

MANNERING PARK FISHERMANS COOPERATIVE AND THE FISHING INDUSTRY



Mannering Park Fisherman's Co-Operative

The Mannering Park Fishermen's Co-operative, sited in Kenilworth Street, was established in 1956. The inaugural Chairman and Secretary were Ron Wendt and Peg Wendt respectively. Dorothy Wynn served as the secretary for most of the Cooperative's existence, until Lake Macquarie was closed to commercial fishing in 2002.

The co-operative supplied fresh fish, and, seasonally, prawns, crabs and smoked fish to locals, tourists and the Sydney Fish Markets. It provided employment in retail, primary industry and administration for many in the community of Mannering Park and beyond.



Jarrod Wynn, Mark Fullick and Kel Wynn doing maintenance

In times of glut for mullet and tailor, the ice storage shed was used as a smoke house. The smoked fish became very popular with Co-operative customers.

The co-operative was also a generous donor and fund raiser for local charities, contributing to the new community hall and especially the local primary school.



Picking out fish - Brett Morris and Braiden Micallef

Commercial fishing became part of the extended family's history, with male members of the family spending some time commercial fishing over four generations. This way of life continues to this day with Kelvin Wynn, son of Clarence and Dorothy Wynn, and David Micallef, son of Thomas Micallef and Esther Wynn, and their sons.

Compiled By
Mannering Park Progress

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Dorothy Wynn with Johnny Martin Fullick

Before mechanisation and synthetic nets, fishermen did one dig per week using a sail and oars, hand winches and cotton nets. The cotton nets had to be dried, cleaned, patched and tanned weekly. Tanning was the process of boiling iron bark so that the resin was released. The fishermen coated the cotton nets by dipping them into the boiler and pulling them through. It was a huge physical feat.



Kel Wynn and other fisherman picking out fish



David Micallef

The Wynn family's involvement in fishing on Lake Macquarie dates back to 1910. Bill and Clarrie worked continuously in the fishing industry for over 50 years each.

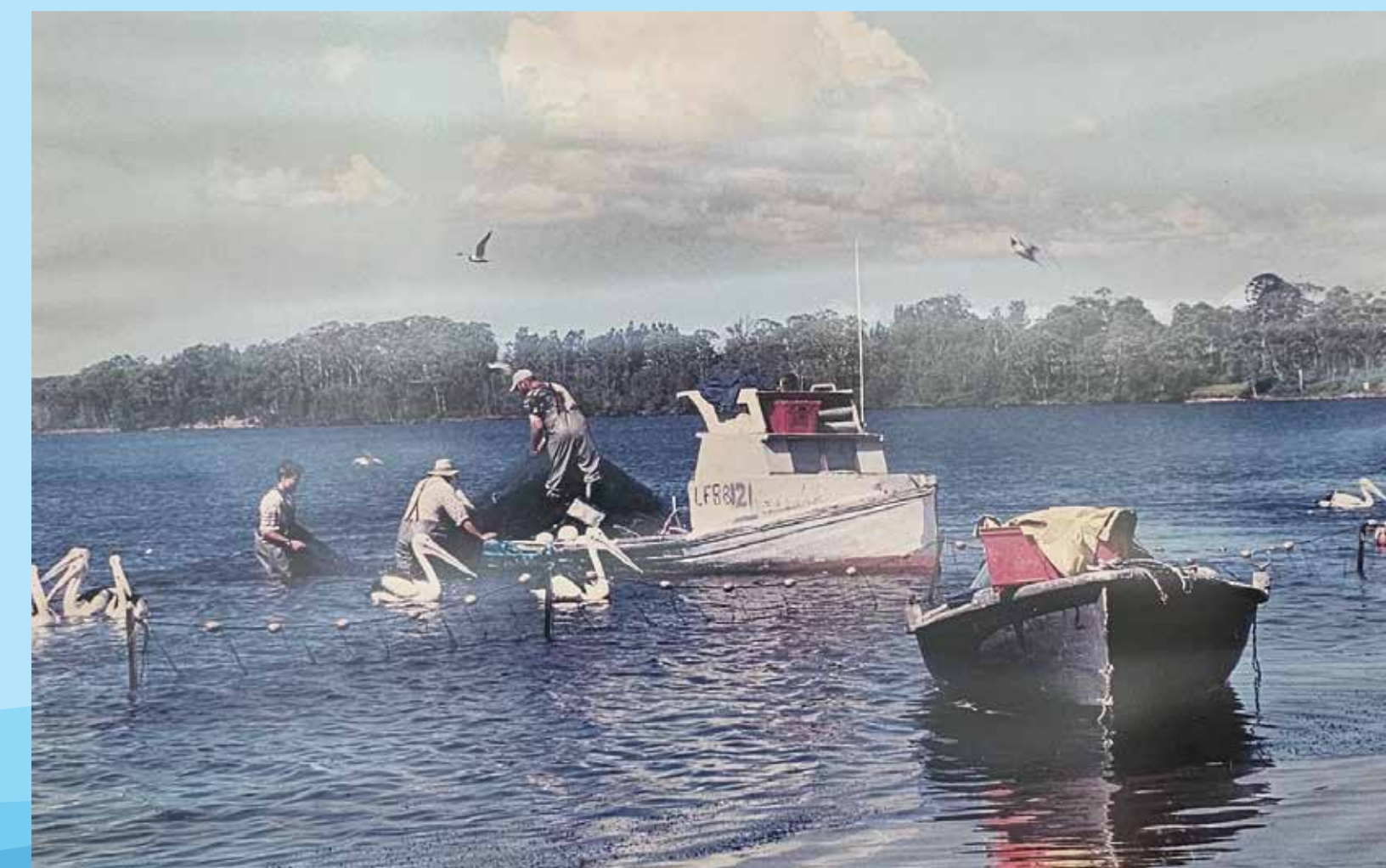
The fishing industry sustained them during hard times.

Clarence and Dorothy Wynn represented the Mannering Park Fishermen's Cooperative at Regional meetings up and down the coast from 1956 onwards. The Mannering Park Fishermen's Co-operative also played a crucial role in advocating for weekend closures for commercial fishing on Lake Macquarie. This helped reduce pressure on fish stocks and minimised conflict between professional and recreational fishers. Hauling was only ever permitted in the southern half of the lake below Pulbar Island.

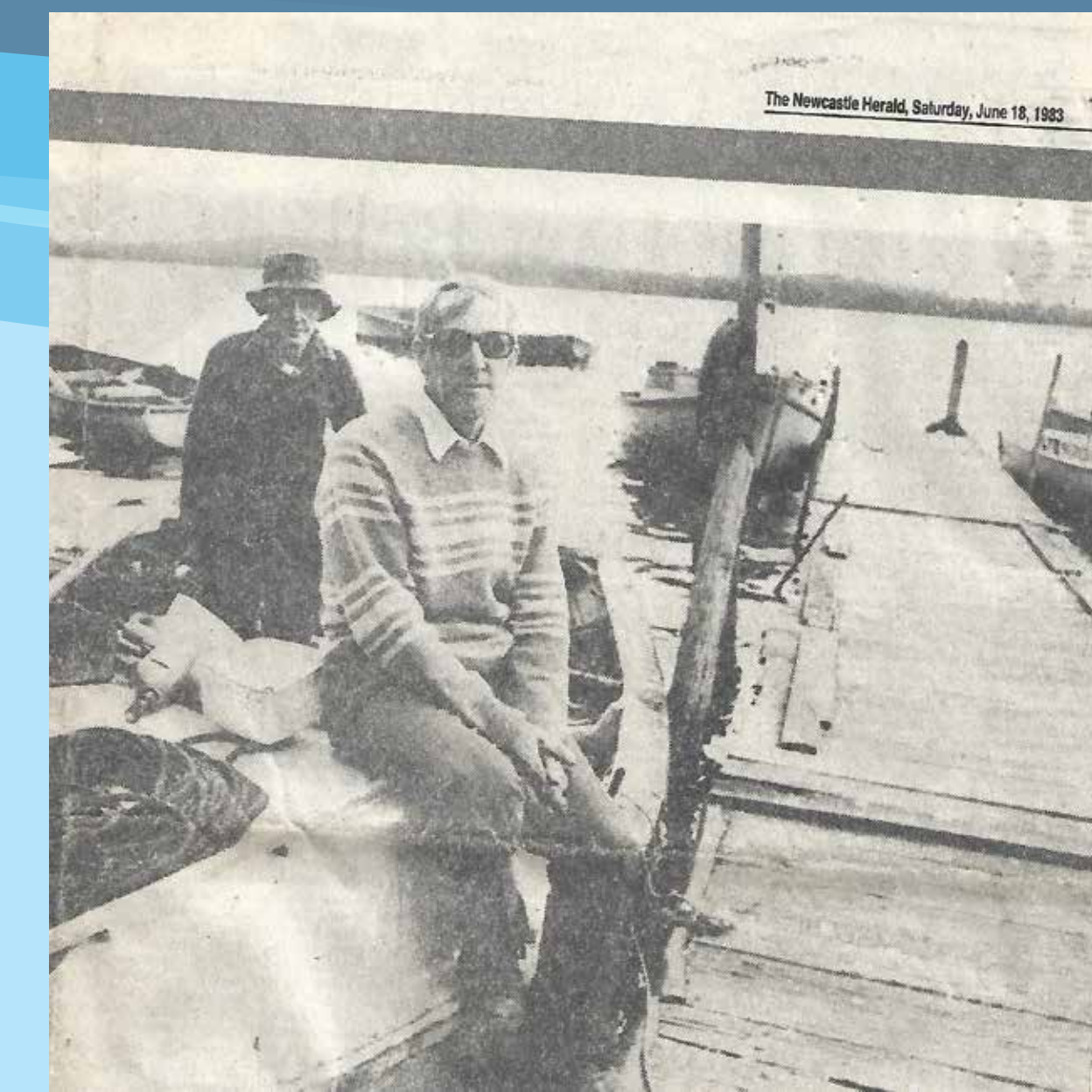


*Hauling nets back onto fishing boat after tanning
L to R: Clarrie and Kelvin Wynn, Ron and Noel Wendt, Robyn Wynn*

Clarence's contributions were recognised with a medal for Services to the Fishing Industry in the Bicentennial year (1988), presented by then Prime Minister, Bob Hawke.



Ben and Kelvin Wynn and David Mitchell on boat

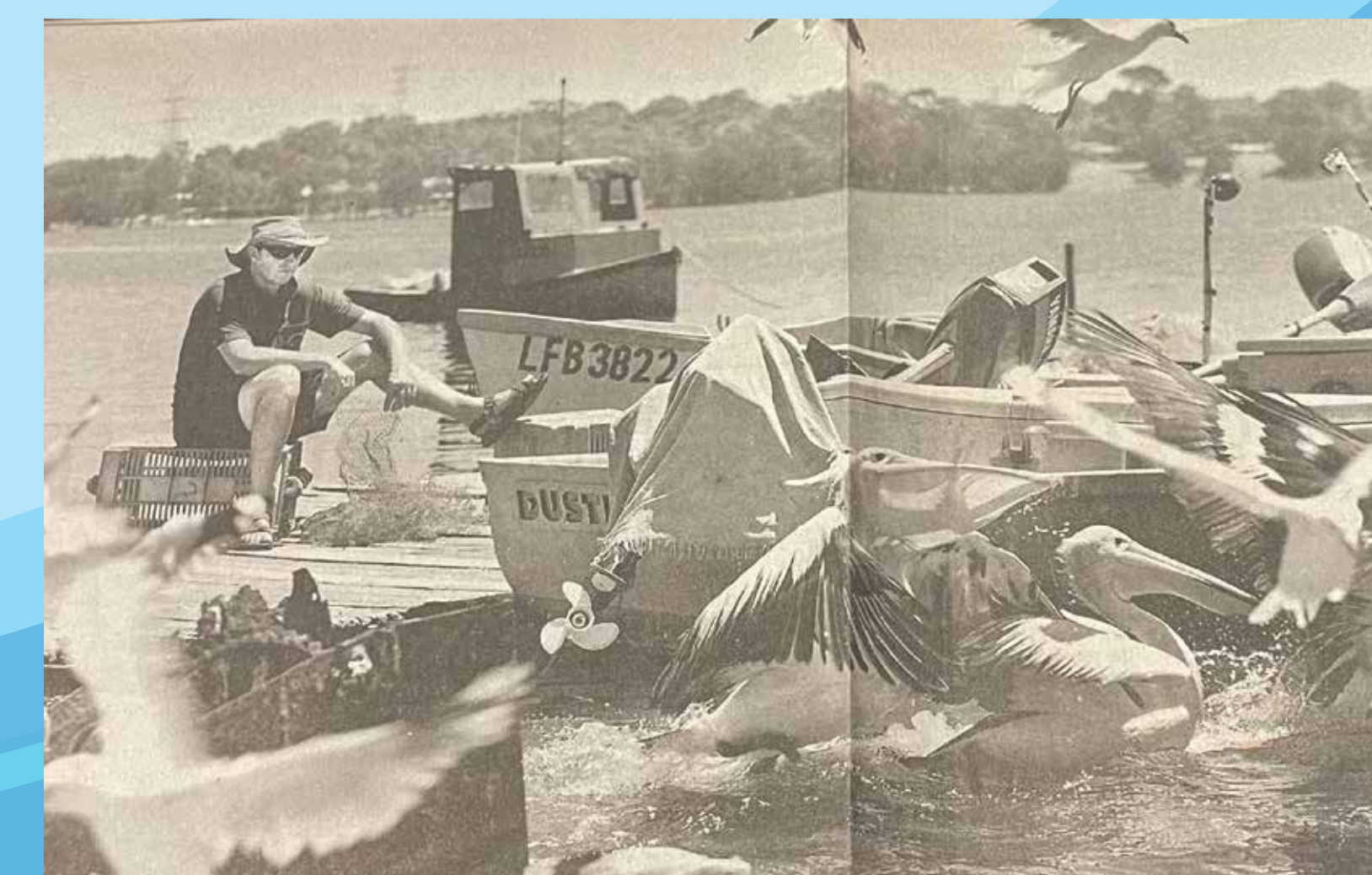


*Founders of Mannering Park Fisherman's Cooperative
Bill and Clarrie Wynn*

Bill and Clarrie played key roles in modernising the industry. They introduced automation in 1936, followed by mechanised winches around 1946 and synthetic nets around 1960. These advancements completely revolutionised commercial fishing.



Noel Wendt with Lake Macquarie prawn catch



Kel Wynn on the jetty

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

This history was compiled through primary interviews with Clarence Wynn and family records.

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The fishing industry sustained them during hard times.

Commercial fishing became part of the extended family's history, with male members of the family spending some time commercial fishing over four generations. This way of life continues to this day with Kevin Wynn, son of Clarence and Dorothy Wynn, and David Micallef, son of Thomas Micallef and Esther Wynn, and their sons.

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Shane Peters, Kel Wynn and Wayne Price with Lake M

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