

**I**N 1906 Messrs. S.J. Jackson and D.S. Macdonald commenced business in Sydney as jobbers (wholesalers) of 'Edison' cylinder records and phonographs.<sup>1</sup>

A few years later they began importing talking machines to play the new 'disc' records and these were marketed under the trademark '*REXOPHONE*'.

The next step was to import motors, tonearms and soundboxes from S.A. Thorens, Switzerland, which were assembled in Sydney to locally made talking machine cabinets and sold under the '*REXOPHONE*' trademark.

The business prospered and a cabinet factory was established at Moore and Catherine Streets, Lilyfield for the manufacture of talking machine cabinets and additional space obtained in the warehouse building at Kent and Druitt Streets, Sydney, where the cabinets were fitted with motors, tonearms and soundboxes etc.

Early in the nineteen twenties the '*PRISMATIC*' Reflector Sound Chamber was patented. Made of wood it gave a much improved volume, purity and richness of tone for which '*REXONOLAS*' were famous.

The peak of production was reached about 1928/9 when more than 100 people were employed at the cabinet factory, and 120 people in the warehouse.

Early in the 1930s the development of radio receivers and the Great Depression caused a col-

lapse, and production of '*REXONOLAS*' and '*REXOPORTS*' ceased about 1935.

During the 1920s '*REXONOLAS*' and '*REXOPORTS*' were distributed through wholesalers in all capital cities in Australia and New Zealand, and were also exported to South Africa and the Pacific Islands.

Talking machines were also made for a number of large Australian retailers, Anthony Hordern's (Uniphone), Marcus Clark etc. under their own trademarks.

In addition to '*REXONOLAS*', Jackson and Macdonald were wholesalers of HMV, Zonophone, Columbia, Regal, Brunswick Panachord, Parlourphone and Winner records in NSW and also handled Player Pianos.

With the collapse of the talking machine business the cabinet factory turned to making radio cabinets which were supplied to various radio manufacturers and also to clock cases to which were fitted strike and chime movements of German and English manufacture.

Later, under the direction of Mr. D.S. Macdonald's sons, Ken and Geoff, a very substantial business as wholesale jewellers was built up. In 1983 the company was sold, as a going concern, to NEUMAN VAN GELDER PTY. LTD. who are carrying on the business under the name of Jackson and Macdonald Pty. Ltd.

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(1905—2001)

Son of D.S. Macdonald



<sup>1</sup> This document was transcribed in 2005 by Michael Chapman from a typewritten hard copy dated 31/3/1986, supplied by John Meyers, grandson of David Simpson Macdonald and nephew of the author, Ken Macdonald.