

An 1885 image of the staff and office exterior of the *Horsham Times*, Victoria. Edward James Stephens published the first issue of Horsham's first newspaper on 1 July 1873. Imbued with optimism and foresight, he knew that Horsham was tiny, but he established the *Horsham Times*, and *Dimboola*, *Drung Drung*, *Longerenong*, *Mt. Arapiles*, and *Wimmera Advertiser*. From 1875 the *Times* had competition from the *Wimmera Star*, but absorbed that title from December 1930. The *Times* lives on today as part of the tri-weekly *Wimmera Mail-Times*, a member of the Australian Community Media group. The title arose from the amalgamation in 1959 of the *Horsham Times* and the *West Wimmera Mail* from Natimuk. Rupert Murdoch helped Natimuk's Lockwood family-owned newspaper take over big brother *Horsham Times*.

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Ten issues had appeared by December 2000; the *Newsletter* has appeared five times a year since 2001.



117.1.1 Death of Kimberley Kitching: ‘Mean girls’ and media girls

Janet Albrechtsen, “Feckless reporting by female media gang”, *Australian*, 23 March 2022, p.13 (extract):

Labor’s “mean girls” and their apologists in the media should consider this public service announcement: Kimberley Kitching’s allegations of bullying by Labor women won’t go away. To that end, here are two observations concerning the way so-called progressive media figures reported, analysed and judged the bullying allegations made by the late Labor senator.

First, men in that media milieu have been more even-handed about Kitching’s allegations than women in those circles. Second, it is hard to recall a clearer example of barefaced hypocrisy from some of those so-called progressive women.

When Kitching’s bullying allegations emerged after her death, these women quietly dumped the deeply flawed progressive shibboleth that all women must be believed. A new, equally flawed mantra appears to have emerged since Kitching’s death – that only certain kinds of women should be believed. And Kitching is not one of them.

Phil Coorey provided a stellar example of how to cover this fraught issue with fairness and class. Writing in the *Australian Financial Review* last week, Coorey was astute enough to report that while factional politics was at play, “It was always passing strange that the better she (Kitching) performed, the more she seemed to be punished.” Coorey detailed the punishment dished out to Kitching, how she was demoted, shifted sideways, ostracised, belittled, and forced by Labor leader Anthony Albanese to fight for her preselection despite her stellar achievements as a first-term senator, achievements that dwarf those who have bullied her. Coorey’s analysis of claims by Labor’s leadership that the phrase mean girls is disrespectful was equally crisp and correct: “Bunkum,” wrote Coorey. “It’s about as offensive as ‘boys’ club’.”

In the *Age* last week Rob Harris wrote with acerbic accuracy that the description of his friend Kitching as a patriot “appeared to make many progressives deeply uncomfortable”. Harris laid out Kitching’s achievements, which threatened the egos of her less competent Labor colleagues. Kitching, wrote Harris, “thought protecting Australia’s democracy was more important than making the party look bad or making senior figures feel uncomfortable”.

Contrast these analyses with the groupthink among many women in so-called progressive media circles. Their shifting standards when it comes to bullying claims by Kitching can only help Labor bury this scandal. Whereas so many of these female journalists rightly piled on Scott Morrison for his head-in-the-sand approach to the treatment of women inside his own party, they have struggled to apply the same level of accountability to Labor.

Their feckless reporting lets the Labor leader off the hook, along with deputy leader Richard Marles, with whom Kitching shared her serious allegations of mistreatment, and the alleged perpetrators of the bullying, Penny Wong, Kristina Keneally and Katy Gallagher. What exactly did Marles do after Kitching reported the bullying allegations to him? Did he tell Albanese? If not, why not? If so, what did the Labor leader do? Instead of asking these questions, a clique of progressive women in the media have sung from the same song sheet, claiming this saga is best explained as “nasty politics”. Keen to draw the Prime Minister into Albanese’s shame, the *Sydney Morning Herald’s* Jacqueline Maley described it as an “equal opportunity” affair.

117.1.2 Death of Shane Warne, cricketer and global personality

Shane Warne, former Australian Test cricketer, who took 708 wickets as a spin bowler and was named by *Wisden* as one of its Five Cricketers of the 20th Century, died on 4 March 2022 in Ko Samui, Thailand. The news coverage was extensive. For instance:

Brisbane: The *Sunday Mail* published a “Special 20-page Tribute Edition” on 6 March and the *Courier-Mail* issued eight-page commemorative liftouts on 8 and 10 March.

Melbourne: The *Herald Sun* issued a 2am edition on 5 March (two-page coverage of the death); a 24-page wraparound on the Sunday, 6 March; and the extent of weekday coverage was nine pages, 7 March; 11 pages, 8 March; three pages, 9 March; two pages, 10 March. The *Age* published a 16-page wraparound on 6 March; 10 pages on 7 March; five pages, 8 March; five pages, 9 March; and one page, 10 March. The *Herald Sun* published a 12-page tribute edition on 31 March, the day after the public memorial service at the Melbourne Cricket Ground; it was entitled “King of the ‘G’”. On 30 March it published a blank Page 23 (green, with “23” in large yellow type, and SHANE WARNE 13.9.69-04.03.22, also in yellow.

National: The *Australian* had two broadsheet pages on 7 March; three pages, 8 March; three pages, 9 March; and two pages, 10 March. The *Australian Financial Review* had five pages on 7 March. Here’s what the *Australian’s* Media editor wrote on 7 March (also see next page):

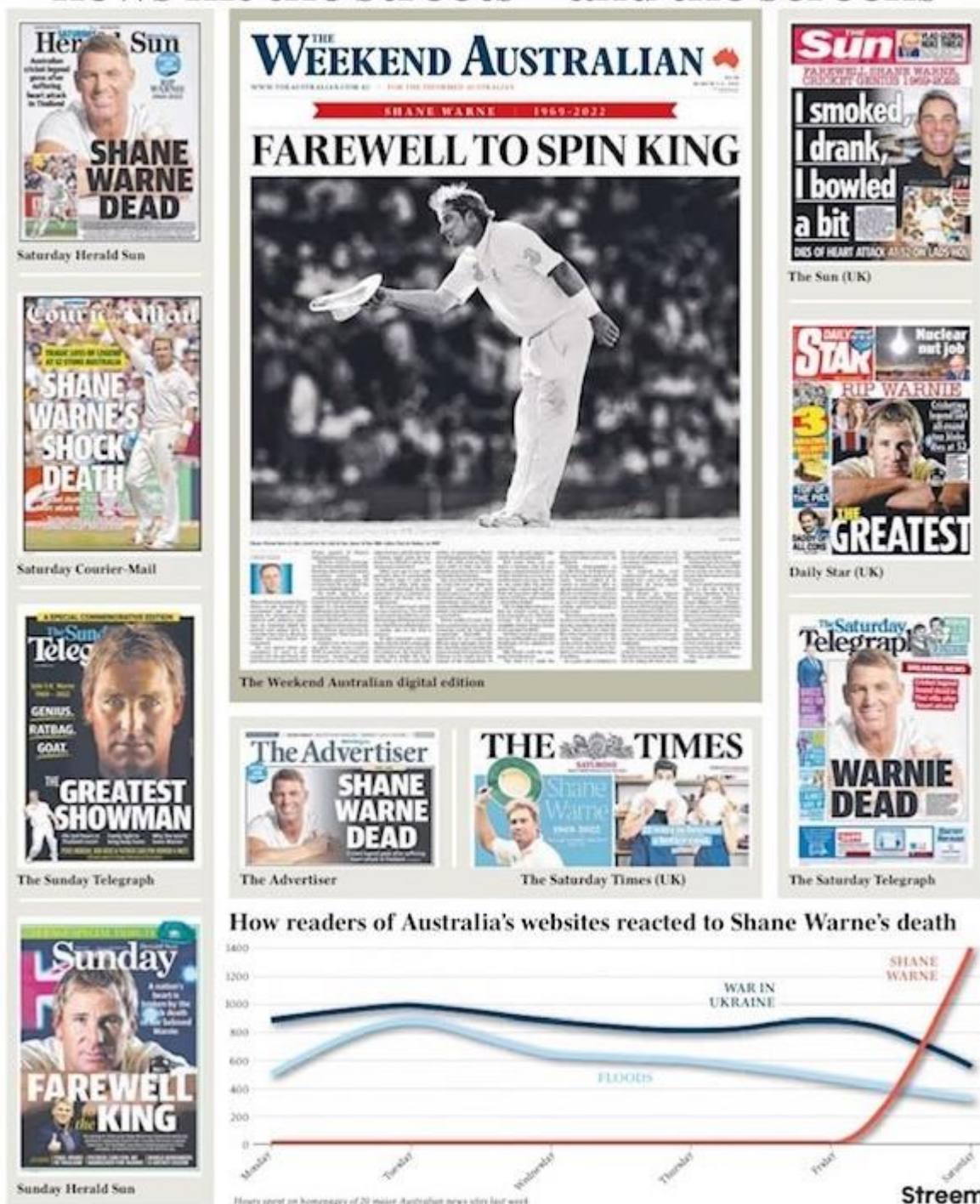
A major unexpected news event breaking at about 1am has always been a challenge for newsrooms—editors must scramble to get staff out of bed, stop the presses to bring print runs to a shuddering halt and remake the front page in a matter of minutes in order to get late-night distribution trucks on their way. The sudden early morning death of Shane Warne, an event no outlets could possibly have prepared for, and with no pre-written obituaries ready to go, posed an even trickier challenge as editors desperately tried to bring readers the news, while designing editions befitting such a significant public figure. Modern printing logistics mean newspapers are increasingly published early each evening, leaving little time for late night special editions landing on front lawns around the country.

On Saturday morning (5 March), newsrooms across the country were racing to re-make newspapers while immediately publishing the breaking news on digital platforms to a shocked world. While News Corp’s city-based metro papers in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide managed to get hundreds of thousands of printed copies with the Warne news onto the streets on Saturday morning, the *Australian* chose to publish a special digital replica front page of the *Weekend Australian*. The national masthead’s digital platforms carried a masterful reflection on Warne’s life and career by cricket writer Gideon Haigh, beneath an iconic image of the spin king in his final Test in Sydney in 2007. The *Australian’s* editor Michelle Gunn worked through the night with morning digital editor Scott Henry to produce comprehensive online coverage of the news of Warne’s death, before teaming with night editor David Tanner and artist Idit Nilsson on Saturday to create the special digital replica front page.

Data compiled for the *Australian* by media research company Stream shows the news of Warne’s death attracted extraordinary interest from readers of websites of all major news sites in Australia, with articles relating to the ex-cricketer on Saturday more than doubling the combined online traffic of the stories about the conflict in Ukraine and the devastating floods in NSW and Queensland.

Editor of the weekend editions of the *Herald Sun*, Nick Papps, said he learned of Warne’s death in a call at 12.30am on Saturday, and returned to the newspaper’s Southbank headquarters in central Melbourne to rip up the front page. “My mind was going a million miles an hour so the first thing I did was called Truganina, where we print our papers, and they said they still had about 65,000 papers to print so I told them to stop the presses,” he said. “I told them Warnie was dead and like everyone they were surprised. I then made lots of phone calls to get people back into the office, while some worked remotely.” The newspaper managed to push out 7000 more papers, thus printing 72,000 copies featuring news of Warne’s passing. Mick Carroll, the editor of Sydney’s *Saturday Telegraph*, said: “For someone of Warne’s stature, it was satisfying to record his passing in our print edition.” (See Page 4 for screen shot of much of Media page from the *Australian*, 7 March 2022.)

Warne's final run: how the shocking news hit the streets – and the screens



117.1.3 National Press Club denies forum for Russian ambassador

Paul Malone, *Pearls and Irritations: John Menadue's Public Policy Journal*, 14 March 2022 (extract only):

The decision of the National Press Club to withdraw the invitation to the Russian Ambassador to speak at the club is the latest move taking Australia to a new low in lack of commitment to free speech. It's not good enough to say you are committed to free speech. If you are in the media you have to be willing to provide a platform for the views of those you disagree with.

In announcing the club's decision, CEO Maurice Reilly said the club was a vigorous champion of media freedom and strongly condemned the media censorship in Russia. Under new laws in Russia both local and international journalists faced charges of high treason and 15 – 20 year jail terms for reporting the facts. This situation should not be tolerated and had no place in a democratic society. He said the invitation was issued at a different stage in the conflict in Ukraine before allegations of war crimes and bombing of civilian targets. The Board now considered it inappropriate to continue with the invitation to the Ambassador. The Club stood by its principles of encouraging free speech and promoting a balanced national discussion of the big issues of the day and reserved the right to revisit this decision at a later date.

The board — president Laura Tingle, vice-presidents Misha Schubert and Andrew Tillett, treasurer Tom Connell and directors Steve Lewis, David Crowe, Tony Melville, Jane Norman, Tim Shaw, Anna Henderson and Julie Hare and patron Ken Randall — says it might revisit its decision at a later date. The decision was unanimous. But it would not have been if I had been on the board as I once was.

The club has a proud tradition of inviting controversial speakers. In 1967, at the height of the Vietnam War, South Vietnam's Prime Minister, Air Vice Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky addressed the club; in 1977 Dr Edward Teller, father of the H-bomb spoke; in 1974 the Shah of Iran Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was on the podium; and in November 1983 South Africa's ambassador, Dr Denis Worrall presented his government's segregationist policies. If the Press Club is to exclude representatives of countries that have been accused of war crimes it's going to have a long list of banned people and it will be breaking with the policies of the past.

Is the club going to exclude the Israeli Ambassador on the grounds that there are frequent killings in Gaza? Is the Saudi Arabian ambassador welcome to speak, given Saudi's action in Yemen and the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi?

And what about representatives of the United States? Here there's a long list and there's space to mention only a few. In the withdrawal from Afghanistan last year a US airstrike killed 10 people, including seven children and an aid worker for an American charity organisation. The U.K. non-governmental non-violent and disarmament organisation Oxford Research Group records that in its illegal war on Iraq, there were 6,616 civilian deaths as a result of US action during the "invasion phase", including the shock-and-awe bombing of Baghdad. The Press Club board might also recall that journalists in a hotel that had been clearly identified were targeted by the US military.

But there's another wider point to be made here. Since when have journalists decided that they don't interview and provide a platform for nasty people? For as long as I can recall journalists have sought out and interviewed murderers and child rapists; criminal gang leaders; terrorists and dictators. The great middle-east journalist, the late Robert Fisk interviewed Osama Bin Laden a number of times and as a result we were all the wiser for his news and insights.

117.1.4 Defamation award of \$1.5m

A prolonged menacing and malicious campaign that brothers Adam and Charif Kazal waged against a former business partner, Rodric David, has resulted in the brothers being ordered to pay more than \$1.5 million in damages. It is one of the largest defamation awards in Australian history (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 February 2022, p.13). For almost a decade Adam and Charif conducted a "concerted, continuous campaign" to vilify and denigrate David and his film production company, Thunder Studios, said Justice Steven Rares. Their ongoing harassment made David's life and his family's lives a "misery" and drove them "from their home in Sydney to seek, unsuccessfully, an escape and another life in Los Angeles", said the Federal Court judgment handed down on 18 February.

While Federal Court defamation payouts are capped at \$431,000, Justice Rares awarded aggravated damages for the "emotional scarring" caused by the "traumatising behaviour" of the brothers. During the seven years the matter has been on foot, the brothers' vendetta was so extreme that in February 2017 Adam Kazal, a debt collector and at the time an undischarged bankrupt, was jailed for 15 months for criminal contempt. The vendetta has its origins in March 2013 when the *Sydney Morning Herald* published a lengthy article by award-winning investigative Linton Besser, who is now with the ABC. The story, "Bad Company", included "less than flattering

accounts of their personal and business ethics and dealings” said the judge. It also detailed the toxic feud following the breakdown in the business relationship over a planned waste industry business in Sydney.

“Bad Company” also referred to the Independent Commission Against Corruption’s December 2011 corruption finding against Charif Kazal over an employment offer and the payment of flights and accommodation to a senior government official who could be beneficial to the Kazal family over the family’s leases in government-owned heritage properties at The Rocks, on Sydney’s foreshore. The court found the publication of Besser’s article resulted in Adam and Charif unleashing a barrage of abuse on David and his family.

117.1.5 Trainee journalists appointed for *SMH* and *Age*

The *Sydney Morning Herald* has appointed five new trainee journalists: Angus Dalton, Angus Thomson, Anthony Segart, Billie Elder and Millie Muroi. The Melbourne *Age*, too, has appointed five new trainee journalists: Carla Jaeger, Jackson Graham, Lachlan Abbott, Najma Sambul and Nell Geraets (*Telum Media Alert*, 16 March 2022).



117.1.6 PEOPLE

Stephen Brook, CBD columnist for the *Sydney Morning Herald* and Melbourne *Age*, has been appointed deputy editor of the *Sunday Age*. He is a former features editor and media writer at the *Australian* (*Telum Media Alert*, 20 April 2022).

Daile Cross, acting editor of *WAtoday*, has been appointed editor. She has previously been deputy editor, senior producer and journalist at the news outlet (*Telum Media Alert*, 20 April 2022).

Osman Faruqi, culture news editor for the Melbourne *Age* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*, began a fortnightly column for the *Age* on 6 April. He is writing about the coming election, current affairs, race and culture (*Age*, 6 April 2022).

Simon Froude, director of South Australian State Records, will become director-general of the National Archives of Australia, on 23 May. Appointed for a five-year term, he will replace David Fricker who finished last December after 10 years in the role (*Canberra Times*, 19 March 2022, p.10).

Janine Graham is the new deputy editor of the *Illawarra Mercury*, Wollongong’s daily. Graham was formerly a digital news editor for Australian Community Media and editor of the *Port Macquarie News* (*Telum Media Alert*, 23 March 2022).

Joanne Gray, managing editor of the *Australian Financial Review*, has left the paper after working for it in multiple positions over two decades. She served as Washington correspondent, opinion editor and financial services editor before becoming the managing editor in 2018. She left to join climate change investment and advisory firm, Pollination Group, as an executive director (*Telum Media Alert*, 1 April 2022).

Kathy Lipari, a former senior News Corp journalist, is the new media director for New South Wales Premier Dominic Perrottet. Lipari has filled several senior roles with News Corp, including editor of the *Manly Daily* when it was printed daily (*Australian*, 28 March 2022).

Samantha Maiden, of news.com.au, has been named the Graham Perkin Australian Journalist of the Year for 2021, for breaking the story of Brittany Higgins’ alleged rape in Parliament House, Canberra. The *Age*’s football columnist, **Caroline Wilson**, won the Melbourne Press Club’s Lifetime Achievement Award for her dedicated career of ground-breaking and agenda-setting sports reporting and commentary (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 March 2022).

James Massola is the new national affairs editor of the Melbourne *Age* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. He was formerly political correspondent for the *Sunday Age* and the *Sun-Herald*. He continues to be based in Canberra (*Telum Media Alert*, 4 April 2022).

Paul Murphy, chief executive of the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA) since 2015, will not seek renewal of his contract when it expires in February 2023. MEAA will soon begin a search for a new chief executive (*Telum Media Alert*, 6 April 2022).

Patrick O’Neil has been appointed opinion editor of the Melbourne *Age*. He joined the paper in 2010 as a senior sub-editor, and has since served as tablet night editor, justice editor, PM news editor and, most recently, deputy editor of the *Sunday Age* (*Telum Media Alert*, 30 March 2022). The previous opinion editor was **Margaret Easterbrook**, who is now working three days a week as a deputy opinion editor alongside Emile Day (*Telum Media Alert*, 1 April 2022).

Bruce Rockemer has retired after 45 years as a journalist. He started as journalist on the *Maryborough-Hervey Bay Chronicle* (now the *Fraser Coast Chronicle*) in 1977. He was managing editor of the *Tablelander*, Atherton, for two years from 2007 before becoming editor of the *Innisfail Advocate*. He finished as chief of staff at the *Townsville Bulletin* where he worked his final year in journalism (*Telum Media Alert*, 6 April 2022).

117.1.7 Counting the readers

How do you find out who is reading what in Victoria? And who do you believe?

The *Herald Sun* says (28 February 2022, p.2): Powerful exclusives setting the national and global agenda have seen the *Herald Sun’s* readership continue to surge ahead and reinforced the masthead’s position as Victoria’s most influential media brand. The latest Roy Morgan figures released 28 February show the *Herald Sun* is the most read newspaper in Australia from Monday to Saturday, and the total monthly Victoria print and digital audience of the *Herald Sun* is the biggest in the state, at **3.323 million readers**.

The *Age* says (28 February 2022, p.2): The *Age* is the most read Victorian-based masthead in the country, with a growing audience of **6.1 million readers** a month. New figures released by Roy Morgan show the *Age* is outpacing the local publishing industry with its total print and digital audiences in a year that included extended COVID pandemic-related lockdowns and the delayed Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

117.1.8 Deaths

Armstrong, Noel David: D. 26 February 2022, in Melbourne, aged 81. Early in his career, Noel was credited as Tasmania’s youngest A-grade journalist; joined the Launceston *Examiner* as a cadet in 1957; served with ABC News in Hobart from the early 1960s to 1972, when he moved to Melbourne to work with Laurie Kerr at International Public Relations; in 1978, set up his own agency, United Public Relations, which he sold to international group Hill and Knowlton, then headed its Asia-Pacific division until 1996; later served as communications chief for Epworth Hospital and a director of Victoria’s Royal District Nursing Service; symbols of Noel’s life featured at the funeral mass at the Xavier College chapel in Kew – his typewriter, a statue of the Virgin Mary, reading glasses, newspaper and MG badge and car keys (source: John Rumney).

Bennett, John Colin Monash: D. 23 February 2022 in Melbourne, aged 92; journalist, film critic for the *Age* for 25 years, horse rider and instructor, pianist and talented portrait artist (*Age*, 26 February 2022, p.43).

Cannon, Michael Montague: D. 24 February 2022 in Melbourne, aged 92; historian, journalist and editor; born in Brisbane and raised in a Victorian country newspaper office; educated at Cobden High School, Camperdown High and Geelong College; member of a prominent newspaper family (great-grandmother Jessie Grover was one of Australia’s early female journalists, in the 1880s; grandfather Montague “Monty” Grover was the editor of successful *Sun* newspapers in Sydney and Melbourne; and mother Dorothy “Dolly” Cannon was a working journalist from 1920s to 1990s); at end of World War II, began working as a copyboy on the Melbourne *Argus*, then as a cadet journalist on the *Herald*; sailed to England in 1948 to work on London staff of *Sydney Morning Herald*; after studying the operations of the fledgling BBC television service, wrote a book-length series of articles for the *Radio Times* on the glowing future of television; returned to Melbourne as a senior on the *Age*; turned to the publication of monthly magazines and in 1955 became founding editor of the Australian edition of *Family Circle*; early in 1959, sold his magazine interests and spent the proceeds on a news magazine called *Newsday* (not to be confused with the

Age's later evening newspaper); first wife Susan died later that year and *Newsday* ceased publication; appointed associate editor of Sydney *Sunday Mirror* in 1960; returned to Melbourne after dispute with publisher Rupert Murdoch; began new career, writing history, in 1960s, as well as working as a bookshop manager and associate director of Melbourne University Press; his first best seller, *The Land Boomers* (1966), exposed well-known individuals and families who led the speculative boom of the 1880s; one of several people writing as "The Melbourne Spy", Cannon contributed frequently to *Nation*, a Sydney journal; appointed founding editor in 1969 of Melbourne's first professional Sunday newspaper, Gordon Barton's *Sunday Observer*; also founded *Sunday Review*, precursor of *Nation Review*; both papers lasted some years, but ceased publication or changed owners when the anti-Vietnam crusades died away and Barton's funds were exhausted; in all, Cannon wrote 20 books under his own name and edited 15 others; his biggest selling book (70,000 copies) was *The Exploration of Australia*; *The Land Boomers* has sold more than 40,000 (Obituary - Michael Montague Cannon - Obituaries Australia (anu.edu.au), accessed 21 March 2022).



Michael Cannon at work in the *Age* office, 1851

Curran, Brian Joseph: D. 1 February 2022 in Wauchope, NSW, aged 66; born in Sydney; family moved in 1962 to Wauchope where he completed his schooling in 1973; gained a cadetship at the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1974; became a sports reporter, covering rugby league and soccer and writing a sports column; became deputy and relieving sports editor; possessed a high degree of literacy, high level of production skill and a flair for layout; returned to writing before taking a sabbatical to work on a farm; returned to Fairfax where he became chief sub of "Spectrum" before moving to the *Sun-Herald* where he was chief sports sub (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 February 2022, advertisement).

Klensch, Elsa: D. 4 March 2022 in New York, aged 89 or 92; born in 1930 or 1933; migrated to Australia with her German parents before World War II; spent some years at Cooranbong, south of Newcastle; her father died when she was young and she moved with mother to Blue Mountains, taking her mother's surname, Aesbacher; won a cadetship at the *Daily Telegraph*; said she wanted to be a political reporter; wrote under byline Elsa Barker; by 1960 she was in London working on the soon-to-close afternoon daily, the *Star*, known for its fashion reporting, and then the *Sunday Express*; returned to Australia on maiden voyage of SS *Canberra*, reportedly negotiating to be its press officer in lieu of the fare; stayed on board as it skipped around the Pacific and finally back to Sydney; worked for a while at the ABC and then Papua New Guinea as a press officer for the Australian government before moving to Hong Kong where she worked for a trade newspaper; married Charles Klensch, who ran the Saigon bureau of American TV network, ABC; moved to New York where she had had "Seventh Avenue" education on America's fashion bible, *Women's Wear Daily*; passed through other legendary mastheads such as *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar* and the *New York Post*; was doing a TV spot when noticed by Ted Turner, who was on the cusp of launching the 24-hour news channel, CNN; he hired her and a few months later she was presenting her first show and reshaping the world of fashion reporting (*Weekend Australian*, 26-27 March 2022, p.10).

Lovass, Stephen John: D. 18 March 2022 in Melbourne, aged 83; joined the Melbourne *Age* in 1976 from the Ford Motor Company and became a highly respected member of the senior management group; chief financial executive at David Syme and Company, *Age* publisher, for more than 25 years; understood the pressures, demands (and occasional excesses) of the editorial and marketing departments and usually accommodated them (source: John Tidey).

McCausland, James: D. 20 February 2022 at home in Staten Island, New York City, aged 77; born and educated in the United States; came to Australia in 1971 and lived here for 37 years; his cultural contributions to his adopted country included writing the screen play and appearing in the Australian film *Mad Max*; and several years as inaugural chair of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival; journalist and editorial executive at Melbourne *Age* before joining the newspaper's senior management group as business manager (source: John Tidey).

Richardson, Peter: D. 18 February 2022 at Tamborine Mountain, Queensland, aged 92; born in Brisbane; joined *Toowoomba Chronicle* in 1945 as a cadet journalist; rose through ranks at the paper to become chief of staff; left in 1957 to become editor of the weekly *Nambour Chronicle* where he found himself to be also “chief reporter, sub-editor and proof-reader, and then on Thursdays I was expected to deliver the papers to Woombye and Palmwoods”; started writing a weekly column, which first appeared on 27 September 1957; continued the habit for 57 years, long after leaving full-time journalism; *Nambour Chronicle* became a bi-weekly in September 1966; Richardson became managing editor, but in 1974 dropped the management duties; in 1976, David Lonsdale was brought in as editor-in-chief as steps were taken towards the launch of a daily, which Richardson had suggested in 1974 as various weeklies were being added to the *Chronicle* stable; Richardson became the features editor at the launch of the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, 7 July 1980; Shirley Sinclair says Richardson was extremely well-read and with an insatiable appetite for news; he was a protector of the English language and cringed at words being misused and misspelled; he couldn’t bear to have a comma out of place, was a stickler for correct tense in a sentence, and often educated readers and reporters about the origin of words and phrases (Peter Richardson, *Aged in the Ink* (2009); Rod Kirkpatrick, research notes; Shirley Sinclair, *Sunshine Coast News* website, 28 February 2022).

Walsh, Maximilian Sean: D. 23 March 2022 in Sydney, aged 84; born in a Catholic, Labor-voting family in Sydney; left school at 16 to work in a chemical factory; in 1955, joined John Fairfax and Sons as an assistant proof-reader; in 1956 became a cadet journalist with the *Sydney Morning Herald*; nine months later, he joined the *Sydney Daily Mirror*, where he entered the rough and tumble world of crime reporting; his ability quickly showed itself, and he was transferred to Canberra to cover parliamentary sessions; it was impressed on him that politics was about what people could get out of “the system”, and that system was based on economics; enrolled as an economics student at Sydney University, and performed brilliantly; in 1962, Maxwell Newton, whom Walsh had met during his stint in Canberra, recruited him to write in the *Australian Financial Review (AFR)* on oil and gas at a time when the industry was becoming increasingly important; Vic Carroll took over editorship of the *AFR* in 1964 and two years later sent Walsh back to Canberra, this time as chief political correspondent for the paper; he saw the dangers of Australian industry stagnating behind protectionist walls and his column, “Canberra Observed”, in the *AFR* and another in the *Sun-Herald* quickly gained prominence; one commentator put it: “Through his grasp of the central role of economics and the corrosive effects of protection, voluminous scoops, knowledge, intellectual audacity and occasional cheekiness, Walsh was a power in the land”; in 1974, became editor of the *AFR*; journalist Paul Bailey notes that Walsh “led the *Financial Review* through one of its most important periods, turning it into an agenda-setting powerhouse that campaigned and drove governments to important changes that opened up the Australian economy”; Max Suich said when Walsh was *AFR* editor-in-chief and Fred Brenchley, editor, that staff numbers “were enlarged, women journalists were recruited and encouraged, ideas were exchanged and argued over in the pub, at lunch and in the office in a rough and tumble collegium”; the dynamism of his editorial leadership and the growth of the economy led to the *AFR* finally making a profit”; in 1980, Walsh joined Australian Consolidated Press and wrote columns for the *Bulletin* and *Australian Business*; in 1981, became a political and economic commentator on Channel 9’s *Sunday* program; in 1985, began a two-year stint as co-presenter of the *Carlton-Walsh Report* and on Channel 10, where he anchored *The Walsh Report* (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 March 2022, online). See also: Paul Kelly, “Giant of political journalism drove generational change”, *Australian*, 25 March 2022, p.12.

117.1.9 More variety in magazine sector

Popular US entertainment magazine *Variety* is expected to arrive in Australia later this year after *Rolling Stone*’s local publisher struck a deal to bring the title to local shores. The Brag Media, an independent publishing group investing in print and digital titles, is preparing to launch *Variety* under an expanded licensing deal, in the latest sign of revival for the local magazine sector. Earlier, the merger between two major local publishers, Bauer Media (now Are Media) and Pacific Magazines, led to mass redundancies and the closure of several global titles, including *OK!*, *NW*, *Harper’s Bazaar*, *Elle* and *Instyle*. In the past two years, some of these titles—*Men’s Health*,

Women's Health, *Harper's Bazaar* and *Instyle*—were revived, this time by small, independent publishing houses *Age*, 28 February 2022, p.25).

117.1.10 AAP goes to the public with an app

Australia's national newswire AAP will make its stories available to the public through a mobile app, as it looks at alternative ways to make money and reduce dependence on government funding (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 March 2022). The newswire, which was rescued from closure by a group of philanthropists almost two years ago, began offering breaking national, state and sports news for \$10 a month through an app that launched on 28 March. The app was created to ensure existing philanthropists and supporters could see how their money is spent, but newly appointed AAP chief executive Lisa Davies said it would also allow the newswire to go direct to consumers for the first time.

"A national newswire needs to be an agile news organisation," Davies, former editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, said. "We need to broaden our appeal and deliver both our subscribers and supporters independent journalism that we do in the most effective and innovative way possible. It's also fair to say we need to explore new revenue models and this product could help us grow the service we provide by improving our brand awareness and encouraging more philanthropic and commercial support."

AAP has joined a small group of international newswires that are focused on engaging with the public (newswires are typically business to business operations). AP and Reuters have already created their platforms for readers, but neither requires a paid subscription. "Allowing subscriptions to the general public is not a traditional source of revenue for newswires, but enhancing our digital presence is becoming increasingly important," Davies said.

What AAP offers the public is different from what it provides its clients, including regional media company Australian Community Media, Seven West Media and Guardian Australia. Davies said the newswire was not trying to compete with other media companies. She said it was mainly focused on ensuring philanthropists such as the Loti and Victor Smorgon Family Foundation, John Sevier and Rebecca Gorman, and Rob Keldoulis could see the work being created.

117.1.11 What editor tells *SMH* readers

Election editorials: *Sydney Morning Herald* editor Bevan Shields in email letter to readers, 1 April 2022: "The goal of an election editorial is not to predict who will win, but to make a judgement about who we think deserves to win, and who has not done enough to earn the trust of voters. The *Herald* editorialised for Bill Shorten in 2019, Malcolm Turnbull in 2016, Tony Abbott in 2013, Julia Gillard in 2010, Kevin Rudd in 2007 and John Howard in 2001."

Dropping honorifics: In his email letter to readers on 8 April, Shields said the *Herald* and the Melbourne *Age* have been working for months on changes to their style guide, "a 248-page internal document designed to foster consistency, clarity and accuracy in the way we communicate with our audiences, regardless of the platform they choose". It is, says Shields, "the newsroom's bible". The biggest decision the papers have made is to do away with honorifics. "Whether they be a prime minister, a president, a doctor or a professor, after initial use of their title in our news stories, their surname alone will follow. With a few exceptions for things such as clarity, no more 'Mr', 'Ms', or anything else," Shields says. Under the new style, Scott Morrison is still introduced as Prime Minister Scott Morrison but subsequent mentions refer to him only as "Morrison" instead of "Mr Morrison". Many news organisations have decided to streamline their copy by moving away from honorifics, even ones you might not expect, such as the London *Times*.

See: Jo Anderson, "With due respect, why the *Age* is moving away from Mr and Mrs", *Age*, 11 April 2022, p.4. Anderson, the chief desk editor at the *Age*, coordinated production of the new style guide.

Covid for the third time: In his email to readers on 29 April, Shields said he had "managed to contract COVID-19 for the third time". The first time was April 2020 when he was the *Herald's* Europe correspondent; the second was December 2021 (despite being "triple vaccinated"); and the third, April 2022. His first bout was the worst.

117.1.12 Local Russian papers and the war

Every Thursday, Bondi Centre Newsagency receives three Russian-language newspapers on its doorstep, writes **Zoe Samios** (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 March 2022, p.27). The publications—*Argumenty i Fakty*, *Moskovskii Komsomolets (MK)* and *Unification*—are on a newsstand at the front of the shop with publications written in Italian, German, French and Greek. They also sit alongside Sydney’s local Ukrainian newspaper, the *Free Thought*, which arrives fortnightly. They, like international tech giants, are playing a role in the dissemination of news about the war in Ukraine for local readers. And yet the way the war is portrayed in the publications is very different.

Argumenty i Fakty, an international newspaper owned by the Russian government, does not use the words “war” or “conflict” on its front page. The main stories are about selling apartments and growing tomatoes. There are several headlines about Russia and its relationship with the world, but these are focused on sanctions and the support China is giving the country. A picture filled with Western brands says: “Fruits of Temptation. Who will now be tempting the Russian consumer and with what?” It also says it is natural for Russia to change country’s borders. The front page of Russian-owned newspaper *MK* focuses on investment in space and the formation of Australia’s aerospace armies, rather than the conflict.

Unification, the locally owned Russian newspaper, does not mention the war. The articles promoted include the birthday of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the latest on COVID and petrol prices. The war is mentioned for the first time on page three in an article about the president of Switzerland declaring his country’s readiness to hold talks regarding Ukraine.

But these newspapers couldn’t be more different from their Ukrainian counterparts. The most recent edition of Sydney’s local Ukrainian newspaper, the *Free Thought*, for instance, splashed with the headline “We believe in Ukraine’s victory”. Next to it was an image of the monument to poet Taras Shevchenko in Borodianka, with buildings burning in the background. The circulation of these diasporic newspapers is not publicly available, but for decades they have been accessible to thousands of Ukrainian and Russian people living in Australia (the 2016 Census said there were 13,366 Ukraine-born and 20,425 Russia-born people in the country).

Communications Minister Paul Fletcher’s request for tech platforms to remove Russian state-based media from their platforms earlier in March was a sign of how concerned the government is about the danger of spreading misinformation about the war. But that demand did not extend to newspaper publications (it is not in his remit).

117.1.13 Quill award for sports reporting reinstated

An independent review has found the decision to strip an *Age* sports reporter of a prestigious Victorian media prize was “flawed” and the award should be reinstated (*Australian*, 11 April 2022). The decision by the Melbourne Press Club board to annul Sam McClure’s 2020 Quill Award in the sports news category was heavily criticised by many in media circles and prompted the review by four independent panellists, who spent weeks scrutinising the MPC board’s progress. The review concluded the process followed by the board on 9 February was flawed in a number of ways. It found McClure and the *Age* should have been given the opportunity to show cause why the board should not revoke the Quill, and the decision to revoke the award should have been delayed until as many board members as possible could discuss the matter (many members were missing from the February meeting). The review also found the decision was based on three assumptions that were wrong. These included the claims that the article was no longer available (it could still be found in archived print versions); that the *Age* and McClure had conceded serious errors were made (they hadn’t) and the assumption that McClure had apologised (he hadn’t).

The 15-page report from the review was discussed at the MPC board meeting on 13 April. The board decided to reinstate the award (*Age*, 13 April 2022).

117.1.14 Federal election and fact-checking

On 10 April Prime Minister Scott Morrison called the federal election, to be held on 21 May.

In the lead-up to the election, media companies are receiving access to software that detects and tracks the spread of false and misleading information (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 April 2022).

Philanthropic organisation the Judith Nielson Institute is providing local media companies with access to the RMIT FactCheck Lab and international detection software to reduce the spread of disinformation online before the poll. JNI chief executive Mark Ryan said the project, known as Mosaic, was about doing more to immediately reduce the spread of problematic content before it damaged or influenced voters.

Misinformation is defined as false or misleading information that is likely to cause harm, while disinformation is more often distributed by users via spam and bot. Both are major problems on social media, particularly during crises and elections. The Morrison government has already pledged to introduce new laws to help reduce the spread of harmful content later this year, if it is re-elected.

JNI's project brings together work from the global think tank, Institute for Strategic Dialogue—which has deployed social media technology and techniques to reduce the spread of harmful content in the US and German elections—with RMIT's FactLab, a research group trying to debunk misinformation online. FactLab is monitoring disinformation campaigns targeting local voters on social media, and is using special technology created by the ISD to map the spread of harmful information online. The group is also watching accounts by MPs, local and international political actors and extremist groups and attempting to fact-check commentary as quickly as possible before disclosing it to the media and relevant officials.



117.2.1 Big tech and the courts

Meta Platforms (formerly Facebook) fought hard to have a Melbourne court dismiss an anti-trust lawsuit against it. The global social media giant's strategy was to argue that its dispute with an Australian tech media startup, Dialogue, was purely contractual and, as such, a matter that could only be resolved by a court in Silicon Valley (*Age*, 7 March 2022, p.27). Judges sitting in the Federal Court of Australia did not agree with those arguments. They ruled that Australian competition laws trumped any terms of service that Dialogue may have signed up to, and they rejected Meta's claims that its services were provided in the US, not in Australia.

117.2.2 New podcast for the *Australian*

The *Australian* has launched a new weekly podcast to bring the paper's essential headlines and one-page stories to on-demand audio. The *Front*, a 15-minute podcast, presented by the *Australian*'s editorial director, Claire Harvey, features journalists giving their take on issues, as well as behind-the-scenes insights from the newsroom. The podcast is produced by News Corp Australia's audio vision, NewsCast. It has been available since 21 March via the *Australian*'s app and other podcast platforms (*Australian*, 21 March 2022).

117.2.3 New wave of digital media on horizon

A new wave of digital media companies is coming to Australia, offering Millennial and Gen Z readers news in a punchy, quick and stylish format (writes Nick Bonyhady, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 March 2022, p.27). They tend to use frequent bolding to break up the page and emphasise subheadings that make salient points clear to the reader at a glance and reach readers where they are online, whether through email newsletters or Instagram.

Mainstream media in Australia missed the boat on the internet in the early 2000s, doing huge damage to its profitability and resulting in thousands of journalists losing their jobs. It tried to get on board with ad-driven sites like Huffington Post and BuzzFeed News in the 2010s, but they did

not last. If the new wave of outlets works, it could offer the industry a shot at redemption (and profit) but also fresh competition for established players.

Major media outlets might also be convinced that a snappier tone and (judicious) use of memes, humour and emojis is the way to reach younger readers, at least on some content.

Examples: it's early days for the genre, but there are already a few leading contenders.

- *The Daily Aus* does general news in short, simple bites and claims an audience that is 80 per cent under 30, with a female skew. It has 329,000 followers on Instagram, its favoured platform.
- *Letter of Intent* is a daily email newsletter for finance and deal professionals, tracking market moves and capital raising, that started this year. Its founder Kal Jamshidi, 32, told *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age* that's just the start. It will expand into more verticals, like HR and is quickly growing its subscriber base, which sits at 5500.
- *Cut Through Venture* is another newsletter, aimed at the start-up capital raising space, but full of the data and charts beloved by techies.

117.2.4 Reuters and Meta expand partnership

Reuters and the Meta Journalism Project have announced the expansion of the Reuters Digital Journalism Course. The free e-learning program, launched as a partnership between Reuters and Meta in May 2021, aims to enable journalists across the Asia-Pacific, India, the Middle East and Africa to build skills in digital newsgathering and publishing. The course will now be offered in 12 additional countries and territories and in additional languages, including Italian, Spanish, German, Swahili, Amharic, Traditional Chinese, Hindi, Turkish, Bangla, Tamil, Polish and Filipino (*Telum Media Alert*, 23 March 2022).

117.2.5 Fresh look for *Canberra Times* website

The *Canberra Times* website was revamped on 22 March. Based on the feedback of hundreds of local online users, the changes in the website have been designed to be more responsive to mobile and tablet users as well as the paper's large desktop audience. In addition to the new look and feel, digital subscribers of the *Canberra Times* will; unlock access to all of publisher's ACM's other local news sites around the ACT and southern inland region (*Canberra Times*, 19 March 2022, p.2).



3—CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS: COMMUNITY & PROVINCIAL

117.3.1 Report from parliamentary inquiry into regional papers

The report from the Inquiry into Australia's regional newspapers, issued on 25 March, has made 12 recommendations including that the Australian Government ensure a percentage of government print advertising is placed in regional newspapers. The report also discusses the emergence of hyper-local news providers.

The House of Representatives standing committee on communications and the arts, which conducted the inquiry, recommended the Australian Government review government advertising expenditure across all departments and agencies with a view to ensuring a minimum of 20 per cent of government print advertising is placed in regional newspapers.

The committee's report, *The Future of Regional Newspapers in a Digital World*, said the government advertising should be part of long-term advertising contracts that provided certainty of income for regional publications. "The committee expects this measure to be cost neutral and

able to be implemented within 12 months,” the report said. “An independent process should be established to select the newspaper outlets eligible to participate in the print advertising program.”

The committee also recommended the Australian Government carry out a comprehensive review of the viability of regional newspapers in Australia, reporting its findings to the committee within two years.

The committee’s 12 recommendations in full are:

1. That the Australian Government undertake a comprehensive review of the viability of regional newspapers in Australia, reporting its findings to the Committee within two years.
2. That *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* be amended to enable the Australian Communications and Media Authority to consider the factors outlined in the *News in Australia: diversity and localism* research paper in determining whether an unacceptable media diversity situation exists.
3. That the Australian Government consider the funding and development of a project to gather and analyse core longitudinal data on regional newspapers in Australia over a minimum 10-year period.
4. That the Australian Government consider legislative amendments which would allow the sharing of industry data on regional newspaper providers between relevant Government agencies.
5. That the Government create and maintain a national, publicly available register of regional news providers (both print and digital), using the US News Desert project by the University of North Carolina as a model.
6. That the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications work with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the Special Broadcasting Service to facilitate partnerships with small regional publishers and broadcasters, modelled on the BBC Local News Partnerships program.
7. That the Australian Government review government advertising expenditure across all departments and agencies with a view to ensuring a minimum of 20 per cent of government print advertising is placed in regional newspapers. This should be part of long term advertising contracts that provide certainty of income for regional publications. The Committee expects this measure to be cost neutral and able to be implemented within 12 months. An independent process should be established to select the newspaper outlets eligible to participate in the print advertising program.
8. That the Australian Government develop a targeted grants program aimed at small, independent newspapers based in regional and remote Australian communities.
9. That the Australian Government provides funding for research, programs and initiatives to assist local publishers, including regional newspapers to:
 - (a) identify and implement alternative, sustainable business models, achieved through a diverse range of revenue streams that might include advertising, audience generated income, services and e-commerce;
 - (b) increase capabilities required to perform the governance, administrative and editorial functions of the news organisation; and
 - (c) implement effective technology to reach their target audience and monetise outputs.
10. That, as part of the review recommended at Recommendation 1, the Australian Government also considers the viability of a tax rebate for regional businesses that support their local newspaper through a minimum advertising spend, and for regional newspapers that produce public interest journalism and employ local journalists.
11. That the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, and Communications and the Australian Communications and Media Authority work with relevant digital platforms and news providers to ensure appropriate transparency in voluntary commercial deals.
12. That the *Consumer and Competition Act 2010* be amended to require that news media organisations must have revenue of \$75,000 for the most recent year and for at least 3 of the 5 most recent years to register for the News Media and Digital Platforms Bargaining Code.

117.3.2 Newsprint price rises to be worse than expected

Price hikes slated to hit regional newspapers on 1 July from Australia's sole remaining newsprint plant are worse than the industry has feared, with some publishers reporting price jumps of 80 per cent over previous rates and orders going only half filled (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 April 2022). Regional media representatives have asked the federal government for rapid help, fearing the cost rises could result in newsroom closures. Norwegian paper giant Norske Skog has closed its New Zealand and Albury mills in recent years because of a long-term decline in demand for newsprint, leaving only its Boyer facility in Tasmania making that type of paper in the region. But demand for paper is now outstripping limited supply as Australia recovers from the pandemic.

International options are limited. Another major global wood products company, Finland's UPM, is facing a crippling strike that has lasted about four months. Russia, a major supplier of wood, is under sanctions because of its invasion of Ukraine. And freight from Asian paper supplies has become more costly as a result of the global supply chain crunch. Country Press Australia, representing 190 papers, and Australian Community Media, a company that owns 140 titles (many of which belong to Country Press Australia), wrote on 21 April to the Communications Minister Paul Fletcher and Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce to ask for help through the price crunch.

117.3.3 The Echidna and the election

ACM has launched The Echidna, a national weekday online bulletin covering stories from the federal election trail. Garry Linnell, a former editor of the *Bulletin* and the *Daily Telegraph*, is The Echidna. The bulletin is available free to ACM subscribers and has been promoted across the company's stable of 140 mastheads. The first bulletin was sent on 14 March (*Telum Media Alert*, 11 March 2022).

117.3.4 *Bush Journal*: 'love letter to the humble newspaper'

Photographer and writer, Jessica Howard, grew up on a grazing property in Central Queensland and studied journalism at the University of Queensland. She graduated in 2003 and spent nearly 10 years working in the United Kingdom. She did not want to go back to where she grew up. Instead she launched, in 2021, *Bush Journal*, a quarterly paper which features creative work from around Australia. The website says: *Bush Journal* is a quarterly collection of soulful stories and stunning photography from rural Australia. It's printed on improved newsprint as "a love letter to the humble newspaper" and its pages are designed to be re-loved as posters or wrapping for paddock snacks.

The first issue, containing 44 pages, featured a top-secret bush wedding; tricky relationships with country dads; a day in the life of a young station manager from the Northern Territory a stunning aerial photograph feature; the battle to be creative in rural Australia; an interview with Cowra wool producers, the Chalkers; and the importance of self-portraiture.

The second issue (February 2022), containing 50 pages, explores: the lure of abandoned houses; when a crop feels like family; the crazy evolution of Western Australia's wildflowers; motherhood in a remote Aboriginal community; how to create magic with a stylised woolshed shoot; patisserie desserts on a far-western sheep station; a special Territory wedding; an interview with photographer Pip Williams; why the Bush teaches you about what you need; and a photo essay about NW Queensland cowboys.



4-NEWSPAPER HISTORY

117.4.1 Magazines in the first half of the 1800s

The *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 July 1864, p.3, carried a report on a two-hour lecture on Australian literature, given at Windsor the previous week by William Walker. Walker discussed newspapers at one point and then talked about magazines: "... [he] enumerated the many unsuccessful attempts which had been made to establish that kind of literature. He referred to the *New South Wales Magazine*, one of that name having been published in 1833, and another in 1843. Next to the *University Magazine*, and lastly to the *Month*, which he said was the best of its kind which had been tried in the colony. Since the decease of the latter, he said, no successful effort had been made to establish a literary magazine in the colony, which he thought was some reproach to them as a people. He hoped the period was not far distant when the colony would support periodical literature of that kind.

"It affords a grateful outlet for native talent, it being a well-known fact that many of the first productions of genius in other countries had first been brought out through the medium of a magazine." He quoted from an article in the *Month* "on the support of letters in Australia", in which the writer lamented the fact that little encouragement had hitherto been given to men of educated talent in the colony. The *Heads of the People*, which was published by William Baker in 1847 and 1848, was next referred to, and a volume of the work produced. Numerous pamphlets on various subjects, but chiefly on religious or political questions, had issued at various times from the Colonial Press, but he did not deem it requisite to refer particularly to them."

117.4.2 For sale: 27 years of the *Sydney Gazette*

Janette Pelosi, of Sydney, discovered the following ad. in the *Sydney Gazette*, 24 July 1830, p.2, col. 2: "FOR SALE, the whole Number of the SYDNEY GAZETTES, from the first Commencement of 1803, to the present Date, all complete, and most of them bound. To prevent trouble, the Price will be Sixty Guineas.—Apply to A. B. Gazette Office. They are all in very good order."

117.4.3 The remarkable Frank Marien

Following is an edited extract from Colleen Passfield, "Frank Marien, Journalist (1889-1936)", *Endeavour, Journal of the Botany Bay Family History Society*, No. 150, March 2022, pp.43-46:

Francis Joseph (Frank) Marien was a well known Sydney journalist and newspaper editor, the son of Robert Marien (Marianni), also known as Sebastien or Sabatino, and his wife, Mary née Ledo. His parentage was Irish-Italian. Unusually talented, he could have been a great artist, musician or engineer. He chose to become a journalist, and he was remarkable in that sphere; he was loved and respected by all who knew him.

Frank was educated at St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, where he became captain of the school and had a distinguished sporting record as a member of the winning "Eight", captain and fullback for the Rugby XV, and captain of the cricket and athletics teams. His Rugby performances were so good, it was thought he could have played international Rugby.

His first position was with the *Freeman's Journal* in Sydney in November 1910, immediately after leaving school, but it was on the *Lithgow Mercury* that he made his start as a junior (cadets were unknown at that time). His training there was rigorous but made to make or break him. It did the former, making him a first-class journalist and, later, a good boss.

He returned to Sydney and went to the *Daily Telegraph*, then to the *Sunday Times*. Marien then became publicity manager for J.C. Williamson Ltd. In 1919 he returned to the *Telegraph* and joined the *Sydney Sun* in 1922, eventually becoming news editor. Subsequently, he was managing editor and director of *Truth* and raised its circulation substantially. In 1927 he joined Smith's Newspapers Ltd as editor-in-chief, a position he held until his death in 1936.

Smith's Weekly was founded in 1919 by financier Sir James Joynton Smith, theatrical publicist Claude McKay and journalist Clyde Packer (father of Frank and grandfather of Kerry). It mixed sensationalism, satire and controversial opinions with sporting and finance news. It also includes short stories, cartoons and caricatures.

Frank Marien was a highly skilled mechanical engineer, Linotype compositor and had an elaborate workshop at his home where he made all kinds of devices for his home. A movie projectionist, he had an 80-seat cinema set up at his home, with a full-size picture-projector and sound equipment, where he regularly entertained his friends. Art critics said he could have become one of Australia's significant artists had he stuck to black and white work instead of journalism.

117.4.4 Chipping away at the masthead of the Age

Extract from *Les Carlyon: A Life in Words. Collected writings from Gallipoli to the Melbourne Cup* (2021), p.215 (from an article published 2 July 1993):

Before leaving for Cambridge, the economist Neville Norman addressed the Australian Institute of Management under the title "If I were PM". One of his proposals was that the Union Jack on our flag be remade 2 per cent smaller each year to reflect Britain's declining influence here. This isn't silly. At the *Age* in the late 1960s we wanted to redesign the paper's masthead, a riot of heraldry straight from Dickens' England, but feared an abrupt change would upset our readers. So we chipped away at the old masthead. One week we would knock off a rampant lion, the next the prancing unicorn, then a squiggle. When the new masthead was eventually introduced, few readers thought the change radical.

117.4.5 William McMahon and a Packer deal in 1932

Extract from Patrick Mullins, *Tiberius with a Telephone: The life and stories of William McMahon* (2020), p.32-34:

In October 1932, the journalist George Warnecke conceived a plan to scratch at the protective instincts of Hugh Denison, chairman of the Sydney-based Associated Newspapers. Warnecke's plan was simple: form a syndicate to take on the loss-making Australian Workers' Union newspaper, the *World*, and then, by announcing plans to set up the *World* as a direct rival to Denison's evening paper, the *Sun*, provoke a panicked takeover bid from Denison, a tidy proportion of which would be profit.

Unable to raise the capital for the idea, Warnecke approached his old boss, Clyde Packer. Packer was intrigued but could not take part. He told Warnecke to talk with his son, Frank, who was smarting from his recent ejection from Associated Newspapers. The young Packer seized on Warnecke's plan with glee. He brought James Scullin's former treasurer, E.G. "Ted" Theodore, into the loop, and together they purchased a nine-day option on the *World* and its premises for £100. Via a front-page report on the *Newspaper News* on 1 November 1932, Packer announced that he and Theodore would remodel the *World* along the lines of the London evening dailies and undercut the price of the *Sun* by a ha'penny. "We are busily organising so that the new production will make its first appearance on November 9," he said.

To ensure the scratch could not be ignored, Packer had his solicitors register a new company to publish the paper: Sydney Newspapers Ltd. According to the announcements it made, the company had a formidable authorised capital of £150,000. But only £30,000 was actually paid at the time. Packer and Theodore, respectively managing director and chairman, invested £5,000 apiece; Warnecke scraped together £1,000; the remainder came from "friends and business associates".

Where did [William] McMahon fit into this? As he described it forty years later, McMahon's involvement with Sydney Newspapers Ltd was simple:

On 8th November 1932 or somewhere about that time I did sign the memorandum and articles of association of his [Packer's] company. I was then an articled clerk in Allen Allen & Hemsley. I had never met Frank Packer; I had never met his associates. I did not know who he was. The men to whom I was clerking, Sir Norman Cowper and Mr Arthur Hemsley (sic), asked me to sign the document. Of course, I signed it. Any person with a knowledge of the law and a knowledge of the way companies are formed would have done exactly as I did.

McMahon may certainly have signed the papers, but to leave it there is to understate his role. McMahon was an original subscriber to the infant company, one who stumped up part of the remaining capital. Cowper and Hemsley were not among those others; indeed, the articles of association were not even drawn up by Allen Allen & Hemsley. How Cowper and Hemsley would have been involved, if they were at all, is unclear. It is likely, however, that McMahon was alerted to the opportunity by a relative, Maisie McMahon, a stenographer for the lawyers who drew up the papers.

However it happened, it was among the best investments that McMahon ever made—for the scratching worked. Denison and the board at Associated Newspapers panicked. They paid Packer and Theodore £86,500 in exchange for their promise not to publish an afternoon daily newspaper or Sunday newspaper in Sydney for three years. The only modesty that Denison managed to insist upon was keeping the figures private: "It was inadvisable to make this public," Denison said. The discretion did not last. It was common knowledge within a few months.

The money, and the company that had been formed in the ploy to obtain it, was the seed of the Packer family's wealth and power. From that money sprang the *Australian Women's Weekly*, from that came Australian Consolidated Press; from that grew the clout that Packer would wield unabashedly in the service of McMahon's political ambitions. However new it was in 1932, the connection between McMahon and Packer would strengthen in the years that followed: Packer would bring his business almost permanently to Allen Allen & Hemsley in 1936, and McMahon would count the press tycoon as a close friend.

117.4.6 Launceston *Examiner* at 180

The *Examiner*, Launceston, celebrated its 180th birthday on 12 March 2022, publishing a 36-page special issue to mark the occasion. The paper is the third oldest Australian newspaper still in print. The older papers are the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which began publication on 18 April 1831 as the *Sydney Herald*, and the *Geelong Advertiser*, which began on 21 November 1840. On the *Examiner*, here's an extract from Rod Kirkpatrick's *A Short History of the Australian Country Press* (2014), p.21.

When the *Launceston Examiner* became the first Tasmanian provincial newspaper to publish daily, it threw convention out the window. It made the move not at the start of a quarter, but as a competitive strategy. The *Examiner* appeared daily from 21 December 1877, two days after the *Devon Herald* had been launched at Latrobe, then the biggest town on or close to the north-west coast and at a time when the *Cornwall Chronicle* was competing strongly as a tri-weekly. The Latrobe paper was the first Tasmanian country newspaper launched outside Launceston. The *Launceston Examiner and Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser* began publication on 12 March 1842 with James Aikenhead, as the proprietor, publisher and official editor. The unofficial editor was the Rev. John West, a man of rare intellectual power and the principal mover in bringing the newspaper into existence. His powerful editorials gave the paper immediate and far-reaching influence. While editing the *Examiner*, he was pastor of the Congregational Church and was engaged in writing an acclaimed history of Tasmania, published by the *Examiner* in 1852. A leader of the movement to abolish the transportation of convicts to Van Diemen's Land, West put his case "with apostolic zeal from pulpit, platform and press, seeking to awaken the public to the degrading effects" of being transported as a convict. He made it a national cause, leading to the formation of the Australasian League for the Prevention of Transportation. Through the columns of the *Examiner*, West attacked transportation in editorials of great length and vigour that, in their own way, were a call to moral arms. When transportation ended in 1853, the members of his church presented him with a purse of fifty sovereigns and the people of Launceston gave him with a testimonial.

When West left Launceston in 1854 to become the first designated editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Examiner* wrote: "His was the inspiring spirit that gave vitality and impetus to every well-concerted and successful movement. He was the guiding hand that chiefly directed the machinery ... his tongue was ever eloquent, his pen was incessantly occupied. He did all that is permitted to the most gifted to accomplish." West also championed the cause of federation of the Australian colonies. Sixteen of his articles on this topic were published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* between 30 January and 1 September 1854. These articles helped convince John Fairfax, sole proprietor of the *Herald*, to appoint West editor. He took up the position on 14 November 1854 – at a salary believed to have been £1,000 a year – and edited the *Sydney Morning Herald* from 1854 until his death on 11 December 1873.

117.4.7 The country newspaper's role

Dungog Chronicle, 29 October 1949, p.3:

Fred Thompson writes (extract): When that great English provincial newspaper, the *Manchester Guardian*, celebrated its centenary, C. P. Scott, who for 57 years was its editor, wrote his conception of what a newspaper stands for: "The newspaper is of necessity something of a monopoly, and its first duty is to shun the temptation of a monopoly. Its primary office is the gathering of news. At the peril of its soul it must see that the supply is not tainted. Neither in what it gives nor in what it does not give, nor in the mode of its presentation must the unclouded face of Truth suffer wrong. Comment is free but facts are sacred. Propaganda so called by this means is hateful. The voice of opponents no less than that of friends has a right to be heard. Comment is also justly subject to a self-imposed restraint. It is well to be frank, it is even better to be fair."

These words have since gone round the world. No doubt echoes have been heard in many country districts, for C. P. Scott's policy being forth right yet fair is evident in the policy adopted by large numbers of Australian country publishers. The country newspaper stands on its merit as a newspaper, not as a political organ. It is fair, tolerant and above all independent. It covers a wide variety of productions and of potential markets.

Local pride

Nevertheless, all country newspapers have something in common. Affectionately termed “the local rag”, there is considerable local pride in each separate community having its own newspaper which quite often has been handed down from father to son, generation to generation, and few are the human and interesting happenings within the paper's horizons that fail to “make” its pages and thus bring all concerned together for greater understanding, harmony and good will. In many country districts one often sees an almost aggressive loyalty when outsiders harshly compare the local paper with more widely read and more expensively produced publications.

Prestige unchallenged

In most cases these genuine news sheets portray every day happenings in a purely reportorial vein. The country newspaper is usually as home spun and down-to-earth as are the honest and industrious people in the community it serves. The local editor knows his country scene: he notes items which are of no interest to the daily press but which knit local communities closer together and keep them informed of local matters which would otherwise be mere rumour open to the usual enlargements and aggravations on which irresponsibility feeds. Invariably produced by one whose hand is on the wheel that steers for progressive development and who occupies an important position in the community, the local newspaper has a prestige which is enjoyed by no other publication circulating in the district.

There is no substitute

In its peculiar way there is no substitute for the country paper and the reader whose copy has gone astray combs the town until he gets it or borrows from someone else. On its publishing day no other publication can compare with its local circulation. It is a leisurely paper: what cannot be read today can be just as interesting tomorrow. Recently a director of one of our largest advertising agencies visited a friend some 180 miles from Sydney. When asked why he did not take out subscriptions with the metropolitan dailies, the man on the land replied, “If you want news here you can get it from the *Times*. That gives me all the news I want. I have no touch with the city except for an occasional visit. The news I want concerns local wool prices, stock sales, council meetings and other items which I can only get from the *Times*.”

117.4.8 Trove and Victoria

Wayne Hodges (email: info@moretroveforvic.org) has written to the ANHG: “Previously I've exchanged emails with you in respect to the possibility of getting *Newspaper News* (1928-1954) digitised on Trove. The State Library of NSW has completed a pagination survey of the out-of-copyright portion of *Newspaper News*. The publication was produced monthly, with a commemorative 100th issue published in August 1936 and a 25th anniversary supplement produced in May 1953. According to the survey this is a total of 7,923 pages, which at \$2.20 per page will cost \$17,430.60 to digitise. I'm yet to get formal indicative quotes from Trove as I thought it best to gain your advice on what years are best to show preference to. Between 1928 and 1954 are there particular years more worthy of digitisation? [ANHG has suggested up to 1940.]

Do you think the e-subscribers of ANHG's newsletter will be supportive of a crowdfunding campaign to see *Newspaper News* (1928-1954) digitised? [Please contact Wayne yourself if you wish to assist his cause.]

117.4.9 Flashback 100 (7): Lachlan Murdoch's changing role

This is the seventh in a series of flashbacks to items in the *ANHG Newsletter* 100 issues ago (20 years ago). This extract is from *ANHG* No. 17, April 2002.

Who said you can't be a prince of print and queen of the screen? Lachlan Murdoch, who has been managing the *New York Post* and HarperCollins Publishers for two years, has now been given responsibility for managing the 33 American television stations in the Fox Entertainment Group. Lachlan, 30, is the heir apparent to the media empire put together by his father, Rupert, the major owner of Australian metropolitan newspapers (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 February 2002, p.3; *Australian*, 27 February 2002, p.21; see also ANHG 17.63.10 and 17.63.11).



5—RECENTLY PUBLISHED

117.5.1 Book

Olmsted, Kathryn S., *The Newspaper Axis: Six Press Barons Who Enabled Hitler*. Yale University Press, 328 pp.

As World War II approached, the six most powerful media moguls in America and Britain tried to pressure their countries to ignore the fascist threat. In America, Robert McCormick's *Chicago Tribune* and its associated radio station, McCormick's cousin Joe Patterson's *Daily News*, and Patterson's sister Eleanor "Cissy" Patterson's *Washington Times-Herald*, as well as William Randolph Hearst's media empire, all pushed isolationist viewpoints; while in England, Lord Rothermere's *Daily Mail* extolled Hitler's leadership and Lord Beaverbrook's *Daily Express* insisted that Britain had no interest in defending Hitler's victims on the continent.

Kathryn S. Olmsted shows how these media titans worked in concert—including sharing editorial pieces and coordinating their responses to events—to influence public opinion in a right-wing populist direction, how they echoed fascist and anti-Semitic propaganda, and how they delayed both Britain's and America's response to Nazi aggression.

117.5.2 Articles

[See 117.1.1 for Jane Albrechtsen article about Labor's mean girls' and how the media reported them; and 117.1.2 for special sections devoted to Shane Warne]

Albrechtsen, Janet, "Time for the big guns over ABC's vigilante journalism", *Australian*, 27 April 2022, p.11. This is interesting background reading for item 117.1.1 above.

Bonyhady, Nick, "Buck stops with social media giants", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 February 2022, pp.26-27. What stays up and what comes down are not easy questions, but either way there is a lot of money riding on getting content moderation right.

Dore, Christopher, "New golden age of journalism no place for activists and crowd-pleasers", *Australian*, 28 March 2022, p.23. The author is the editor-in-chief of the *Australian*. The article is an edited extract of a speech he delivered on 25 March at the Judith Neilson Institute for Journalism and Ideas. Three letters to the editor (*Australian*, 30 March 2022, p.22) commented on the article/speech.

Knott, Matthew, "Headline magnet makes himself the story", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 February 2022, p.5. Even in an industry of supersized egos, Peter van Onselen stands out from the pack. See also: Bianca Hall, "Reporter names van Onselen in claims of bullying at Ten", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 February 2022, p.8.

Ruffles, Michael, "Bob Carr", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 February 2022, Spectrum, p.2. The former Foreign Minister, former NSW Premier and former journalist on philosophy, literature and the politicians of today.

Simons, Margaret, "Focus on gaffes misses the real issues", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 April 2022. Comment on reporting after the first week of the federal election campaign.

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