company.

In 1969 the Program Manager Tom Warne and the Chief Engineer Tom Provan were sent on an investigative trip overseas to investigate colour television. It was noted the Commonwealth Government considered that the enormous expense of conversion '...should

¹⁷¹ *The West Australian*, Perth, 1 October 1969.

¹⁷² *STW Swan Television Limited Annual Report 1969*, Jubilee Print, Perth, 21 October 1969, p3.

¹⁷³ At this time David Aspinall joined STW9 as a producer/director. In 2003 he was El Supremo of the Seven Network.

¹⁷⁴ The judges were Barry Creighton (ex *Mavis Bramston Show*) and radio announcer John Fryer. See Appendices for photographs.

¹⁷⁵ *The West Australian*, Perth, 1 October 1969.

not be imposed on the Australian economy.¹⁷⁶ At that time the executive make-up of STW9 was,

Directors: D.M. Cullity (Chairman)
B.F. Prindiville (Deputy Chairman)
D. Bell O.B.E.
L.J. Kiernan
D.M. Speed
H.C. Stewart
W.A. Young
Assoc. Director: P.B. Young
General Manager: R.J. Mercer
Secretary: K.N. Stronach, A.A.S.A., A.C.I.S.

By April 1969 the *McNair Survey* Top Twenty was,

1	<i>TVW7 Homicide</i>	46% of homes
2	<i>TVW7 Sun. Movie</i>	40
3	<i>Ditto Fri. Movie</i>	36
4	<i>Ditto Bonanza</i>	36
5	<i>Ditto Perth's New Faces</i>	35
6	<i>Ditto It's Academic</i>	34
7	<i>Ditto Pick-a-Box</i>	33
8	<i>Ditto Family Affair</i>	32
9	<i>Ditto Laugh-In</i>	32
10	<i>Ditto The Nurses</i>	32
11	<i>Ditto Coles' \$6000 Question</i>	32
12	<i>Ditto It Takes A Thief</i>	32
13	<i>Ditto The News Mon-Fri.</i>	31
14	<i>Ditto Beverley Hillbillies</i>	30
15	<i>STW9 Showcase</i>	30
16	<i>Ditto Mission Impossible</i>	30
17	<i>TVW7 News Sund.</i>	29
18	<i>STW9 Star Trek</i>	28
19	<i>TVW7 Wed. Movie</i>	28
20	<i>Ditto Sat. Movie</i>	26

This was a bad result for STW9 with rating *Showcase* badly and only one other program represented in the Top Twenty. Local 'live' production was still doing well at TVW7 with talent quest *Perth's New Faces* at Number 5 and *It's Academic* at Number 6.

¹⁷⁶ *STW Swan Television Limited Annual Report 1969*, Jubilee Print, Perth, 21 October 1969, p3.
See 'Colour Television' following 1975 Reports in Chapter Eight.

In 1969 during a three week tour of India I filmed (in black and white, colour being too expensive) enough material to produce a one-hour studio recorded program called *Magic Carpet* which I scripted, produced, narrated and presented. Although it received very good newspaper critiques, station management could not see their way clear to finance a series of such programs. They were of the opinion that it was too much like the James Fitzpatrick cinema travelogues. Today of course, such programs are featured on all commercial channels but are mainly produced in the Eastern States. It was a case of ‘Experimental programming, when it exists, is relegated to educational departments which we know are little regarded by general management.’¹⁷⁷ As a result of this decision (and being co-opted to NLT Productions to help produce the *Tonight* programs) I terminated my full-time employment with STW9 but continued to appear in various local ‘live’ productions thereafter, including a *Welcome to 1970* filmed in La Tenda Nightclub, Victoria Park.

The 1969 *Anderson* results for STW9 were much the same, with only one of their programs appearing in the Top Ten.

<i>Homicide</i>	42%	163,000
<i>Perth's New Faces</i>	38	194,000
<i>Sunday Theatre</i>	37	166,000
<i>Disneyland</i>	36	188,000
<i>It's Academic</i>	36	170,000
<i>TVW7 News</i>	35	148,000
<i>Pick-a-Box</i>	35	144,000
<i>Mission Impossible [STW9]</i>	33	139,000
<i>Beverley Hillbillies</i>	32	149,000
<i>Friday Movie</i>	32	138,000

As noted earlier, a galling part of these figures for STW9 was the fact that *New Faces*, a local talent search program at 5.30 p.m. on Sundays was being produced by Jeff Newman who resigned from STW9 in September after being replaced as host of his own show by Peter Dean.¹⁷⁸ To make things worse, he was the presenter of the new high ranking High School Quiz Program *It's Academic* on TVW7.

¹⁷⁷ Barzyk, Douglas Davis, Gerald O'Grady and Willard Van Dyke, (eds), *The New Television*, The MIT Press, Massachusetts, 1977, p.208

¹⁷⁸ Jeff Newman, interview, 1999. Although Newman was made the scapegoat, the program was discontinued after only another two weeks.

In an attempt to change their fortunes, STW9 General Manager Bob Mercer invited the Sydney production firm N.L.T.,¹⁷⁹ to produce two *Tonight* shows and a talent show with the generic name *Spotlight* on a weekly contract basis. The Executive Producer was Peter Benardos, who returned to Sydney and three years later produced 'Cash-Harmon's 'sex serial' *Number 96* made for Ten in 1972'¹⁸⁰ The first of these rated (on a quarter hour basis) 17,18,18,17,16,13 against TVW7's *Ragtrade* 29,20 and *Close-Up* 15,10,6,5; ABW2 showed *Review* and *F.A. Cup* for 14,13,9,7,6,6. The following week saw *Tonight* with 26,26,24,24,23,24, pitted against *The Academy Awards* on TVW7 with 42,44,42,45,33,31,31. TVW7's local talent quest *Reach For The Stars* rated 29 in its early Thursday evening spot. *Spotlight* which went to air on Sunday evenings rated 20 as compared to TVW7's *Perth's New Faces* at 38.¹⁸¹

The following survey saw STW9 un-represented in the Top Ten. TVW7 had another huge winner in the locally produced (by Max Bostock) *Spellbound* starring Western Australian born stage hypnotist Martin St. James. With a studio audience and some willing participants, it rated No.2 with 48% and 175,000 viewers.¹⁸² *Perth's New Faces* with 41 and *It's Academic* with 37 were still strong at Nos.4 and 9 and 200,000 and 159,00 viewers. *Spotlight* was performing creditably with 29,29,27,27. STW9 tried a 7 a.m. breakfast program called *Today* (compered by Tim Connor, an Irish comedian) which did best figures of 5,6 against *Earlybirds*, a hosted cartoon parade aimed at children with 9,10.¹⁸³ By the following survey in Sept/Oct., these programs were only being shown on Saturday mornings and *Earlybirds* was supreme at 8,10 against *Today's* 1,1. In the afternoon slots for children TVW7 were showing *Broken Arrow*, 11,12, *Bugs Bunny* 14,17, *Superman* 18,21 and *McHale's Navy* 21 repeats against STW9's *Bomba the Jungle Boy*, 6,6, *Top Cat*, 5,7, *Blind Date* (a game show from

¹⁷⁹ Jack Neery, Bobby Limb and a man name Tate. Tate was the money man. Bill Bowen, interview, 1999.

¹⁸⁰ Kate Bowles, 'Soap Opera: 'No end of story, ever'' in *The Australian TV Book*, Graeme Turner and Stuart Cunningham, (eds), Allen & Unwin, St. Leonard's, 2000.

¹⁸¹ *Anderson Analysis No 2 of 1969, 23 April-20 May 1969*, Sydney, 1969.

¹⁸² *Anderson Analysis No 3 of 1969, 16 July-12 August 1969*, Sydney, 1969.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

Sydney) 12,13. ABW2 had *Adventure Island and Playschool* 4,5, *Kimba the White Lion*, and *Forest Rangers* 5,5.

By the first survey of 1970, daily studio production of both *Children's Channel Seven* and *The Channel Niner's Club* had stopped although the session still carried those designations. This was caused because, for the first time, it cost more to produce local 'live' than it did to purchase from interstate and overseas. As well, the ratings demonstrated that children were choosing to watch the imported programs. This can be seen as a greater degree of sophistication amongst viewers, produced by them having had five years of choice and exposure to programs that were previously 'put to air' during adult viewing times. *TVW7 News* at 6.30 p.m., was still leading with top figures of 33 against *STW9's* 27 at 6 p.m. ABW2 was doing 23 at 7 p.m., followed by *This Day Tonight* (locally produced) at 7.30 p.m., with figures of 22,21.¹⁸⁴ The *McNair Television Audience Survey* was still being conducted and their comparative leading programs list numbered twenty. If anything, in this period it consolidated the accuracy of the *Anderson Survey*.

1	<i>Homicide</i>	46% of TV Homes
2	<i>TVW7 Sun. Movie</i>	40
3	“ <i>Fri.</i> “	36
4	<i>Bonanza</i>	36
5	<i>Perth's New Faces</i>	35
6	<i>It's Academic</i>	34
7	<i>Pick-a-Box</i>	33
8	<i>Family Affair</i>	32
9	<i>Coles' \$6000 Qu.</i>	32
10	<i>It Takes a Thief</i>	32
11	<i>Laugh-In</i>	32
12	<i>The Nurses</i>	32
13	<i>TVW7 News Mon-Fri</i>	31
14	<i>Beverly Hillbillies</i>	30
15	<i>STW9 Showcase</i>	30
16	<i>STW9 Mission Impossible</i>	30
17	<i>TVW7 News Sun.</i>	29
18	<i>STW9 Star Trek</i>	28
19	<i>TVW7 Wed. Movie</i>	28
20	“ <i>Sat.</i> “	26 ¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ *Anderson Analysis No 1 of 1970, 11-24 February and 4-17 March 1970.*, Sydney, 1970.

¹⁸⁵ *McNair Television Audience Survey Perth No. 1 April/May 1969*, Sydney, 1969.

It was a case of ‘no contest’ when STW9’s new *Spotlight* rated 24,24,23,23 against TVW7’s *Disneyland* with 54,54,53,54. It was not that Perth audiences didn’t like talent quests, as the program before *Disneyland* was local ‘live’ *Perth’s New Faces* which rated 46,47. TVW7’s self-claimed position of being the Local Station was still proving to be un-assailable.

However, the same survey conducted for July/August 1969 threw up some anomalies, particularly regarding ABW2 with their *This Day Tonight* and *News*. Coming in at Number 11 and watched by 32% of available homes it surprised the commercial station managements.

In the following survey, the hypnotism phenomenon *Spellbound* rated 58,59,58,57,40 against *Tonight* with 12,14,13,12,12,14.¹⁸⁶ The next *McNair Survey* for Feb/March 1970 still showed *ABW2 News* at No.8 with 31% of TV Homes watching. *This Day Tonight* was also strong with 26%. *STW9 Sunday Movie* was No.9 with 28%, *Showcase* was No.16 with 25% and *Julia* on TVW7 was No.18 with 23%.

1.	<i>Homicide</i>	53% of TV Homes
2.	<i>Movie</i>	45
3.	<i>Spellbound</i>	44
4.	<i>Perth’s New Faces</i>	38
5.	<i>Flying Nun</i>	36
6.	<i>TVW7 Fri. Movie</i>	36
7.	<i>This Day Tonight</i>	35
8.	<i>It Takes a Thief</i>	35
9.	<i>TVW7 News Mon-Fri</i>	34
10.	<i>Laugh-In</i>	32
11.	<i>ABW2 News Mon-Fri</i>	32
12.	<i>Showcase</i> [STW9]	31
13.	<i>The Saint</i>	31
14.	<i>Hawaii Five-O</i>	31
15.	<i>It’s Academic</i>	30
16.	<i>Pick-a-Box</i>	30
17.	<i>F.B.I.</i> [ABW2]	29
18.	<i>TVW7 News Sun.</i>	28
19.	<i>Bonanza</i>	28

¹⁸⁶ *McNair Television Audience Survey July/August 1969.*

STW9 and ABW2 both had only one representation. However, the previous *Anderson Analysis 6-26 May and 3-9 June 1970* showed a clean sweep of the Top Ten by TVW7, and 14 Oct-10 Nov. period was no different.

The Twelfth Directors' Report TVW7 1970¹⁸⁸ recorded the 'birth' of a new Station mascot. With the 'retirement' of Taffy the Lion, James Cruthers ordered a new 'animal' to be created. He stipulated that it must not talk and its face had to be part of the costume.¹⁸⁹ This was to obviate the degree of leverage that a 'live' faced animal could exert in regard to continuity of employment. James Cruthers said that Taffy the Lion was the only 'personality' who ever gave him any trouble. The character had adopted the attitude that he was indispensable and would be not removable due to his high public profile. This demeanour and demands for greater remuneration brought about his demise.¹⁹⁰ The new 'animal' was Fat Cat and it was soon joined by Percy Penguin, originally played by dancer Kevan Johnston. Fat Cat's photograph with a large TVW7 pedestal camera occupied a full page, whilst the back cover advertised '*DEPARTMENTS* star Peter Wyngarde at the studios with Peta Maitland, Miss Australian Beach Girl for 1970.', 'Garry Meadows looks on apprehensively as Graham Kennedy judges PERTH'S NEW FACES' and 'Maggie Tabberer with Channel 7 compere Jeff Newman'. Rolf Harris who was the original producer and compere of Children's Channel Seven revisited the studios and his photograph appeared on the page which recorded the directors and executives of the Station as being,

Board of Directors	M.L. Fry, Chairman
	R.A. Long
	J.W. Cruthers
	B.W. Treasure
Managing Director	J.W. Cruthers
General Manager	B.W. Treasure

¹⁸⁷ *McNair Television Audience Survey Perth No. 2 July/August 1969*, Sydney, 1969.

¹⁸⁸ *TVW Channel 7 Twelfth Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited – 1970*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 28 August 1970, p.6.

¹⁸⁹ Sir James Cruthers, National Heart Foundation Committee meeting 1982, stated to Peter Harries and others when they were contemplating a 'mascot' character.

¹⁹⁰ Sir James Cruthers, 31 March 2003.

The Directors reported a net profit of \$841,024 (including realisation of investments and all working expenses) and subsequently contributed \$11,000 to the TVW Staff Benefit Fund. A transfer from General Reserve saw the Station sitting on \$1,255,991 out of which they paid a 20% dividend and transferred to Capital Reserve \$900,000 and provided a further \$5,000 for long service leave entitlements. At that time both Perth Building Society and W.A. Building Society were both offering 7% on cash deposits at call. The Bank of NSW was at 5% and Finance Corporation of Australia 8.5% for a 4 year investment.¹⁹² TVW Limited shares were quoted at \$4.90 on the Stock Market.¹⁹³

The acquisition of all of the issued ordinary capital of West Australian Newspapers Limited by The Herald and Weekly Times Limited made it necessary for West Australian Newspapers Limited to substantially reduce its shareholding in TVW7 Limited in order to avoid contravening the ownership and control provision of the Broadcasting and Television Act.¹⁹⁴ Herald and Weekly Times had a controlling interest in HSV7 in Melbourne. With the influence of James Macartney removed, this meant that the position of James Cruthers as ‘El Supremo’ of TVW7 was absolute. With the 45% holding formerly maintained by West Australian Newspapers spread throughout the shareholders of TVW Limited, this great local company was now totally independent of direction by any major shareholder.

A big event was the purchase of the licenses of 6IX, 6WB, 6MD and 6BY as of 1 July 1970 and that 6IX was to be moved to Tuart Hill. It was also noted that TVW7 had extended its activities during the year to other matters associated with entertainment. They were involved in theatrical productions, outdoor entertainment and sporting events, which all added to the Company’s income.¹⁹⁵ The number of licensed TV sets was at 179,000. The appropriate

¹⁹² *The West Australian*, Perth, 3 October 1970.

¹⁹³ Ibid. [W.A. Newspaper Holdings Limited shares were selling at par \$2 due to the takeover by Herald-Weekly Times. The new South West Telecasters shares were at 56cents.]

¹⁹⁴ *TVW Channel 7 Twelfth Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited – 1970*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 28 August 1970, p.7-8

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

persons were studying an eventual transition to colour but it was not considered imminent. The Channel was now transmitting for 104 hours per week with Australian content at 50% and the claim was made that *Channel Seven News and Weather* at 6.30 p.m. ranked fourth among all programmes and was a clear leader over its opposition.¹⁹⁶

In the Sixth Annual Directors' Report STW9 Limited 1970¹⁹⁷, once again pictorial content stressed the station's involvement in local 'live' production. The back cover pictures were 'Tony Howes, Jenny Clemesha and Kingsley Koala [STW9's answer to Fat Cat] at Princess Margaret Hospital'; 'Clive Robertson'; 'Barry Crocker being interviewed on Woman's World by Jenny and John'; 'Recording 'Spotlight' Studio 'C'; 'Graham Webb Compere of Spotlight' and 'Ray Victor and Renee Piazza', an American couple originally brought to Perth at my instigation for La Tenda Night Club.¹⁹⁸

This report brought some joy with a 'maiden' dividend for STW9 Shareholders:

Profit for the year was \$142,751 (170,186) after providing \$179,619 (164,069) for depreciation. Excess provision for cost of \$30,492 from previous years was written back making \$173,243 available for appropriation. Allowing \$128,000 for dividend, the balance of \$45,243 has been used to reduce the accumulated loss to \$19,329. No provision for income tax was necessary... Your directors recommend the payment of a maiden dividend of 8% to \$128,000 payable on 16th October.¹⁹⁹

Swan Television Limited shares were quoted on the Stock Market at \$1.96.²⁰⁰ Sales revenues had increased but higher costs offset this. Major items of equipment purchased included a microwave link system and another videotape machine, capable of handling transition to colour. In February the General Manager Bob Mercer was given the sack although the report said that '... [he] resigned and went into business on his own account.'²⁰¹

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ *TVW Channel 7 Fifteenth Annual Report and Financial Statements of TVW Limited – 1973*, West Australian Newspapers, Perth, 28 August 1973.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid. See Appendices for photographs.

¹⁹⁹ *STW Swan Television Limited Annual Report 1970*, Jubilee Print, Perth, 21 August 1970, p3..

²⁰⁰ *The West Australian*, Perth, 3 October 1970.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

L.J. Kiernan was appointed Chief Executive and the Board was very complimentary of Mercer's 'untiring efforts on behalf of the Company during a vital stage of its development.'²⁰² Laurie Kiernan was the head of a very successful transport business and had taken shares in STW9 at the request of Dennis Cullity. They had been individually the Head Prefects of Guildford Grammar School and Aquinas College at the same time. With the fortunes of STW9 still not rising enough for the satisfaction of the Board of Directors, Cullity asked Kiernan to take a job riding shot-gun as Resident Director. Eventually Bob Mercer was replaced by Kiernan as Executive Director²⁰³ a title which he did not like and changed it to Managing Director and Chief Executive.²⁰⁴

When questioned regarding the state of STW9 when the changeover happened, Kiernan said,

Peter it was a mess! I don't want to go into details but financially it was a disaster! And I'd never been associated with anything that lost money. But, you know, in January you could lose a hundred to a hundred and fifty thousand dollars and as I say, I'd never been associated with a company that hadn't made money.²⁰⁵

Kiernan said that the arrangement with N.L.T. Productions was a disappointment '...as they didn't deliver the people that they said they would and I had to terminate that... anyway I finished Neery up because it wasn't working and we were paying a lot of money'²⁰⁶ By his own admission Kiernan knew nothing about television generally, let alone local 'live' production. His intention was to make money and his special talent was in delegating authority. One such example was former General Manager of STW9 Bill Bowen who commenced his television career as a cameraman with ABN2 Sydney in 1956. He became Production Manager of NBN3 Newcastle. He had also done work for N.L.T. Productions in Sydney, producing *The Don Lane Show*, *At Home With Hazel* [Philips] and *Dita Cobb*. He was hired from there to be STW9 Production Manager at the beginning of 1969. One of his

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Dennis Cullity, former STW9 Chairman of the Board, personal communication 1 September 2001. [Mercer subsequently succumbed to leukemia the following year.]

²⁰⁴ Laurie Kiernan, interview, 25 May 1999.

²⁰⁵ Laurie Kiernan, interview, 25 May 1999.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

conditions was that he alone would hire and fire the Production Staff.²⁰⁷ Bowen's first meeting with his new boss was embarrassing.

...so in waltzes Bob [Mercer] one day with this other guy in tow and says 'I'd like you to meet Laurie Kiernan who's our new director.' And I said, 'You can un-direct him Bob 'cause I told you I will hire the directors and you can un-hire him! You hired him and I told you not to and you can un-hire him!' and Laurie sort of pulled himself up to his full six foot two and said, 'Director of the Board!' I said, 'Oh! That's different!'

The first *McNair Survey* for 1970 by total numbers of persons viewing gave TVW7 the first seven of the Top Twenty. *Homicide* was still on top with 156,000 viewers and a newcomer *Greenacres* was No.2 with 139,000 STW9's *Sunday Movie* was at No.8 with 117,000 viewers, *ABW2 News* was at No.12 with 111,000 viewers. The Sydney produced *Skippy* was No.19 for STW9 with 91,000 viewers.²⁰⁸

The *McNair Survey* of August 1970 credited only two programs to STW9. *Skippy* No.9 with 134,000 viewers and *Hogan's Heroes* at No.18 with 117,000. The British comedy *Stephoe and Son* was holding No.13 with 122,000 viewers. The afternoons 4-6 p.m. showed some evenness.

Monday	TVW7 <i>Childrens Channel Seven</i>	48,48
	<i>Rin Tin Tin</i>	47,47
	<i>Superman</i>	42,44
	<i>Sea Hunt</i>	45,49
	STW9 <i>Archie</i>	43,43
	<i>Adams Family</i>	45,45
	<i>Time Tunnel</i>	53,53
	<i>Star Trek</i>	48,44
	ABW2 <i>Play School</i>	9, 9
	<i>Adventure Island</i>	8, 8
	<i>Cartoons</i>	5
	<i>Captain Fathom</i>	4, 7
	<i>Life of Riley</i>	6
	Tuesday	<i>C.C.Seven</i>
	<i>Archie</i>	45,45
	<i>Playschool</i>	10, 9
Wednesday	<i>C.C.Seven</i>	40,41

²⁰⁷ Bill Bowen, personal communication, interview, 1999.

²⁰⁸ *McNair Television Audience Survey Feb/Mar, 1970.*

<i>Starnight</i> (Local Live)	41,41,39,49
<i>Archie</i>	52,52
<i>Adams Family</i>	53,52
<i>Time Tunnel</i>	54,53
<i>Playschool Etc.</i>	8, 7,7,7,6

For the first time, TVW7's dominance in the children's area was threatened. The time-slot 4.30 to 5.30 p.m. showed TVW7's *Children's Channel Seven* live studio production of *Starnight* trailing 12,13,13,14 to STW9's *Flipper* at 11,12 and *Land of The Giants* 16,18 encroaching on the TVW7's previous stranglehold. In 1970/71 children under the age of 15 years represented 30.28% of the population in W.A.²⁰⁹ They were selecting the imported American shows against the local 'live' programs, indicating that the entrenched position of TVW7 was starting to break down due to the passage of time. ABW2 trailed with *Playschool*, *Adventure Island* and *Space Patrol* all rated 2. A precursor to eventual change was that the *STW9 News* was now rating well with 24,25 against TVW7's *The Rifleman* at 21,23. This provided a good springboard for the programs which followed, *I Dream of Jeannie* with 20,21 and *H.R. Puff'n 'Stuff* with 24,25. However, they were eclipsed by *TVW7 News* 34,34 and *Pick-a Box* with 34,33.²¹⁰

Conclusion:

This chapter has provided the framework for comparison of the correlation of programs (both local 'live' and imported) with audience acceptance through the ratings system and financial returns to the two television companies. It has shown that STW9 had high hopes of immediate success, which did not happen. They had to overcome the engendered acceptance of TVW7 as being the 'local' station. By the end of 1970 this handicap was starting to weaken.

During the period 1958 to 1970, TVW7 was successfully established by management's careful attention to promoting a community feeling that this television outlet was indeed

²⁰⁹ R.N. Ghosh, 'Economic Development and Population Growth in Western Australia since 1945' in *A New History of Western Australia*, C.T. Stannage (Ed.), University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1987.

²¹⁰ *Anderson Analysis No 3 of 1970, 14 Oct-10 Nov 1970*, Sydney, 1970

‘their’ station. One of the most important aspects of this policy was the instigation of a highly successful annual *Telethon* which management cleverly tied to the future fortunes of the State’s specialising Children’s Hospital.

In 1965 STW9 established competition, but endured several years of financial loss and although they enjoyed some individual successes, they failed to catch up on TVW7 in the Audience Ratings Surveys. During the first few years at STW9, financial structures brought about regular cutting to the Production Department and local ‘live’ programs. In 1968, the first indications of a change-over to colour television were recorded by Station Management. A major change during this period ending in 1970 was the cessation of both daily ‘live’ children’s shows with studio audiences and regular studio produced women’s programs. It was not until that year that STW9 returned a dividend to shareholders.

