



Ella Ebery as editor of the *North Central News*, St Arnaud, in Victoria's Wimmera region. Rod Kirkpatrick took this photo on 12 December 2001. Eleven days later Ella turned 86. She edited the paper from the age of 63 to 97. She died on 16 May 2019. You will find an obituary below at ANHG 103.1.13 and extracts from some of her letters to Rod at 103.4.4. The day Rod took this picture he drove from Horsham to Murtoa and Minyip, interviewed Robin Letts and Jack Slattery at the *Buloke Times*, Donald, and drove to St Arnaud to meet and interview Ella Ebery and Brian Garrett, part owner, then to Bendigo to interview *Advertiser* editor Wayne Gregson.

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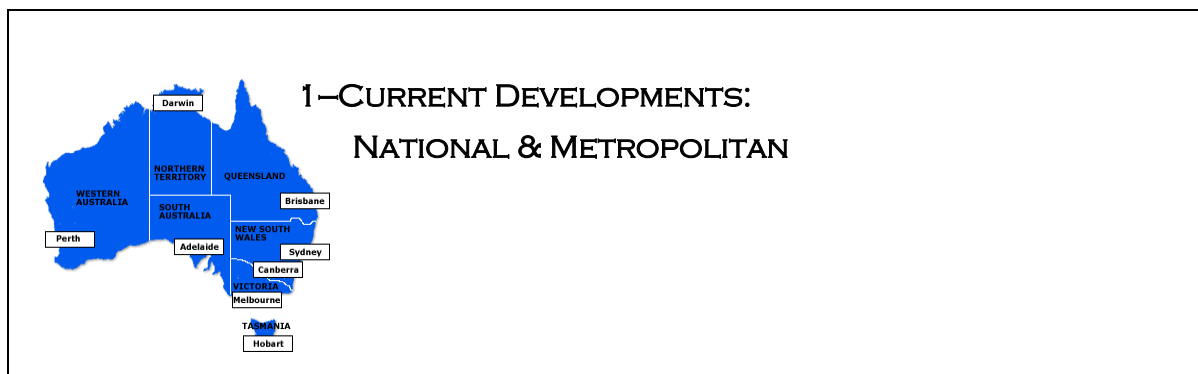
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**Deadline for the next *Newsletter*: 30 September 2019.**

Subscription details appear at end of *Newsletter*. [Number 1 appeared October 1999.]

Ten issues had appeared by December 2000 and the *Newsletter* has since appeared five times a year.



## Index to issues 1-100: thanks

Thank you to the subscribers who contributed to the appeal for \$650 to help fund the index to issues 76 to 100 of the *ANHG Newsletter*, with the index to be incorporated in a master index covering Nos. 1 to 100. The contributions almost reached the \$650 mark. – **Rod Kirkpatrick, Editor.**

### 103.1.1 Federal Police raids on journalists

**4 June:** The home of an Australian political journalist has been raided by Australian Federal Police (*Business Insider*, 4 June 2019). The raid follows a story published by the *Daily Telegraph*, and written by national political editor, Annika Smethurst, in April 2018. The article, titled “Spying shock: Shades of Big Brother as cyber-security vision comes to light”, detailed a discussion between two government agencies that were reportedly discussing the potential for new surveillance powers for Australia’s electronic spy agency, the Australian Signals Directorate (ASD). The *Daily Telegraph* article included photographs of top secret internal documents that detailed a proposal to allow the ASD to target Australians — if approved by the Defence and Home Affairs ministers.

**7 June:** Laws that allow Australian Federal Police to charge journalists were last night condemned as a “danger to our democracy” by News Corp Australasia executive chairman Michael Miller (*Herald Sun*, 7 June 2019, p.1). **See also:** (1) Justin Quill, “Raids are an assault on our democracy”, *Herald Sun*, 7 June 2019, pp.60-61. Quill is a media lawyer who acts for the *Herald Sun*. (2) Michael Harvey, “Intolerable in any democracy”, *Herald Sun*, 7 June 2019, p.58. Harvey is a former *Herald Sun* journalist who 12 years ago faced the possibility of jail over a similar situation to Smethurst. (3) Annika Smethurst, “Democracy relies on the brave”, *Herald Sun*, 7 June 2019, p.58. (4) Waleed Aly, “Who will fight the power?”, *Age*, 7 June 2019, p.26. Aly is an *Age* columnist and a presenter on *The Project*, Channel 10. (5) Greg Barns, “Freedom of speech is fragile right”, *Age*, 7 June 2019, p.27. Barns is criminal justice spokesman for the Australian Lawyers Alliance and is adviser to Julian Assange’s Australian campaign. (6) Geoffrey Robertson, “Law needed to protect press”, *Age*, 8 June 2019, p.33. Robertson, QC, is a London-based Australian human rights barrister.

*Extract from the Geoffrey Robertson article: “How come we allow inconsequential officials to authorise police to intimidate news-gatherers? Scott Morrison says “no one is above the law so why should journalists have any special right? For one simple reason, Mr Morrison—democracy depends on it. It depends on an informed public, which means that journalists must be free to cultivate and to protect sources of important information about government agencies and businesses, otherwise news will diminish to what is fed to them by public relations departments, press releases and ministerial statements.”*

**11 June:** The Coalition has flagged action on press freedom after the government came under fire for police raids on the ABC’s Sydney headquarters and the home of a senior News Corp journalist (*Australian*, 11 June 2019). Finance Minister Mathias Cormann opened the door on 10 June to a parliamentary inquiry, telling reporters in Perth the government would publicly address the AFP probes in coming days. “There are obviously a range of issues to be considered here and we’ll make statements in relation to this later in the week,” Senator Cormann said. The raids in the first week

of June, which were sparked by separate reports based on leaked classified information regarding national security, prompted a debate over the freedom of the press and protections for journalists.

**12 June:** Coalition MPs are urging the Prime Minister not to set up a special inquiry into press freedom, saying the issue should be resolved by an executive decision of government after consultation with media players (*Australian*, 13 June 2019).

**14 June:** “Journalism is NOT a crime”, *Australian*, 14 June 2019, p.8 (full-page advertisement). Also see, Michael Sexton, “When freedom of expression is all right for some”, *Australian*, 14 June 2019, p.14.

**25 June:** News Corp Australasia will take to the High Court a direct challenge to the validity of AFP raids on the home of journalist Annika Smethurst this month (*Australian*, 25 June 2019, p.6). News will argue the raids were invalid on the basis of the “implied right of political communication”. On 24 June the ABC filed a claim in the Federal Court challenging the AFP raids on its Sydney headquarters on 5 June.

**27 June:** Australia’s most powerful media executives have urged the Morrison government to overhaul laws relating to national security, defamation, the issuing of warrants and changes to Freedom of Information, in order to protect whistleblowers and journalists from police prosecutions (*Australian*, 27 June 2019, p.1).

**3 July:** Federal Cabinet has agreed to establish an inquiry to examine the powers of police and intelligence agencies and their impact on a free press, following calls from media executives for the government to overhaul laws affecting the work of journalists (*Australian*, 3 July 2019, p.2).

**13 July:** News Corp Australasia executive chairman Michael Miller has lashed out at Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton, saying he is “appalled by damage this government is inflicting” on Australia’s reputation for press freedom (*Weekend Australian*, 13-14 July 2019).

### **103.1.2 Defamation: \$2.9m and \$385,000**

**Daily Telegraph to pay \$2.9m:** Oscar-winner Geoffrey Rush has been awarded a record defamation payout of almost \$2.9 million for a single plaintiff, after the Federal Court ordered on 23 May that he be given \$1.98 million for past and future economic losses (*Australian*, 24 May 2019, p.7). This figure, agreed by expert accountants, came on top of the \$850,000 in general and aggravated damages that judge Michael Wigney of the Federal Court awarded Rush in April when he won his defamation case against the *Daily Telegraph*, Sydney.

However, the *Daily Telegraph* has launched an appeal against Justice Wigney’s decision, in which he found the newspaper had failed to establish that claims it published in 2017 against the *Shine* star were substantially true. If that appeal is successful, it would overturn the record damages sum. Rush’s barrister, Sue Chrysanthou, told the court that in January 2017, Rush had offered to settle the case for \$50,000 plus costs, and an apology. However, the *Daily Telegraph*’s lawyer, Tom Blackburn SC, revealed that Rush had demanded an apology that would have taken up two-thirds of the front page, plus further space on page three. Actress Rebel Wilson won record damages of \$4.5 million in her defamation battle with Bauer Media, but the Victorian Court of Appeal slashed this to \$600,000 in 2018. Before the Rush case, Perth barrister Lloyd Rayney held the record for the largest defamation payout to an individual, at \$2.6 million.

**Sydney Morning Herald to pay \$385,000:** The NSW Supreme Court has awarded damages of \$385,000 against the *Sydney Morning Herald* for a column in which journalist Peter FitzSimons defamed Dr John O’Neill over how he had supervised a boxing match in 2017 between Anthony Mundine and Anthony Green. FitzSimons said the fight should have been stopped after Green was struck by a foul blow in the first round, requiring a medical examination. He wrote that Green was suffering from a bleeding brain and concussion but judge Lucy McCallum found on the balance of probabilities this was not the case. Dr O’Neill argued in court that FitzSimons’s article had conveyed the imputation that he was incompetent, had negligently endangered Green’s life by allowing him to continue when he had brain damage and was reckless in failing to stop the fight. Justice McCallum noted that the *Herald*’s solicitors had accepted in March 2017 that FitzSimons’s reference to bleeding on the brain was incorrect. However, that reference had remained online for another week and the publisher had not apologised.

### 103.1.3 Rupert Murdoch and Bill Shorten

**Denis Muller** writes (in “Mounting evidence the tide is turning on News Corp and its owner”, *The Conversation*, 13 May 2019): There is mounting evidence that Australia is sick of Rupert Murdoch and the political propaganda machine he runs in the guise of a news organisation. In January, Bill Shorten rebuffed an open-ended offer to meet Murdoch whenever the opposition leader was in the United States. According to the ABC’s 7.30 political editor, Laura Tingle, Shorten replied that any dealings he had with News Corp would be conducted with the company’s representatives in Australia. This was a bold break with tradition. For decades, Labor leaders have paid court to Murdoch. During the prime ministership of Bob Hawke, there was memorable footage of a cortege of ministerial cars driving in procession through the gates of Murdoch’s farm outside Canberra. [In the wake of the 18 May election, Shorten resigned as Labor leader.]

### 103.1.4 Former *Mercury* home transformed into arts centre

**Rosemary Neill** writes (*Weekend Australian*, 1-2 June 2019, p.3): It may be the nation’s best-kept cultural secret. For the past six years—and unbeknown to most Tasmanians—arts patron Penny Clive has spent millions of dollars transforming the former *Mercury* newspaper building in central Hobart into a new, privately funded arts centre. The centre’s biggest venue, The Detached Artist Archive, features four floors of works by big-name artists including Patricia Piccinini, Mike Parr, Ben Quilty and Tracey Moffatt, and it opens this month [June]—but there is a catch. Only 16 visitors a day will be allowed to see this impressive collection, which includes a 100sq m maze, a Tasmanian reading room with a domed ceiling, and a Japanese work, *The Key in the Hand*, which wowed critics at the 2015 Venice Biennale. The visitor limit reflects the singular vision of Ms Clive, an unassuming grandmother and ex-antiques dealer who is helping transform Hobart into an incubator of radical art.

[Rosemary Neill’s news item pointed to her feature article, “Penny for your thoughts”, in the *Review* section of the *Weekend Australian*, 1-2 June 2019, pp.4-6. Here’s a one-sentence extract: “Warmly maternal but a woman of few words, (Clive) bought the distinctive art deco newspaper building in 2013 with her husband, the equally low-key financier Bruce Neill, who last year made the *Australian Financial Review Rich List*, with reputed wealth of almost \$700 million.”]

ANHG: The *Mercury*, produced on site at its former Macquarie Street building from 1854 until 2012, is now located in Salamanca Square. A *Mercury* predecessor, the *Hobart Guardian*, was produced from 1847-54 in what became the *Mercury* building. Damian Bester, then of the *Mercury* (see 103.1.11), says: “Penny Clive’s father once worked at the Boyer newsprint mill (now Norske Skog) outside Hobart, from where countless reels of paper were dispatched to the *Mercury* building for many decades.” He adds: “In the *Weekend Australian* photo of Penny Clive, the partially obscured person on the far right is almost certainly Dean Ware, an electrician who remained on site as caretaker after we left the building and was hired by Penny Clive when she took over.”

See also ANHG 62.1.3 (May 2011), 66.1.22 (February 2012) and 74.1.20 (October 2013).

### 103.1.5 Death of Bob Hawke, former Labor PM

Two days before the Federal election of 18 May, Robert James Lee Hawke, Prime Minister, 1983-1991, died. The news was broken after the 6pm and 7pm television newscasts had gone to air. Hawke’s death, at the age of 89, generated extensive coverage in Australia’s daily newspapers.

Some examples: The Sydney *Daily Telegraph* of 17 May had an eight-page wraparound centred on Hawke’s life and the next day, the paper’s usual “Saturday Extra” section, carrying 12 pages, was entirely devoted to Hawke. The *Australian* published a four-page wraparound on 17 May (it wrapped around the first section of the paper, not the full edition) and an eight-page tribute in the *Weekend Australian* of 18-19 May.

Hawke’s state memorial service was held at the Sydney Opera House on 14 June.

### 103.1.6 *Mercury* classics department centralised in 2 other cities

The Hobart *Mercury* classifieds department closed on 31 May 2019. It is now centralised in Brisbane and Adelaide.

### 103.1.7 Death of Evan Williams

Update on the **Evan Williams** obituary published in ANHG 102.1.6: Full name was Frank Evan Williams; date of death was 12 May 2019. An obituary written by son Roy appeared in the *Australian* on 21 May, the same date on which Tony Stephens' obituary of Williams appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

### 103.1.8 News Corp cuts jobs

News Corp is slashing dozens of editorial jobs across the country, with nearly a third of the cuts coming from Victoria (AAP, 4 June 2019). The company has already identified the positions to go and some staff have put their hands up for voluntary redundancies, MEAA's director of media Katelin McInerney said.

Of the 55 positions identified, 15 are at Melbourne's *Herald Sun* and *Weekly Times* newspapers. Another two jobs are set to go from News' regional titles in Victoria. Ten positions are also expected to be cut in Adelaide, six in Tasmania, six in Sydney, four in Brisbane, and seven across regional Queensland and Northern Territory papers. Another five group editorial positions are also on the chopping board.

### 103.1.9 News Corp sporting coverage

In recent months sporting coverage in News Corp metro dailies and the *Australian* has often been on a shared basis. A lot of football reports in the *Australian* carry the byline of a News Corp metro daily writer, along with an acknowledgment of the source newspaper at the end of the story. A cricket report in the *Australian* on 1 July was written by Sam Landsberger and acknowledged "Herald Sun" at the foot of the report. A rugby league report in the *Australian* on 6 July was written by Fatima Kdouh and had "Daily Telegraph/AAP" at the end. A rugby league report in the *Courier-Mail* on the same date was bylined "Brent Read" and had "The Australian" at the end. It is understood that Brent Read is the only full-time employee of the *Australian* covering rugby league.

### 103.1.10 Queen's Birthday honours for journalists

The following people who are or have been involved in the print media received awards in the Queen's Birthday honours in June 2019:

**Buttrose, Ita Clare**, NSW: Companion (AC) in the General Division. For eminent service to the community through leadership in the media, the arts and the health sector, and as a role model.

**Cott, Mackay James**, Mittagong, NSW: Medal in the General Division (OAM). For service to the print media as an editor and journalist. [Mac Cott, 88, knew about the award, but died on 10 June, the day it was officially announced.]

**Follent, Sarah Margaret**, Teneriffe, Qld: Member (AM) in the General Division. For significant service to the visual arts and to the print and broadcast media.

**Martin, Peter Ross**, ACT: Member (AM) in the General Division. For significant service to multi-platform and print media as an economics journalist.

**Reid, Campbell Hamilton**, Balmain, NSW: Member (AM) in the General Division. For significant service to the print media.

**Tierney, Judy**, Sandy Bay, Tas.: Medal in the General Division (OAM). For service to the print and broadcast media as a journalist.

### 103.1.11 People

- **Dennis Atkins** finished duties as the Brisbane *Courier-Mail's* national affairs editor on 28 June. He had worked for the newspaper since 1995. He was the paper's federal political editor for five years and was an editorial writer throughout the 24 years. He will continue as a regular panellist on the ABC's *Insiders* program and will continue to produce the Australian politics podcast, *Two Grumpy Hacks*, with news.com.au's Malcolm Farr (*Telum Media Alert*, 12 June 2019).

- **Damian Bester** finished at the Hobart *Mercury* on 1 July after 30 years with the company. In a farewell note to colleagues he said (in part): “I won’t name names, but thank you (so much!) to everyone who has shared their knowledge and expertise, allowed me to tell their stories, pointed me in the right direction, answered my questions, and enriched my career as colleagues, friends and contacts. I hope to be able to contribute articles to keep a certain council on its toes, but that might depend on where I next find work. So, after a wonderful run through the *Mercury*, *Sunday Tasmanian*, *Community Express*, *Westerner*, *Derwent Valley Gazette*, features sub-editing, Newspapers in Education, *Mercury* Print Museum, advertising features, historical supplements, Pictures of our Past, Anzac editor, and digital news producing, it’s been a blast.” [Damian is an ANHG subscriber and contributor.]
- **Patrick Elligett**, the *New Daily*’s editor, is understood to have resigned from the business to join Nine Entertainment Co newspapers, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age* (*Australian*, 24 June 2019). Elligett, who was appointed editor-in-chief of the Industry Super Holdings-owned publication in 2017 after the resignation of Thomas Hunter, will become world editor for the two mastheads. A replacement for Elligett has not been announced.
- **Chip Le Grand**, of the *Australian*, will become chief reporter at the *Age*, Melbourne, in early August (*Telum Media Alert*, 12 July 2019). Le Grand was born in the USA.
- **Tracey Linguey** has said goodbye after more than 30 years at the Herald & Weekly Times (*Herald Sun*, 8 June 2019, p.13). She was the Saturday editor of the *Herald Sun* and the founding mother and voice of reason of the Page 13 feature. Linguey said: “What a ride and what a privilege to have worked at one of the world’s, yes, world’s great media titles. When I started at the *Sun News-Pictorial* in Flinders St, you could measure the time of day by whether the floor was humming from the presses down below. Ink was ground into every surface of the building. There was a ladies’ lounge with armchairs and an attendant. There was a cafeteria that cooked to order. Rubbish bins caught fire nightly because you could smoke in the office. Filing cabinets were toppled, phones and keyboards were thrown. Swearing was a high-volume art form. And every night when the ‘all up’ call was made, drinks were served at the subs’ club and the raconteurs ruled: stories, laughs, so many laughs, outrageous antics. Reporters and snappers would stagger back from the Phoenix, prime ministers and premiers would call late into the night, mistresses would storm into the office and verbally, or physically, assault their love rats.”
- **Sue McVay**, a journalist for nearly 30 years, has finished as editor of the Brisbane *Courier-Mail*’s Saturday magazine, *Qweekend*. She edited the magazine from April 2016 until July 2019. She has left the *Courier-Mail* after 16 years (*Qweekend*, 6 July 2019). **Natalie Gregg** replaces Sue at *Qweekend*.
- **Leo Shanahan** is the new editor of the Media section of the *Australian*. He is also co-host of *Business Weekend* on Sky News Live. Shanahan was most recently chief reporter for YourMoney and a business journalist for Sky News Live. Before that he was a journalist for the *Australian* and the *Age*, where he covered business and politics.
- **Paul Toohey**, who has spent 17 of the past 20 years as a News Corp journalist, departed the company on 14 June. From generally a Darwin base, he won three Walkley Awards for feature writing and was named Graham Perkin Australian Journalist of the Year for the year 2000. His final role was as chief reporter for the News Corp Australia Network. Toohey plans to continue in journalism with investigations across the region, non-fiction books, scriptwriting and speechwriting (*Telum Media Alert*, 14 June 2019).
- **Judith Whelan**, a former editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, has been appointed director of the ABC’s regional and local division after having acted in the role since November 2018. The regional and local team includes the ABC’s eight capital-city radio stations, 48 rural and regional teams, regional and local screen content, including *Gardening Australia*, *Backroads* and *Landline*, *Grandstand Sport*, live events such as New Year’s Eve, Australia Day and Anzac Day and emergency broadcasting (*Telum Media Alert*, 12 July 2019).

### 103.1.12 *Canberra Times* re-establishes own political bureau

The *Canberra Times* has re-established an independent federal political bureau as it expands its coverage of national politics and the public service (*Canberra Times*, 8 June 2019). From 17 June, a team of experienced reporters has worked from the *Canberra Times* offices in Fyshwick and at Parliament House to provide coverage of federal politics and the public sector that is specifically tailored for audiences who live and work in the national capital. The team initially comprises six reporters. Kirsten Lawson, Sally Whyte and Katie Burgess are based at Parliament, while Doug Dingwall, Daniel Burdon and Markus Mannheim are working primarily from the *Canberra Times* newsroom. Deputy editor Scott Hannaford leads the team.

The *Canberra Times* has published federal politics coverage and analysis produced by Fairfax Media's press gallery bureau since 2012, when a number of journalists from the stand-alone bureaus of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Age* and the *Canberra Times* were brought together as a national reporting team. A content-sharing agreement involving the three papers is in place until later this year. Political reporter Kirsten Lawson returns to a federal parliamentary role after stints as chief reporter covering the ACT Assembly and, more recently, as the *Canberra Times* news director. Former *Sunday Canberra Times* editor Meredith Clisby will replace Lawson as news director.

### 103.1.13 Deaths

**Cott, Mackay James (Mac):** D. 10 June 2019 in Bowral, aged 89; founding editor, *Southern Highlands News*, Bowral, in 1958 at age 28; served as editor or manager for next 40 years; awarded OAM in Queen's Birthday honours on the day of his death (see ANHG 103.1.8, above).

**Dunleavy, Steven Francis Patrick Aloysius:** D. 24 June 2019 in New York, aged 81; began journalism career at Sydney's *Daily Mirror* in 1952; left Sydney before Rupert Murdoch took over the *Mirror* in 1960; headed for life of adventure starting in Hong Kong; exploits there and in Tokyo mostly involved drink, women, police and, ultimately, immigration authorities; arrived in New York in 1966, destitute; worked fill-in shifts for United Press International before being hired for the News Limited New York bureau; after Murdoch bought the *New York Post* in 1976, Steve, as reporter, metropolitan editor and columnist, helped turn a once-sedate tabloid into a roaring must-read that New Yorkers loved—or hated—or both; spent a decade as a reporter for *A Current Affair* on Murdoch's fledgling Fox network; remembered as the ultimate tabloid reporter (*Australian*, 26 June 2019).

**Ebery, Ella Ivy (née Robinson):** D. 16 May 2019 at St Arnaud, Victoria, aged 103 (see cover image); edited the *North Central News*, St Arnaud, from the age of 63 to 97; won the national award for excellence in editorial writing in country newspapers in 2000 at age 84—that event changed her life, thrusting her into national prominence through being featured in *Australian Story* on ABC-TV and an article in the *Good Weekend*, published in *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Age*; before full-time journalism, she did a lot of free-lance writing for magazines, newspapers and radio; she said, "I had always written; I wanted to write"; she married a shearer, Jack Ebery, and at 58 had her first full-time paid job (as a social worker) only in the final few years of his life; she went on to become newspaper editor and the mayor of the town, 1988-90; James Button, a former *Age* journalist, tried to help Ella to finish a memoir but it remains unpublished; in the final few years before her death she "had lost the mental powers to shape it into a coherent narrative", but he says the manuscript needs to be preserved, for its vivid account of the life of a country girl and woman in the first half of the last century (Rod Kirkpatrick, "From 'Maggie Matilda' to editor, fixer, facilitator and doer", *PANPA Bulletin*, December 2001, pp.32-35; James Button, "Former country newspaper editor Ella Ebery dies, aged 103", *Ballarat Courier*, 12 June 2019).

**Mackinnon, Clive:** D. 29 May 2019 on the Bellarine Peninsula, Victoria, aged 89; was a newspaper photographer for 23 years for the Melbourne *Age* and 22 years for its opposition, the *Sun*; took famous mini-skirt photo of British model Jean Shrimpton at Melbourne's Spring Racing Carnival in November 1965; his series of photographs of Shrimpton in a dress with a hem that sat 10cm above her knee were published around the world and have been reproduced many times since; took renowned photo of an Alex Jesaulenko mark in the 1970 VFL grand final between



Collingwood and Carlton; remembered as a “king of his craft” (*Age*, 30 May 2019, and *Herald Sun*, 31 May 2019).

**Scambary, Rex Anthony:** D. 15 March 2019 in Melbourne, aged 89; born at Palmerston North, New Zealand, to an Australian father and NZ mother; began in journalism on the *Southern Cross*, Wellington, a daily published by the NZ Labour Party; then to *Evening Post*, also Wellington, then *Straits Times*, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur during the Malayan emergency; returned to Wellington in 1956 as parliamentary reporter for the NZ Press Association; after a year with Australian Associated Press, joined the Melbourne office of the Australian News and Information Bureau (later the Australian Information Service, or AIS); worked from 1958 to 1984 for AIS, under its various titles (AIS provided journalists as media officers to all major Australian diplomatic posts); served as press officer or in a higher role at Australian High Commissions in London (1961-64), New Delhi (1968-71), and Wellington (1972-76); after AIS, spent two years in Brisbane with the *Catholic Leader* (*Age*, 29 May 2019, p.34).

### **103.1.14 Secrecy, suppression, the courts and the police in Victoria**

The commissioner running the Victorian inquiry into informers has suggested senior police deliberately withheld an “uncomfortable” and “controversial” letter from a homicide detective that lay secret from the hearings for more than four months (*Age*, 22 May 2019, p.3). In addition, Commissioner Margaret McMurdo described her attempts to manage an onslaught of applications for secrecy orders as “akin to a boxer fighting a match with one hand tied behind his back and the other bruised and bleeding”. Her comments came as media lawyers accused Victoria Police of running “a new regime of secrecy”.

During the inquiry, more than 50 secrecy orders have been granted so far under sections 24 and 26 of the Inquiry Act, the legislation that governs the operation of royal commissions. Those orders include suppression of 13 people’s names as well as various words mentioned during the daily hearings. Pseudonyms are frequently used to protect identities, with cheat sheets provided to witnesses so they know who is being spoken about. When each gag order is made, a copy is posted on the door of the hearings. At various stages, there has not been enough space on the door and the paperwork has spilled over to neighbouring walls.

### **103.1.15 What Nine has meant to the former Fairfax people**

More than 120 staff, including 10 top executives, have left Nine Entertainment since its \$4 billion merger with Fairfax Media (*Australian*, 19 June 2019). The latest executive to leave the media company is Andrew Beecher, chief executive of its online automotive publisher, CarAdvice, after more than five years. Beecher had overseen CarAdvice’s merger with the Drive Network in recent months. Beecher’s decision to “step down” immediately came a month after the surprise departure of the founders of youth-focused online news business Pedestrian TV, Chris Wirasinha and Oscar Martin, who were charged in December to run the enlarged business. Nine wrapped up its merger with Fairfax on December 7.

Nine sacked an undisclosed number of staff across its technology and sales teams in late March, four months after CEO Hugh Marks axed 92 staff as part a new corporate structure. The layoffs included Fairfax CEO Greg Hywood, chief financial officer David Housego, general counsel Gail Hambly, group director of strategy and corporate development Dhruv Gupta and human resources’ Michelle Williams, as well as dozens of back office staff. It also included about 12 editorial job losses, as a result of the Pedestrian/Allure merger. Allure boss Jason Scott also left at the time after five years with the group. Business Insider’s publisher and editor-in-chief Paul Colgan stepped down in January after six years, saying on Twitter that it was “time for a fresh challenge.”

Nine’s workforce is set to shrink further once the \$125 million sale of its regional publishing operations, which consists of 160-plus regional mastheads, including The Canberra Times and The Newcastle Herald and printing business, to former Domain CEO Antony Catalano and billionaire investor Alex Waislitz’s Thorney Investment Group is completed at the end of the month, two months after the deal was struck.

Nine is believed to have deferred the sale of its New Zealand operations, inherited from the Fairfax deal along with its regional publishing business, on the back of limited buyer interest.



### 103.1.16 News Corp launches farming magazine

News Corp Australia launched a new national agricultural magazine on 23 May. Called *AgJournal*, it is published quarterly by the *Weekly Times*. A 40-page gloss magazine, it focuses on the nation's booming \$60 billion agriculture food and fibre industry. The magazine reaches 700,000 readers through its distribution with the *Weekly Times*, *Weekend Australian*, *Herald Sun*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Sunday Mail* (Queensland and South Australia), *Advertiser*, *Sunday Times* and News Corp rural papers in Queensland and Tasmania.

### 103.1.17 News Corp cover prices rise

From 1 July the weekday cover price of News Corp's dailies, the Sydney *Daily Telegraph*, Melbourne *Herald Sun*, Brisbane *Courier-Mail*, Adelaide *Advertiser*, Hobart *Mercury*, Darwin *NT News*, Geelong *Advertiser*, Gold Coast *Bulletin*, Townsville *Bulletin* and Cairns *Post* increased from \$1.70 to \$1.90. There was no explanation in most of the papers.

From 6 July the Saturday price of the Hobart *Mercury* rose from \$2.40 to \$2.50, and the *Sunday Tasmanian* from \$2.50 to \$2.60, bringing these closer to the price of other News Corp weekend newspapers and the Saturday prices of News Corp's regional dailies, increased from \$2.40 to \$2.50.

### 103.1.18 *Daily Telegraph* at 140

On Monday, 1 July, to celebrate the 140th anniversary of the *Daily Telegraph*, there was an eight-page wraparound, retelling historical stories but written in a modern style. This continued until Friday, 5 July.



### 103.2.1 Paid digital subscribers exceed peak print circulations

The *Australian* has hit a major milestone by reaching a record 145,000 paid digital subscribers, joining an elite group of world-class mastheads to surpass their print peak circulations. This was featured strongly in the Media section of the *Australian* on 1 July, but had already been mentioned, with lesser prominence, in the paper on 3 June. At a time when media companies the world over are struggling to find sustainable business models, the *Australian* has become only the fourth masthead in the world to achieve this subscription milestone after the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* in the US and Britain's *Financial Times*. The *Australian* is the third-fastest to surpass its print peak since setting up a paywall in 2011. No other publisher has achieved this milestone in Australia.

In the 3 June article, News Corp Australasia executive chairman Michael Miller was reported as reinforcing the company's commitment to invest more in Foxtel to drive uptake of its iQ4 box, Kayo Sports and acquire new programming, and says the dominant pay TV company is "making good money" (*Australian*, 3 June 2019). In an interview with the *Australian* and Weekend Business Sky News Live, Miller lauded the success of News Corp Australia's online publications in signing up 500,000 paid subscribers. He warned, however, that staff needed to prepare for further cuts across the company in keeping with the rest of the industry, with jobs likely to be lost across all major metropolitan newspapers' editorial, marketing, advertising and human resources departments. Despite writedowns in the Foxtel business last year when the company's ownership structure changed to incorporate Fox Sports and to dilute the interest of Telstra, Miller said that News was committed to further investment in Foxtel and pointed to the success of sports streaming service Kayo.

On 1 July, the *Australian's* Media section also ran a column by Mark Ritson that featured the newspaper's achievement in achieving so many online subscribers. He did this in the midst of a fascinating column whose theme was "disruption" ("Survive and thrive in the age of disruption").

### **103.2.2 Digital newspaper for Canberra**

NewsLocal launched on 10 June 2019 the *Canberra Star*, a hyperlocal digital news platform providing community news for the nation's capital (*Daily Telegraph*, 10 June 2019). The *Canberra Star* seeks to be different from other media outlets in Canberra. It doesn't live in the political bubble and publishes only local stories that resonate with the people of Canberra about what's happening in their community — not what's happening in Parliament House.

The *Canberra Star* covers a wide range of community news including crime, development, transport, environment, education and health. It follows in the footsteps of NewsLocal's other successful digital-only community websites: the *St George Shire Standard*, *Illawarra Star* and *Central Sydney*. The *Canberra Star* reporter is Kate Christian who has spent over a decade working at community newspapers.

### **103.2.3 Facebook 'fails in duty'**

Trade Minister Simon Birmingham says Facebook has failed in its duty to protect users from violent content posted by terrorists, as world leaders at the G20 summit demanded the company take responsibility for terrorist and extremist content (*Australian*, 1 July 2019). It comes as Facebook maintained it would not give media companies the right to block comments on newspaper Facebook sites, despite a landmark ruling that found news organisations were liable for defamatory comments posted on the social media platform.

In an interview with the *Australian* and Sky News *Business Weekend*, Birmingham said the G20 statement was evidence social media platforms had failed to protect users, with the Christchurch massacre being the most appalling example. "We don't believe they've lived up to their responsibilities. The message from the G20 is now clear ... other countries have the same type of concerns Australia and New Zealand have," he said.

### **103.2.4 *Fassifern Guardian* goes digital**

Drew Creighton, a member of the ownership family of the *Fassifern Guardian*, will help bring the 118-year-old newspaper online in September. Drew was most recently audience engagement editor and digital producer, as well as breaking news chief, at the digital *Brisbane Times*. He is now the digital editor at the *Fassifern Guardian* (*Telum Media Alert*, 3 July 2019).

### **103.2.5 Facebook and defamation**

Anyone who has a social media account with a comments section — be it a blog, Facebook or YouTube channel — should regard themselves as fair game for a defamation action in Australia, a media law expert has warned (*Weekend Australian*, 6-7 July 2019). The warning follows a world-first judgment by the New South Wales Supreme Court that media companies were liable for any defamatory comments made by third parties on their Facebook pages, even if they didn't know the offending comments were there. Peter Bartlett, a partner with the country's largest law firm, Minter Ellison, said he believed the public did not understand the implications of the ruling last month. "It applies well beyond the media, whether it's individuals or small businesses or one of Australia's largest companies," said Bartlett, who acts for Nine newspapers (formerly Fairfax). "If they have a website and someone posts a potentially defamatory comment on their site — even though they didn't write it, they didn't see the post — they can still be sued."

The decision is a preliminary ruling in a defamation action launched by a former inmate of the Northern Territory Don Dale youth detention centre, Dylan Voller, who is suing three media companies over 10 anonymous and potentially defamatory posts made about him between 2016 and 2017 in the Facebook comments section of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Australian*, the *Centralian Advocate*, Sky News Australia and the *Bolt Report*. Judge Stephen Rothman found while the law was in "uncharted territory" dealing with digital media, the media outlets ran the public Facebook pages for their "own commercial ends" and by doing so had assumed the risk.



### 3—CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS: COMMUNITY & PROVINCIAL

#### 103.3.1 *Sunshine Coast Daily* slips up with Page 1 imagery

The *Sunshine Coast Daily*, Queensland, earned the ire of many readers on 20 May when it ran a front-page carrying an image of the Queensland premier Anastacia Palaszczuk with gun sights superimposed across her face. It appeared in the wake of the Federal election when Labor lost out big time, principally in Queensland. The headline declared: “ANNA YOU’RE NEXT. Labor rout puts Premier in crosshairs”. Initially resisting the need to apologise, the *Daily’s* editor Craig Warhurst finally gave in and wrote (in part):

“Our front-page imagery in Monday’s edition of the *Sunshine Coast Daily*—of Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk in the crosshairs—has been the cause of a lot of concern by our readers. Today (21 May) I was inundated with letters saying we got it wrong and we needed to apologise for our actions. Many of the letter writers said our front page could incite attacks on women and politicians and glorified gun violence. At a time when domestic violence was so high on the agenda, it was unacceptable, they said. What the front page was seeking to highlight was Labor’s poor performance in the federal election in Queensland, and that the State Government is now in the political sights of the conservative parties in Queensland. A lot of that centres around the Adani process. That is all the front page was intended to signify to readers... It will be a shame if one very small image on our front page detracts from the debate this State needs to have. It will be a double shame if other media let themselves be distracted. That said, in retrospect, I agree it was a poor choice of imagery on the front page. We could have got the message across in a different way.



“In no way does the *Sunshine Coast Daily* condone any sort of violence against women or politicians. For those of you in the community who feel let down and betrayed by the image, I apologise. We won’t be re-running it and you’ll notice we are happy to publish the criticism. We give it, we have to take it and learn from these things.”

#### 103.3.2 Adelaide suburbans: changes made

Messenger Community News, Adelaide, has announced that the following changes took place to its mastheads on 19 June (*Telum Media Alert*, 12 June 2019).

- All mastheads have been rebranded the *Messenger*.
- The *North-Eastern Weekly* and *Northern Weekly* have been merged into one publication, called the *Messenger*, expanding its footprint and growth areas further north.
- The *Eastern Courier*, also now called the *Messenger*, has expanded its coverage area to take in suburbs from the city fringe and foothills.
- The *City* print publication has become Messenger Community News’s first digital-only masthead.

### 103.3.3 NT edition of *Rural Weekly* closes

News Corp's *Rural Weekly Northern Territory* edition ceased publication following the edition of 18 December 2018. The other *Rural Weekly* editions for Central Queensland, SW Queensland and NSW continue (as do News Corp's other rural publications, the major *Weekly Times* in Victoria and *Tasmanian Country*.) *Rural Weekly Northern Territory* had only a short life. It was established on 2 April 2015.

### 103.3.4 Jenkins era in journalism ends

The retirement of Ken Jenkins as managing editor of the *Gannawarra Times* and *Loddon Times* at Kerang in northern Victoria closes an era in newspaper production for the Jenkins family. The contribution of Ken, his daughter Emma, father Lloyd and mother Val to the industry spans nearly 150 years. Ken worked for 48½ years at Kerang while Lloyd had a 50-year career in journalism including State political roundsman for the regional daily news service in Brisbane, sub-editor at the *Toowoomba Chronicle* and five years as editor of the *Hamilton Spectator*. Lloyd and Val were partners in the Northern Newspaper Group at Kerang for 38 years. Emma graduated from Deakin University and worked as a regional journalist for some years before retraining as a health professional.



KEN JENKINS

Lloyd retired last year after 53 years on the executive council of Victorian Country Press Association including two years as president. Ken had 10 years on the executive and was president in 2010, the VCPA centenary year. Lloyd is a life member of VCPA and Country Press Australia and was a prime mover in national journalism training programs for 25 years. On retirement to Geelong he was a part-time tutor for Deakin University and continued his training of cadets in five States. The family company's realm at Kerang began with the *Kerang New Times* later merged with the *Pyramid Hill Advertiser* to become *The Northern Times*.

Later acquisitions of the *Boort Standard/Quambatook Times* and the *Wedderburn/Inglewood Express* were amalgamated to create the *Loddon Times*. The *Cohuna Farmers' Weekly* and the *Northern Times* were combined in 2015 to become the bi-weekly *Gannawarra Times* (named after the local shire). The Elliott Group purchased the business when Lloyd and Val retired in 2001 and Ken continued as editor. With his retirement on 30 June there are no Jenkins journalists remaining in the industry. [Thank you, Lloyd, for this contribution.]

### 103.3.5 Big acquisition completed

The acquisition by Antony Catalano and Thorney Investment Group of the 160 newspaper titles of Australian Community Media (largely the former Rural Press Ltd titles) from Nine Entertainment was completed on 1 July. Catalano and Alex Waislitz, principal of Thorney, have told the *Canberra Times* they "got a pretty good deal for a pretty amazing business" (*Canberra Times*, 6 July 2019).

### 103.3.6 Tamworth and New England

Barry Blair, of Uralla, writes (20 May 2019): The *Northern Daily Leader's* weekly "free" the *Tamworth Times* is very much alive and well, with the major weekly feature being the (usual) 48-page newsprint real-estate insert, *Domain*. There are times throughout the year (perhaps seasonal) where *Domain* can run up to 80pp. *Domain* is a glossy supplement in Saturday's NDL.

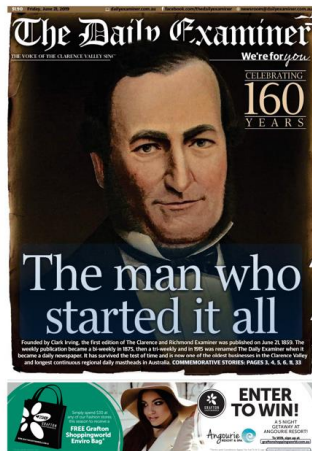
Meanwhile, the *Armidale Express/Extra* will often run a mere three pages each week and some weeks none at all. All this has happened since the majority of Armidale real estate/stock station agents created their own glossy publication which is now published monthly.

Some newspapers between Walcha and Tenterfield have what appears to be no physical presence. Walcha and Guyra survive each with bare mobile phone number. Both towns have their own weekly community newsletter, both locally produced. Walcha has had one for at least 10 years, and Guyra for about three years. Uralla now has its own fortnightly A4 community



newsletter/newspaper *Uralla Wordsworth* with edition no.13 (1 July) currently available online at <https://online.flowpaper.com/79750743/3rdJulyEditionFINALWEB/#page=1>

### 103.3.7 Grafton: *Examiner* at 160



The *Daily Examiner*, Grafton, NSW, celebrated its 160<sup>th</sup> birthday on 21 June 2019. The Clarence River Historical Society staged a display to mark the occasion. The front page of the anniversary edition of the *Examiner* carried a large image of Clark Irving, who financed the beginning of the *Clarence & Richmond Examiner* in 1859 (see image at left). This is what Rod Kirkpatrick wrote in *Country Conscience* (2000) about the establishment of the paper:

At Grafton, the *Clarence and Richmond Examiner* was ostensibly launched in 1859 by William Edward Vincent. However, the power behind the throne was wealthy politician, Clark Irving, who sought re-election at the impending NSW poll, the first conducted by ballot. To speed up the publishing process, the first issue, dated 21 June, was printed in Sydney, and distributed en route to Grafton.

The *Examiner* became a daily in 1915.

On 29 May 2019, the *Daily Examiner* changed its masthead for a day to the *Deadly Examiner*, declaring: “The Clarence Valley has the rare honour of being home to three first nations and to one of the largest populations of Indigenous people in [NSW]. To celebrate this remarkable history, the *Daily Examiner* today hands over its 160-year-old masthead to a culture spanning 60,000 years. In this special edition to coincide with Reconciliation Week, the valley’s Indigenous communities tell their stories, acknowledging the past and championing the present, as we move towards a brighter future.”

### 103.3.8 Tasmania: PR firm buys 2 more newspapers

Font Public Relations has added two more Tasmanian newspapers to its acquisition at the beginning of the year of the *Derwent Valley Gazette*, New Norfolk. In a Facebook post on 12 July, Font PR announced it had purchased both the *Sorell Times* and the *Tasman Gazette*, serving the south-east and east coast of Tasmania. Both papers were formerly owned by Temperate Zone Tasmania, a private company based in the state's south-east, which also owns the East Coast View community newspaper. Former senior Liberal Party advisers, Brad Nowland and Brad Stansfield, are partners in Font PR. Martine Haley is to edit the two papers. She is a former principal adviser to Tasmania’s Premier Will Hodgman (ABC News online, 13 July 2019).



## 4-NEWSPAPER HISTORY

### 103.4.1 Tamworth and the *Northern Daily Leader*

**1920:** It was in Tamworth that the post-war movement for a separate northern state was born, mainly through the energy and enthusiasm of Victor Charles Thompson, editor of the *Daily Observer* (writes Rod Kirkpatrick in *Country Conscience*, p.152). Thompson, born in Sydney, entered country journalism at the age of eighteen and soon absorbed country values and aspirations. In 1911, at the age of twenty-six, he was appointed editor of the *Observer* and became a strong advocate of increased public expenditure in country areas. Through the *Observer* he pressed strongly for the implementation of the proposals of the 1910-11 Decentralisation Commission. In 1915, new state advocate Earle Page had visited Tamworth and called on

Thompson “whose ideas were moving along similar lines”. Page won Thompson’s support. Stimulus came from other directions, too, Page wrote.

The need to disseminate ideas, circulate knowledge, and create a favourable public opinion was uppermost in my mind. When the opportunity arose during 1915 to purchase the [Grafton] *Examiner*, a band of keen local enthusiasts joined me in floating a local company to take it over.

The company converted the tri-weekly *Clarence and Richmond Examiner* into a daily (1 July 1915—see ANHG 103.3.7 above) during the first year of ownership, “to keep public issues constantly before the minds of the people”. Even before daily issue, the *Examiner* had already begun running an “open” column on the separation movement. The column was not solely pro-separation; for instance, it carried an editorial comment from the *Don Dorrigio Gazette* which, while sympathetic to the movement, suggested that the formation of a new state offered too many difficulties to be attempted at present. The *Daily Examiner* established cooperative arrangements with the *Northern Star*, a Lismore daily, with each paper supplying the other with local news from their town. Along with the Tamworth and Murwillumbah dailies, these four papers developed a uniform policy on decentralisation and became “the vehicles for our [New State] campaign”, Page said. They worked to “make the inarticulate countryside articulate”.



ABOVE: This is the former home of the *Northern Daily Leader*, Tamworth’s daily newspaper since 1 January 1921. [Photo by Barry Blair, Uralla.] It was one of four northern NSW dailies that were at the heart of the New England new-state movement (the other dailies were published in Grafton, Lismore and Murwillumbah). Situated on the corner of Brisbane and Marius Streets, the *NDL* building has had a glass-enclosed penthouse added—giving the building a fourth floor—since the newspaper moved to new premises at 92 Brisbane Street.

The New State movement was essentially a regional anti-urban protest movement led by the local newspapers, the pastoralists, and the urban elite in the leading towns. It had the same beliefs of earlier separationists: that city interests dominated political power and were determined to strangle country development. One of the problems the movement struck was that, although the Federal Constitution specifically provided machinery for the creation of new states, it failed to make clear who should take the first step: the Federal parliament or the parliament of the State

out of whose territory the new state was to be formed. Neither did it specify whether the creation of a new state required the approval of only the electors in the new state area, or all the electors in the State from which the territory would secede, or all electors in all States. These constitutional difficulties apart, by 1920 the prevailing political culture, and economic and demographic trends operated against the establishment of new states. Federalism and the existing pattern of State boundaries had proved satisfactory and no strong swell of public opinion had emerged in favour of major changes. With an increased concentration of population in Sydney and a static population in many country districts it was unlikely that any NSW government would approve any scheme for a new state in the north. Yet despite these factors, a vigorous new state movement developed in northern NSW in the early 1920s, with Tamworth, Armidale, Glen Innes and Tenterfield as its backbone...

The *Daily Observer*, inspired by its great cause, changed its name to the *Northern Daily Leader* on 1 January 1921. It benefited, with circulation rising from 2,500 copies in 1913 to 7,000 in 1922 and 13,000 in 1939. A formal organisation, the Northern New State Movement, was formed and in 1921 had 200 local leagues scattered throughout the northern tablelands, the north-west, the north coast, the Liverpool Plains and the Upper Hunter.

**1925:** *Daily Examiner*, 8 August 1925, p.4: The fine new offices of the *Northern Daily Leader* at Tamworth were officially opened on [4 August] by the Federal Treasurer (Dr. Earle Page). Speeches were also made by Lieut-Colonel Bruxner, MLA, Mr Frank Chaffey, MLA, Mr A. McClelland, MLA, Mr. W. G. Conley (general manager, of the *S.M. Herald*), and Messrs. Joseph and Creagh, directors, and others. The function took place on the flat roof of the imposing three-storey building in which the paper is now housed and concluded with refreshments. A dinner was held later where further speeches were made by the visiting Parliamentarians and also by Mr Victor Thompson, MHR, editor of the *Leader*.

**2019:** *Bush Telegraph*, February 2019, p.7: Recently Brian Gregson visited the old *Northern Daily Leader* (building) to see how it's changed since being purchased by the Sleiman family as a long-term investment project. The building was completed in 1924 and has been home to publishing and printing the *Northern Daily Leader* amongst other projects. As a journalist Gregson had worked at this iconic building for a short time and later when he established his own business and published the *Bush Telegraph* and the *Northern Inland Fishing News*, had a lot to do with personnel at the *Leader* as his publications were printed by Regional Publishers.

PRD Real Estate is now in the building on the first floor and they have more room for their 25 staff members. Other tenants have already moved in. The redevelopment was 95 per cent complete at January this year. The developers have added a floor to the building, making it four-storey. The top floor is completely glass enclosed, with spectacular views all around. Another space that has been brought to life is the old press room, in the basement, which has been unoccupied for years. It now houses a cocktail bar called the Press 2340 (the city's postcode is 2340).

[Barry Blair's recent photo of the former *NDL* building inspired the above item. Thanks, Barry.]

### 103.4.2 Free speech (1): 1889

*Queenslander*, Brisbane, 7 December 1889, p.1091: Speaking on Tuesday night, 8th October, before the members of the Leeds Literary and Philosophical Society on freedom of speech, Lord Carnarvon said there were four things which men specially valued—namely, freedom of speech, art, thought, and writing. There never had been a time in English history when the Press had been better informed, more capable, more free from personalities than at the present time. Referring to the question of anonymous writing in the Press, he said that they had succeeded in reconciling fairness of speech with anonymous writing, and that whatever objection had been made against the Press it had never been attacked on this ground.

Year by year the Press seemed to him to take a larger field, and consequently greater responsibilities; and often, when official mouths were sealed, it became well and wise for the Press to speak out. Dealing with the other side of the question, he pointed out the great harm which might be done by free discussion, if not modified and guarded by sense and wisdom. With our great citizenship we should think soberly and speak wisely. (Applause).



### 103.4.3 Free speech (2): 1893

*Methodist*, Sydney, 7 October 1893, p.6 (editorial—an extract): The repeated and successful attempts on the part of a section of the community to stifle free speech have become a menace to representative government in New South Wales. On two occasions recently Freetrade meetings have been turned into a pandemonium, and more recently still the same tactics with similar results were brought into exercise at a meeting of the Protectionists. Mr. McMillan, as representing one party, and Mr. W. Robson, as representing the other party, were literally howled down. Their attempts to intelligently present their views on the great political questions of the day were frustrated; and the desires of those who wished to hear them were set at naught by a section of the community which seems equally hostile to every form of civilized government.

Moreover, it is pretty generally affirmed that this method of securing an enlightened form of government is to be systematically persevered in, and the hope is cherished that when men who have the general welfare at heart have been muzzled or have retired in disgust from the turmoil and indignities of political life, the reins of government will fall into the hands of professional agitators, class representatives, and other would-be re-constructors of society. This, however, is not an inevitable sequel to the conduct which is now bringing the political life of New South Wales into contempt. Indeed, it might safely be predicted that after interference with the freedom of public utterance has reached a certain limit, this natural right of a civilized people will effectually, if not sternly, re-assert itself.

Every form of tyranny, sooner or later, over-reaches itself, and nothing is more certain than that the so-called democratic theories of political propriety which substitute tumult and brute force for arguments will themselves, eventually, arouse a dormant public sentiment, which will assert the majesty of true liberty.

### 103.4.4 For Ella, too, it was all about the words

**Rod Kirkpatrick** writes: Ella Ebery, who died on 16 May 2019 at the age of 103, is featured on the cover of this 103<sup>rd</sup> issue of the *ANHG Newsletter* (see also 103.1.13). I first spoke to Ella on 23 April 2001 shortly after she had been featured in *Australian Story*. She edited the *North Central News*, St Arnaud, Victoria, 1979-2013. We spoke again by phone on three other occasions in 2001 and I interviewed her face to face on 12 December at St Arnaud. While I was sitting across the desk from her, the December *PANPA Bulletin* containing my article about her arrived. The newspaper's part owner, Brian Garrett, brought it in and they dissected every fact presented in the article.

Over the years Ella and I built up a warm friendship through letters, cards, emails and phone calls. We met again at the launch in 2010 of *The Bold Type*, my history of the Victorian country press. For Ella, as for Les Carlyon, it was all about the words and their power. At the centenary conference of the Victorian Country Press Association on 12 November 2010, she said, "We [editors] have the power to change people's thinking and get things done." Here are some extracts from what she has written to me over the past 18 years.

**December 2004:** As you can see (from the card), I went to the "Impressionists" in Melbourne during the year. A great [art] exhibition. Was put on the Victorian Women's Roll of Honour in March. My last flutter of fame, I think. The paper keeps me going and I have an assistant. Plenty of issues to tackle.

**21 June 2006** (email; Subject: Late night radio): Was sleepless at 4am recently. Turned on radio to gauge time of night. I refuse to have a clock to mock my sleeplessness—caught the end of a dissertation on newspapers by Rod Kirkpatrick followed by questions by phone-in. What on earth were you giving radio interviews at that hour for or was the whole thing phone-in and pre-recorded? [RK: No, it wasn't.]

I am still editing *NCN* (*North Central News*) with the assistance of a couple of casuals who work part-time and do the leg work. I have just got this bloody computer at home so that I can send my own emails instead of them open to all eyes in the office. The said bloody computer has caused me more stress and frustration than any other such thing in my life. My grandson set it all up and the man on Telstra told him that I was the first ninety-year-old asking to get on the internet...



**ELLA EBERY, AUGUST 2010, AT A BOOK LAUNCH  
DURING THE VICTORIAN COUNTRY PRESS  
ASSOCIATION CENTENARY**

I have troubles with the model at work, even with the limited use I have for it. It has the delightful habit of freezing without warning and I have to poke a pencil in a hole to shut it down. Recently I had accomplished this, started it up again and got the dire warning that if I did not want to see this message on the screen again, I should shut it down properly. I was telling it verbally that “if you behaved yourself, I would not have to poke you in the guts with a pencil” and looked up to see a startled customer at the front counter regarding me with some concern.

**3 January 2007:** I was in hospital battling pneumonia and complications over the Christmas season. Probably at 91 I should have died but it seems my sober and godly lifestyle pulled me through. I hope to return to work but it is problematical as I feel I have been crushed by a giant hand that will not let me up. The continuing drought is not conducive to optimism. I have not seen the like in my lifetime. However, it seems the year before I was born was a similar drought. [She was born in 1915.]

**20 December 2007** (at the foot of her Christmas note): Your students must be sick and tired of this ancient editor you keep telling them about!

**December 2008:** I am still working and was the subject of a commercial TV news item this week. The

staff enjoyed the experience greatly (of being on air). Next year will be hard as my arthritis and allied complaints are inexorably increasing. Being 93 is no bonus and I dread being confined to home or nursing home. The drought continues unabated and rain is rare. I have an assistant these days to do the leg work.

**December 2010:** What a year! Winning the award for Overall Excellence Newspaper at the [Victorian Country Press Association centenary] Conference dinner was the crowning of my career! I feel sorry for John Brumby. He did not deserve to be kicked out [as Premier]; we are suffering floods and ruined harvests as a result.

**December 2013** (by phone and card): Time’s passing too quickly. I’ll be 98 in three days. I put the newspaper to bed for Easter and then had no paper for a fortnight because of the holidays. I came out of a shop; had low blood pressure, which I did not know about. Just collapsed in a heap. Broke a hip. I was shunted off to hospital for a month. When I came out Janine Batters, who had been the journalist on the paper, had been made editor. A tough situation after 30 odd years. The following eight months have been devastating. Also lost [driver] licence and have just regained it.

**17 March 2014:** I had my freelanced work in the 1950s collated into this magazine (enclosed) for family and friends. I hope you will enjoy it. It is a window into a woman’s world of that era. The short stories are dull. No reference to sex in those days. But I still like the articles. The most exciting thing that has happened since my redundancy disaster has been an offer from Allen & Unwin to publish my memoirs, which I have been writing for the family for the past 10 years.

**Undated but ca late 2015:** Am past Christmas cards and won’t see the one hundred. I am still battling with my book. Had to stop work on it as [the editor] was turning it into his own book, substituting his voice for mine, adding things that never happened. He would not accept that it was an auto biography. [This letter included a colour photo of her with her great-great-granddaughter Ella, “who is also a twin”.]

**3 January 2018** (final letter, handwritten in block capitals): I am now resident in this hostel as I turned 102 last week. I didn’t have any option. It is local and one-on-one care. I have a room opening on to a courtyard. So it is a good place and they are installing my computer. I am learning to walk

again. I had survived two broken hips. Poor old *North Central News* is battling. [The owner] does not have an editor, just a lady who has no experience with the media and works for 12 hours on each edition, arranging contributions people send in... I doubt if *NCN* can survive.

#### **103.4.5 Herald & Weekly Times Ltd (1924)**

*Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, 18 November 1924, p.10: The accounts of the Herald and Weekly Times, Ltd., for the year ended September 30 last, show net profit of £77,524. Allowing for £32,143 brought forward, less £12,713 used to write down cost of new building, there is available £96,954. Dividends are at the rate of 6 per cent, on preference shares, and 15 per cent, plus bonus of 5 per cent, on ordinary shares, the total distribution requiring £57,500. The balance of £30,454 is carried forward. It is proposed to submit to shareholders proposals for the reconstruction of the company, with a view of enlarging its constitution and increasing its capital.

#### **103.4.6 Herald & Weekly Times Ltd (1938)**

*Courier-Mail*, Brisbane, 9 November 1938, p.6: MELBOURNE, Tuesday.—Accounts of the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd. disclose a profit of £252,088 for the year to September 30, after providing for taxation. This compared with £218,125 in 1936-37, and with £185,416 in 1935-36. After providing for 64 per cent, preference dividend ordinary shareholders received a dividend of 12 per cent, in addition to a bonus of 2 per cent. The distribution in 1936-37 was 12 per cent. The year's profit equals 22.2 per cent, on ordinary capital after payment of the preference charge. With £38,526 brought in, £290,614 was available. Dividends and bonus required £162,125.

To the general reserve, £50,000 was transferred, and £30,000 was added to the dividend equalisation fund, leaving £48,489 to be carried forward. Gross earnings advanced from £403,073 to £445,751, and salaries, expenses, and taxes from £143,415 to £149,982. The directors state that the past year has been marked by good progress with the company's main publications, and the *Herald* has become one of the leading journals of the Empire. Provision is now being made for enlarging its overseas services by its own special correspondents. The *Sun* has the largest, net sale among Australian newspapers.

#### **103.4.7 Herald & Weekly Times Ltd (2019)**

*Age*, Melbourne, 22 May 2019, p.2: News Corp Australia will shaft on 16 June the long-standing name of its Victorian division. The Herald and Weekly Times, which publishes the *Herald Sun* and the *Weekly Times*, will be consolidated into News Corp's Nationwide News division, ending a media name that existed years before Rupert Murdoch's \$2 billion takeover in 1987 [and years before Rupert's birth in 1931].

#### **103.4.8 Labor paper: Problem with the title, sport!**

*Labor Call*, Melbourne, 27 July 1922, p.11: If anyone is entitled to advise the workers, said Mr. Higgs at Rockhampton the other day, that man is Higgs. This is what happened: Mr. Higgs:—It is yore 30 years since, with Mr. S. D. Townsend, at 76 Oxford-street, Sydney, New South Wales, I endeavoured to establish a weekly newspaper, entitled the *Trades and Labor Advocate; or Tribune of the People*. I remember putting this proposal before the late Mr. W. F. (sic) Archibald, editor and part proprietor of the *Sydney Bulletin*. He thought the idea of a Labor paper a good one, but was not at all enamoured of the sound, nor the length, of the title. Call it *Sport*, he said, with enthusiasm, his dark eyes sparkling, and sandwich your "Labor" arguments between- sporting items! He doubted whether any other kind of Labor paper would pay. I could not relish the notion of combining the propaganda of a Christian more or less religious Labor movement, with the chronicles of the racecourse, and boxing saloon, and I did not accept Mr. Archibald's advice.

The first number of the *Trades and Labor Advocate, or Tribune of the People* appeared on Monday, the 7th October, 1889, Eight Hours Day. My partner and I were so sure the paper would be a success that we printed 10,000. Ten thousand. I shall never forget that day. We and a half-dozen personal friends had armed ourselves with subscription order forms, bound in books of 100 each. With these and copies of the paper we canvassed the ranks of three thousand Trades and Labor unionists, lined up in College-street, Hyde Park, at 9.30 o'clock, on a beautiful sunny New South Wales morning, and getting ready for the Eight Hours procession. Bands were playing, banners

there waving. Art and music raised our spirits. We would mightily influence public opinion for good. We ought to get at least a thousand subscribers to a newspaper that was to “fairly represent the views and protect the interests of the vast mass of creeds and classes which comprised the working classes of New South Wales”.

Our joint efforts resulted in heart-breaking failure. Out of 3000 unionists, we got only fourteen subscribers, though the price of the paper was 1/- (10c) for 13 copies delivered weekly, post free. Our personal friends of the New South Wales Typographical Association, to the number of about 600, nearly all of whom were not in the procession, subscribed, but Mr. Archibald was right. The paper did not pay. At the end of three months it ceased publication. The policy of the *Trades and Labor Advocate* was set out in the following platform, which I drew up:—Direct Labor representation in Parliament; abolition of plural voting (one man one vote); free and compulsory education up to 15 years of age; legislation of the eight-hour system; beneficial factories act; greater protection to persons engaged in the mining and ship nationalisation; any measure that will secure to the wage-earner (who toils with either brain or hand in honest occupation) a fair and equitable return for his or her labour. I believe that programme was the first Labor platform published in Australia. I have long since ceased to believe in the efficacy of land nationalisation. I think the right to obtain freehold should be the law, as well as perpetual lease.

### 103.4.9 Sporting paper (1914)

*Port Fairy Gazette*, 23 July 1914, p.2: The *Winner* is to be the title of the new 16-page weekly sporting paper, which is to be issued on July 29 from the office of The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd., Melbourne. The paper is to supply what has been a long-felt want, namely, an up-to-date sporting publication, in every way first class. The turf, boxing, coursing, wrestling, football and cricket (in season), boating, rowing, motoring, cycling, golf, bowls, gun and rifle, polo, quoits, croquet, fishing, billiards, general athletics, and the stage. are some of the subjects with which the new venture will appeal to the public. In addition to large numbers of illustrations, correspondents have been secured for the recording of the chief items of sporting interest in Europe, Asia, Africa and America, The *Winner* will be sold for one penny. [The State Library Victoria catalogue says the *Winner* finished in June 1918. It began publication a few days before the start of World War I and ceased publication a few months before the Armistice.]

### 103.4.10 Sporting paper (1922)

*Weekly Times*, Melbourne, 19 August 1922, p.66: Congratulations and best wishes for a prosperous career are extended to the *Sporting Globe*, which made its first appearance as a mid-week paper on Wednesday. [Its first issue as a weekend paper was Saturday, 22 July.] Victoria was badly in need of a really good sporting paper. The *Globe* fully supplies that want. It deals with the turf, boxing, football, cricket and all other branches of sport. It has on its staff a band of expert writers, who know their subjects thoroughly, and may be depended on to keep their readers deeply interested. Judging by the eagerness with which Wednesday's issue was awaited and the rapidity with which it was sold out the success of the *Globe* is assured. Country lovers of sport are advised, if they wish to avoid disappointment, to become regular subscribers to the new paper.



[Initially the Saturday edition was priced at 2d, and the larger Wednesday edition at 3d. With the introduction of the Wednesday edition it also widened its coverage beyond purely sport, acquiring the subtitle “A Journal of Sport, the Stage and the Screen”. However, during 1924 it dropped the subtitle and returned to covering purely sport. The paper was published until 1996. Page 1 of a 1968 edition is pictured.]

### 103.4.11 Editorial cartoons from *Bulletin*, 1886-1952

**Tim Sherratt** writes to the Australian Media History list: I've been downloading editorial cartoons published in the *Bulletin* from @TroveAustralia. There are 3,471 cartoons – at least one from every issue published between 4 September 1886 and 17 September 1952. And you can browse them all...

*Australian Newspaper History Group Newsletter*, No 103, July 2019— 19

To make it easier to explore the images, Tim has compiled them into a series of PDFs – one PDF for each decade. The PDFs include lower resolution versions of the images together with their publication details and a link to Trove. Use the link below:

<https://updates.timsherratt.org/2019/05/09/over-the-last.html>

### 103.4.12 *Mercury* front pages

From 8 to 12 July 2019 the Hobart *Mercury* ran reproductions of notable front pages. These were:

- ❖ 4 September 1939: Outbreak of World War II
- ❖ 9 February 1967: Southern Tasmanian bushfires
- ❖ 22 July 1969: Landing on the Moon
- ❖ 6 January 1975: Tasman Bridge collapse
- ❖ 14 May 1989: (*Sunday Tasmanian*) State election result with hung Parliament.



### 5—RECENTLY PUBLISHED

#### 103.5.1 Articles

**Brown, Warren**, “How telling a secret saved lives”, *Daily Telegraph*, 8 June 2019, p.42. Recounts the story of Keith Murdoch and his Gallipoli letter.

**Hall, Bianca**, “Did Murdoch papers sway votes?”, *Age*, 25 May 2019, p.14.

**Lennon, Troy**, “Mystery man behind the Daily Telegraph”, *Daily Telegraph*, 29 June 2019, pp.70-71. Provides a history of the Sydney *Daily Telegraph*, established 140 years ago. Emphasis is on the founding of the *Telegraph*, and the overlooked role of John Mooyart Lynch.

**Mathews, Iola**, “On the *Age*’s river of gold”, *insidestory.org.au*, 21 June 2019. A former journalist recalls life on the Melbourne daily during the era of legendary editor Graham Perkin. The article includes a lot of nitty-gritty detail, such as a description of the news room: “[It] had a large grid of desks for reporters, and at the top was the ‘subs’ desk’, a horseshoe-shaped table for the executives and sub-editors, all men.” The article is an edited extract from Mathews’ book, *Winning for Women: A Personal Story*. [Iola’s maiden surname was Hack.]

**Ritson, Mark**, “Reality so very easy to fake on internet”, *Australian*, 15 July 2019, p.24. How, for instance, to create a book with 144 blank pages that quickly becomes “the best-selling business book on Amazon”.

**Rose, Hilary**, “Real menace in fake news”, *Australian*, 30 May 2019, p.11. Jessika Aro, a Finnish journalist, fled overseas after exposing Russia’s troll factory.

**Wright, Tony**, “This political life”, *Sydney Morning Herald*, Saturday 8 June, page 26. The journalistic history of Barry Cassidy as he retires from presenting the *Insiders* on ABC TV.

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