

All jobs rolled into one

After working on the ill-fated *Niugini Nius*, Nancy Hillary moved to Alotau upon its closure in March 1990. She became one of the pioneer reporters on the *Eastern Star* — and survived a baptism of fire. But it earned her a place on *The National*.



By PAULA KARI

WORKING round the clock as one of two reporters on a local newspaper and doing the editing, computer printing, cutting and pasting as well, is one tough job — especially if you're just starting out in journalism. This experience, however, hasn't discouraged Nancy Hillary, 27, of Dobu village, Milne Bay, from pursuing a journalism career. In fact, it made her even more determined.

The third born in a family of five, Hillary was selected for Passam National High in 1986 after successfully completing four years in Mareville High School. On nearing her final year at Passam, their school was visited by the late journalism lecturer Peter Henshall and other lecturers from the University of Papua New Guinea who discussed career opportunities. After an interview with Henshall, it was recommended that she take up journalism either at Divine Word Institute at Madang or at UPNG, if she was interested.

Actually, it hadn't started there for Hillary. At high school, as part of an English project, Hillary had chosen to write about journalism and found it an interesting challenge. In 1988, Hillary began her two-year diploma program at the University of Papua New Guinea under the hawk-like supervision of Peter Henshall after declining yet another offer from DWI. Henshall was very much involved with his students, recalls Hillary.

'He was a very strict person. He did not depend on the editors or other such persons to find out how we were doing — and what we were doing — when we were out on practical. He personally came out to the offices and assessed our works,' she says.

During her practical, Hillary worked with Word Publishing and later with *Niugini Nius* where she was offered a job. Upon graduation from UPNG, she joined the team of reporters at *Niugini Nius*, but moved to Alotau upon its closure in March 1990. One of the pioneer reporters on the *Eastern Star*, Nancy worked along with Judith Livindi, and under the general management of Ian Fry.

'Judith and I were the only reporters with the *Eastern Star* at the time and it was quite a job for us doing nearly everything with a few helping hands.

For me, it was the worst experience," she smiles.

Hillary left Alotau and the *Eastern Star* in 1993 and after two years of 'lying low', joined the newly established *National* in March 1995. She was assigned as a reporter to the sports section of *The National*. Later, she was transferred to reporting court and political issues because she had had 'quite an experience with the courts and political reporting while with the *Eastern Star*.

'I'm reading the *ABC All Media Court Reporting Handbook* at the moment. It is based on Australian courts but I find it very interesting and informative and it is written especially for reporters ...I might be asked to move into sports again,' she added.

Hillary, however, might not find journalism always interesting and informative. She says there is something seriously missing among journalists — 'an association among ourselves'. But this lack was not something new; it has been like that for years.

'What most journalists have come to realise is that there is no association whatsoever,' she said. Hillary says this is a pressing need for journalists today to look into.

'Oh, I know the Media Council is there, but it is existing only by name.



Hillary ... 'We need an association'.

NANCY HILLARY

What we need is something stronger, like the Workers Trade Union, where every journalist can get together and discuss issues of interests and issues affecting journalists today,' she says..

Apart from this concern, Hillary likes her job as a reporter and has no other plans as yet. 'I enjoy being a reporter and I like it here at *The National*. It is interesting when you get over the thought of doing anything wrong, she says, smiling.

Hillary's sports editor, Ori Maeaoka, isn't so sure. He says good reporters like her do not pass through the newspaper's office regularly and he fears she may get a better offer elsewhere.

'Nancy is a very intelligent reporter with a good disciplinary record in observing company rules and regulations. She is also capable of covering any sports and a variety of other stories. Her safeguarding of professional ethics, initiative and resourcefulness as well as the ability to work under pressure could not also be questioned, he says.

'Her writing style is excellent and she is one of the best reporters we have here,' he sums up.

'She is leaving,' he whispers and I had to strain my ears to catch his last words.

'What do you mean?' I asked. 'She said she might be moved back to sports.'

'Yeah, I know. I've had a talk with the chief,' he replies.

Hillary is married to a gentleman from Popondetta and they have two boys aged five and two and a half.

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