

The End of an Era

After almost 36 years, the Windsor business and a family retailing tradition of more than 173 years ended in 1998, when Ross and Hunter had reached their 70s and were looking forward to retirement. The business and buildings were sold in three separate lots: firstly the hardware section in 1996, then ladies wear in 1998, and finally menswear on Friday 9 April 1999. It was around this time that a number of fixtures and fittings were donated to Hawkesbury Historical Society. These items formed the basis of the museum's 2013 exhibition.



Remarkably, the brothers never missed a day of business in over 36 years. Each day they travelled to and from work together, sat at a joined desk and always did their own paperwork. What set Hordern's apart was its commitment to diversity, as specialisation moved stealthily into the retail market. This approach continued up until the final closing of its doors, with the store continuing to carry everything from underwear to hardware.



'a family retailing tradition of more than 173 years'



HORDERN'S

From Underwear to Hardware: The Hordern Brothers story

A HAWKESBURY REGIONAL MUSEUM INFORMATION SHEET



The Hordern Brothers

Hunter and Ross Hordern were fifth generation descendants of Anthony Hordern, a famous name in the history of Australian retail (see below). In 1962 the brothers came to Windsor, and bought the Pulsford family business, re-naming it *H & R Hordern – Value Department Store*. Asked in later years why they chose Windsor, they said 'because we like the area, it's slowly expanding, and dramatic things don't happen there.' (*Hunter Hordern, June 1983*).

History of the Building

The building, on the corner of George and Fitzgerald Streets, goes back to 1919. It was constructed by J.G. Taylor to a design by architects Ross & Rowe. It included a banking chamber, and a large shop which was available for lease. The total cost of construction was £5,071. In 1935 the building was sold to Maurice Pulsford, a local businessman for £3,500 (it is believed that only the shop changed hands, hence the discrepancy in the price).

M.H. Pulsford & Co.

The original Pulsford store was located next to the Old Post Office (currently the site of the Post Office Arcade). It became known as *The Manchester House* and by 1908 they had adopted the motto 'Always Ready'. Pulsford was known for his energy, enterprise and enthusiasm, and his business expanded and prospered for more than 50 years.

In 1910 Pulsford acquired William Beard's adjacent ironmongery, and after a few years the business had outgrown both

Images:

Front Cover: H&R Hordern Store, cnr Fitzgerald and George Sts, Windsor c1965. Hawkesbury Library Service.

Page 2, left: M.H. Pulsford & Co, Mercery Department c.1950. L-R: Employees Brian Dodd, Dennis Simmons, Trevel Simmons, Horrie Whalan & owner Maurice Pulsford. Hawkesbury Regional Museum Collection.

Page 2, right: M.H. Pulsford & Co. Ladies and Haberdashery Departments c. 1950. L-R: Employees Rita Mortley, Noeline Case, Norma Taylor, lady with child (customers), Mr Cramp (from Manchester Dept.), Irena Gudakate (from Scheyville Migrant Hostel), Maurice Pulsford (owner) and Jean Hynds.

Page 3, top: Hordern Bros. Hardware Department, Fitzgerald St, Windsor, 1996. Daphne Kingston Collection, Hawkesbury Historical Society.

Page 3, below: Home of the Pulsford Family, later it became Horderns Hardware Department. Hawkesbury Library Service.

Page 4, left: Ross and Hunter Hordern in the Menswear Department, 1998. Hawkesbury Independent.

Page 4, right: Hordern Brothers Menswear Department, 1998. Daphne Kingston Collection, Hawkesbury Historical Society.

