



# The History of BCG

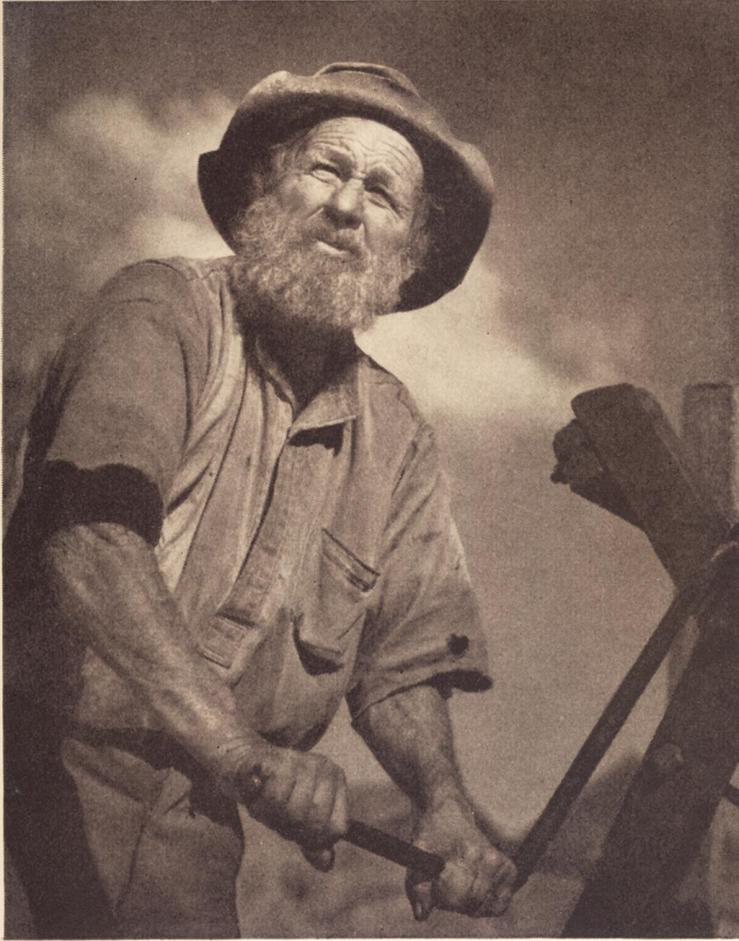
## “Garth Grant-Thomson”

£20 was a lot of money in Australia in 1950. The average weekly male wage was less than £6 and the female wage less than half of that. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1950, The Sunday Mail announced that out of a field of 6000 photographers that Mr. Garth Grant-Thomson had won £20 in their 1950 Amateur Photographic Competition. £10 for his image titled “Toil” in the “Work” category and another £10 for this same image when it was judged the “Champion of Champions” for the competition. Readers were told that Mr. Garth Grant-Thomson was a 38 year old qualified accountant. Under the heading of “Modest fanatic” the Sunday Mail report highlighted Mr Grant-Thomson’s fanatical keenness for his hobby. Mr. Grant-Thomson said that every penny of prizemoney went back to buy more equipment.

Prior to this financial windfall, Garth was well known in amateur photography. During the 1940’s he had been written articles for the Australasian Photo Review (APR) and had work published in that magazine and many others all over the world. Garth was particularly noted for his portrait work. He had also earned the internationally respected distinction ARPS – Associate of The Royal Photographic Society.

Garth Grant-Thomson was to figure prominently in the first decade of BCG. Garth attended his first BCG meeting on November 1<sup>st</sup> 1949 just one month after the club’s formation. In January 1950 Garth was elected Publicity Officer of BCG. A month later in February he judged his first BCG competition. The Set Subject was “Table Top”. In March 1950, he, along with Cyril Savitsky and Jack LeStrange were elected as BCG’s first panel of judges. Garth would continue to be an elected judge over the years and, as such, his work was never submitted into BCG competitions. In April 1950, Garth conducted a portrait lighting workshop for BCG. The records show that Miss June Meek and Miss Allison Redman graciously consented to be models. He gave similar workshops at other clubs. Regional newspaper reports of club events from that era report that his wife Zena was often conscripted as a model. His daughters, Jeanette and Arlene, were immortalised in the pages of APR. Garth judged and lectured widely in the 50’s and was considered a roving ambassador for BCG. He, along with political dignitaries, was often a guest of honour at annual presentation nights. On the 18<sup>th</sup> July 1955 Garth was awarded Life Membership of BCG. The following year he became the Auditor for BCG.

In 1959, BCG reported with great sorrow that Mr. Garth Grant-Thomson had died on the 6<sup>th</sup> February. He was 46 years old.

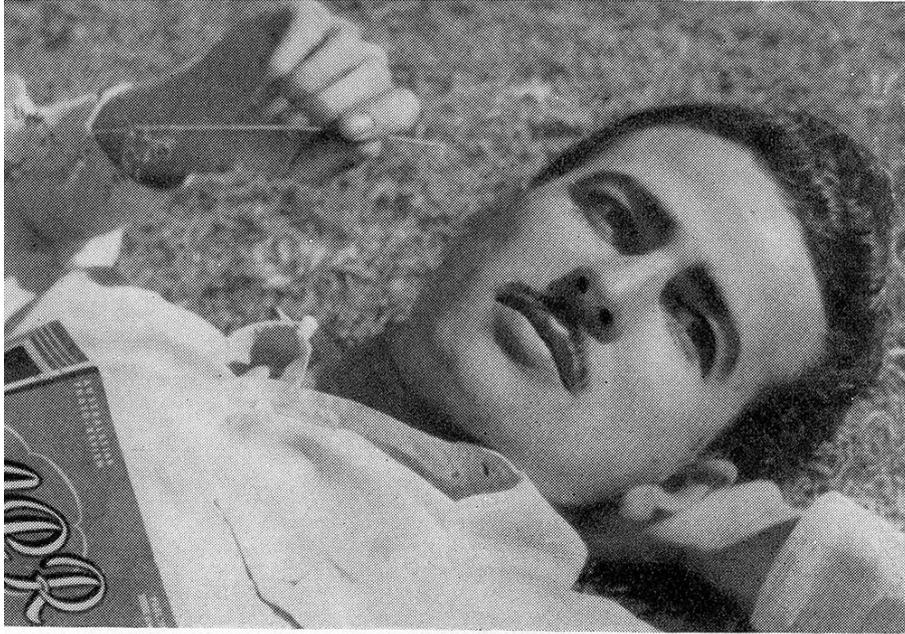


*G. Grant-Thomson*

**TOIL**

BRISBANE CAMERA GROUP

This is the "Champion of Champions" print titled "Toil" that won Garth Grant-Thomson £20 in the Sunday Mail Amateur Photographic Competition of 1950. It is an old-time road worker turning his windlass. It was taken with a quarter plate Graflex at 1/40 second at f8. A K2 filter (yellow filter, notice the sky and clouds) was used. The film was Ilford HP3. Image from APR magazine.



G. GRANT THOMSON

Garth Grant-Thomson in 1943. Published in APR in October 1943 in "A Gallery of Self Portraits". A copy of a previous APR magazine is bottom left on Garth's chest.