

The workroom of the *Charlton Tribune* (Vic.) office in the grand old days of hand-typesetting. The compositors worked by lantern light. The hand type cases are shown on the left and posters are pasted on the roof, a common practice in the early days of printing offices. The newspaper began as the *East Charlton Tribune* on 20 May 1876. The *Tribune's* final appearance was 23 January 1981; it was amalgamated with the *St Arnaud Mercury* (estab. 1864) under the title of the *North Central News*, still published.

## AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPER HISTORY GROUP

# NEWSLETTER

ISSN 1443-4962

No. 72

May 2013

### Publication details

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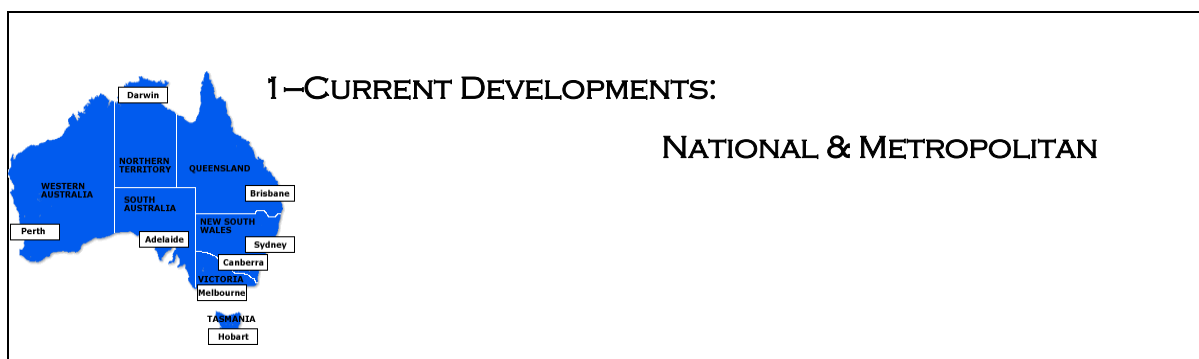
Back copies of the *Newsletter* and some ANHG publications can be viewed online at:

<http://www.amhd.info/anhg/index.php>

**Deadline for the next *Newsletter*: 15 July 2013.**

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.



### 72.1.1 MURDOCH REAFFIRMS FAITH IN NEWSPAPERS

Rupert Murdoch acknowledged in early March that the imminent separation of News Corporation's publishing assets from the film and television business would be a "tough sell", but he believed the company would prove the naysayers wrong. He reaffirmed his faith in the future of newspapers. "Investors don't like risky things," said the chairman and chief executive of News Corporation. "They're not going to like this 'new' News Corporation as a share for some time. We're going to have to prove we have rising profits, do a job and develop new products, electronic products and so on, before we get really recognised by the market, whereas Fox Group will just go up and up." News announced in June last year that it would undertake a historic split this year that would create two distinct publicly traded companies. The global publishing company, which will retain the News Corporation name, will contain the publishing businesses, the education division and the Australian assets. The global entertainment company, called Fox Group, will house the cable and television assets, filmed entertainment and direct satellite broadcasting businesses.

Murdoch's comments were made in a rare video interview with the Hoover Institution's "Uncommon Knowledge" series. Murdoch said he had "resisted" the split "for a long time", but it was already leading to "better and more intensive management of all these assets" as the company adopted new business models around its mastheads. "We are now a new company looking at the business model of newspapers, what we can do, digital developments we can make—it's a great opportunity," said Murdoch. He said the company's decision to abandon the world-first iPad-only news brand, a bold experiment called *The Daily*, was proof of the enduring value of "established" brands in the digital age. "If you take the number of people who pay real money for the *Wall Street Journal* or the *London Times* on their iPads, or even the *New York Post*, it's very different. But they're good looking, they feel like the paper (and) if people feel everything's there, they'll pay for it."

### 72.1.2 MEDIA LAWS: THE ROAD TO WITHDRAWAL

Newspapers on 13 March greeted Communications Minister Conroy's proposed changes to Australia's media laws with the sort of anger with which they greeted the Finkelstein report of 2012 and Media Minister Cass's Press Council proposals of 1975.

**Australian, 13 March:** Labor infuriated publishers by proposing a new federal regulator to oversee press standards and rule on mergers, as part of a wider overhaul to be rushed through parliament, despite fears it could trigger a \$4 billion television takeover (*Australian*, 13 March 2013). The reforms will establish a statutory authority to rule on the way the Australian Press Council and similar bodies adjudicate on complaints against the press, sparking furious warnings against the "unprecedented" intervention. Communications Minister Stephen Conroy launched a high-stakes bid to legislate the curbs within 10 days using support from the Greens and independent MPs who have aired concerns in the past at the way the news media covered federal politics. Opposition communications spokesman Malcolm Turnbull accused the minister of attempting to muzzle the press and declared a Coalition government would seek to rescind the laws. Ending almost a year of deliberation, Senator Conroy gained cabinet and caucus approval to create a Public Interest Media Advocate to decide on takeovers, vet investors in major companies and approve press standards.

**Daily Telegraph, 13 March:** Nick Leys (*Australian*, 18 March 2013) said of the coverage on the *Telegraph*: It was the splash that garnered nearly as much attention as the very issue it tackled. “These despots believe in controlling the press,” Sydney’s *Daily Telegraph* declared last Wednesday, above head shots of the leaders of some of history’s most oppressive regimes. “Conroy joins them.” Communications Minister Stephen Conroy wryly predicted how his raft of proposed media reforms would be met by the industry and the *Daily Telegraph* didn’t let him down, delivering a splash that was typically theatrical and over the top, as good tabloids often are. But did it go too far? ABC 7.30 presenter Leigh Sales certainly thought so and grilled News Limited editorial director Campbell Reid about the treatment in an interview that night. Reid rejected the criticisms and described the newspaper’s approach as “provocative tabloid presentation”. And if Conroy thought the provocative approach would end there, he was wrong. The next day, the *Telegraph* ran an apology to one of the despots featured in the splash, Joseph Stalin, who in the paper’s eyes was at least upfront about media regulation. The *Tele* depicted Conroy on page three that day wearing a grass skirt, in a story linking the government’s media reforms with the suppression of press freedom in Fiji under Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama. *Daily Telegraph* editor Paul Whittaker told Media the splash that got people talking was all about making a point as “emphatically as possible and in a way that would generate massive public debate”.

**Australian, 14 March:** Legal affairs editor Chris Merritt wrote: Stephen Conroy’s plans for media reform could destroy the Australian Press Council and encourage newspapers to establish smaller organisations in order to limit their potential liability under the government’s scheme. The threat to the Press Council stems from the system of collective punishment that seems an integral part of the vision outlined by the Communications Minister on Tuesday. Newspapers could be penalised if the officials who run the Press Council fail to deal properly with the transgressions of their competitors. Under the Conroy scheme, newspapers that belong to the Press Council—and other self-regulatory bodies—will be entitled to retain vital legal protections in the Privacy Act only if those organisations apply standards that are approved by a planned statutory regulator, the public interest media advocate. Without those protections media lawyers believe it would be extremely difficult—and perhaps even impossible—for newspapers to do their work.

**Australian, 18 March:** Julia Gillard was facing internal pressure to “disown” Labor’s controversial media laws if they fail to pass Parliament. The reforms looked increasingly doomed yesterday after the Greens said they would oppose elements of the legislation and independent MP Andrew Wilkie expressed numerous reservations, adding to NSW independent Rob Oakeshott’s likely opposition. With the Prime Minister facing continuing leadership speculation and media bosses descending on Canberra this morning to present a unified front against the reforms, the government’s controversial media law changes loom as a potential leadership flashpoint this week.

**Sydney Morning Herald online, 21 March (12.40pm, AEDT):** The federal government will withdraw the remaining four media reform bills from Parliament after failing to secure sufficient support from the crossbench to get them over the line. Fairfax Media understands Communications Minister Stephen Conroy will announce the decision shortly.

Earlier Senator Conroy said the government’s self-imposed deadline for passing the bills was firm, despite calls from independents to shelve the changes until Parliament returns in May. Earlier this week the lower house passed two relatively uncontroversial bills that would expand the requirement for Australian content, prevent the establishment of a fourth commercial television network, and update the ABC and SBS charters to explicitly require the production of online content. [The four bills were withdrawn a few hours before the Labor Party’s leadership spill in which no vote was needed for either leader or deputy leader because the only nominations were from the incumbents, Julia Gillard and Wayne Swan.]

### **72.1.3 MEDIA REGULATION: WA PERSPECTIVE**

West Australian Newspapers editor-in-chief Bob Cronin has called for a decentralised press regulation system where the Australian Press Council would be effectively abandoned for a series of independent state councils. Cronin said localised bodies such as the Independent Media Council, which Seven West Media established when the *West Australian* broke away from the Press Council last year, were more effective at handling complaints than a centralised bureaucracy. “I think the

Australian Press Council has just become a huge bureaucracy,” Cronin told the *Australian* (14 March 2013).

“One of the advantages of the IMC is that it’s local, so people who complain to it and want to appear before it, it’s quite easy for them to do because it’s based in Perth. Whereas, previously, if you complained to the Press Council and you want to appear before it, you had to go all the way to Sydney and that makes it more difficult for the complainant to pursue his complaint. I think, probably, a series of independent councils in the various states would be a more effective model than the centralised bureaucracy of the Australian Press Council.”

#### **72.1.4 CONCENTRATION OF MEDIA OWNERSHIP: A NEW SLANT**

The Gillard government’s controversial media reforms predisposed that the media sector is concentrated in the hands of the few, but new analysis has revealed the opposite to be true about the structure of local media ownership, reports **Darren Davidson** (*Australian*, 3 April 2013). The media sector has seen a renewed focus on potential mergers and acquisitions in recent months led by \$4 billion merger talks between Nine Entertainment and Southern Cross Media. Soon after the talks leaked in the press, media ownership became a contentious issue at last month’s Senate inquiry into the media reform bills, which proposed scrapping the 75 per cent reach rule and the establishment of a new media watchdog called the Public Interest Media Advocate (PIMA), which would enforce a public interest test on significant industry mergers.

“There’s actually a lack of concentration across the broader media industry,” Citi equities analyst Justin Diddams said in his research which applied the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index, a commonly accepted measure of market concentration. Julia Gillard told parliament the media laws would increase media diversity, but Citi’s analysis uncovered a “relatively diverse media market” with at least 15 independent media outlets and seven players with more than a 5 per cent share of the display advertising market. Diddams said News Corporation was “perceived” to own a disproportionate number of media outlets, but the notion failed to hold true under the HHI test. The test was applied to News’s Australian assets -- News Limited, REA Group, Fox Sports and a half share of Foxtel—but found that, contrary to perceived wisdom, the market remains “highly competitive” and it was “misguided” to assume otherwise.

#### **72.1.5 FAIRFAX (1): DAILIES CHANGE SIZE BUT ‘KEEP THE TONE’**

The *Sydney Morning Herald* and the Melbourne *Age* published their last weekday broadsheet issues on Friday, 1 March, and their first compact issues on Monday, 4 March (ANHG 71.1.1).

**Age:** In its final broadsheet weekday edition, the *Age* published a four-page broadsheet liftout, “A journey through history”, mainly featuring various front pages from its 159-year history—such as from the first issue on 17 October 1854; 29 December 1941, one of the first front pages devoted to news and photographs rather than advertising; 18 December 1967, reporting the disappearance of Prime Minister Harold Holt; 12 November 1975, a Governor-General sacks a Prime Minister; 9 February 2009, the Black Saturday bushfires. Changes in the front page are noted. There was also a four-page tabloid liftout, with Greg Baum reporting on how sporting farewells have changed over the years (this appeared also in the *SMH*). In the first compact edition, on 4 March, editor-in-chief Andrew Holden wrote an editorial, “Welcome to a new Age” (p.2). In the *Sunday Age*, 3 March, Bruce Guthrie discussed the change (see 72.5.2, Guthrie). The *Boroondara Review Local*, 29 August 20123, p.2, carried an article in which Holden discusses his news values and journalism.

**Sydney Morning Herald:** Esteemed Fairfax historian Gavin Souter wrote an article, “History makes way for compact future”, in the final weekday broadsheet issue of the *Herald*, 1 March. Accompanying an article on Page 18 about how work has changed were several interesting photographs of changing technology at the *Herald*. Editor-in-chief Sean Aylmer had an editorial, “Read all about it: the future’s in your hands”, in the first compact issue, on 4 March (p.2).

*Mediaweek* interviewed various Fairfax Media executives, including editorial director Garry Linnell, about the change to “compact” format (4 March 2013, pp.10-11). Fairfax advertised the format change on Pages 1, 2 and 3 of that issue of *Mediaweek*, with the main message being: “New weekday compact size. Small on size, big on impact.” Linnell told *Mediaweek*: “There is a reason we are not using the T word (tabloid) because it has connotations in the Australian market of

changing the tone. Tabloid is associated with the UK's red top newspapers. We are a compact newspaper and we are proud to say we are compact. Keeping the tone is everything in this project."

Nick Leys reported (*Australian*, 25 April 2013) that the sales of the *Herald* from 4 March to the end of March were 3 per cent greater than in February. Fairfax Media's combined print and electronic subscription figures for February and March are available at [www.fxj.com.au/](http://www.fxj.com.au/) The *Herald*, Mondays-Fridays (combined print and electronic subscription), rose from 157,999 in February to 170,818; the *Age* Monday-Friday rose from 165,558 (Feb.) to 173,190 (March). The Saturday editions also increased although these retained the broadsheet format (*SMH* 252,451 to 284,288; *Age* 225,734 to 252,291). However, the figures for the *SMH* are still significantly lower than they were in December 2012 (but this is not so for the *Age*).

Some other results are surprising:

- The enormous percentage decline in the *Sun Herald* since compilation of these combined figures commenced, from 408,616 in Oct-Dec 2011 to 298,810 in March 2013, a decline of 27 per cent.
- On Mondays-Fridays, the *Age* now outsells the *SMH* 173,190 to 170,818.
- The *Age* has increased sales on Saturdays, on a year-on-year basis 2013 to 2012, by 5 per cent.

**Victor Isaacs** writes: Some observations on the biggest day ever for newspaper redesign in Australia, Monday 4 March 2013: The *Age*, despite the biggest redesign it has ever had, still archaically retains the British Royal Coat of Arms – both in its masthead and above its editorial. The *SMH*'s editorial quoted extensively from the *Herald*'s first editorial of 18 April 1831. The *Age*'s editorial confirmed that the Saturday edition of the *Age* and the *Sunday Age* will follow with tabloidisation "in due course". Not only did both newspapers become tabloid, but they both adopted larger font size and more white space. In all, a significant dumbing down, in my view. There was, as is now usual, a very high degree of common content between the papers. Indeed (except for a colour banner at the top of the page in the *Herald*), the foreign news pages were identical, down to the last comma. Ditto for the puzzles-cum-comics page.

The *Canberra Times* was, as expected, redesigned from Monday, 6 May. However, the main section has remained broadsheet size despite statements by Fairfax when the *SMH* and *Age* changed to tabloid that the *Canberra Times* would follow. Perhaps the partial retention of broadsheet is to differentiate the *CT*'s appearance from the *SMH*, which is in the same market. However, all non-general news sections of the *CT*, including Business Day and Sport, have been moved to the *Times* 2 section (tabloid), possibly to reduce the need to reconfigure material from other Fairfax dailies.

#### **72.1.6 FAIRFAX (2): MANAGEMENT RESTRUCTURE**

Fairfax CEO Greg Hywood has announced the company is to operate in five divisions, some with new leadership (*Mediaweek* online, 4 April 2013). The five divisions are: Australian Publishing Media: *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age*, other parts of what were Metro Media, the Financial Review Group, Fairfax Regional and Fairfax Community Newspapers NSW. Domain: Print and digital elements of the Domain business with the Metro Media Publishing JV. Digital Ventures: Stayz, RSVP, TenderLink and other digital business. Fairfax Radio and Fairfax New Zealand will continue to operate unchanged. The existing executive leadership team roles will be replaced with three new roles. Alan Williams, previously CEO of Fairfax New Zealand, has been appointed to the newly created role of managing director, Australian Publishing Media. Brett Clegg and Grant Cochrane will be taking on new roles within Australian Publishing Media, as will Nic Cola. Jack Matthews and Allan Browne will assist with the transition and then leave Fairfax.

#### **72.1.7 FAIRFAX (3): SHARING SECTIONS ACCELERATED**

The comprehensive corporate restructure of Fairfax Media announced at the beginning of April will accelerate the sharing of sections and editorial content across the *Age*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Canberra Times*. In the wake of the restructure announcement, management consulting firm Bain & Company is continuing to push for more cost savings on the editorial side of the business, raising questions about whether there will be another program of journalism job cuts. Sharing of

resources is already well under way. The *Australian's* Media section understands that content from the foreign desks of the *Age* and *Herald* is being produced as one section across both mastheads. Moreover, the two papers' business sections—while containing local stories when required—are increasingly operating as one unit, with many headlines and columns in the two cities identical. The increased pooling of editorial resources in recent months has also been evident in Fairfax's Canberra bureau with Mark Kenny now the chief political correspondent across the *Age* and *Herald*. The pooling has also extended to food sections. While divergent local restaurant and shopping reviews are running in the *Age* and *Herald*, other areas that have a more national focus are seen as common ground.

Other changes could result in the *Canberra Times* going compact like the *Age* and *Herald*, a potential move that was all but confirmed by Fairfax Media chief executive Greg Hywood. "These are decisions (going compact Monday to Friday) that really related much more to the *Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald*, and the *Canberra Times* going compact will obviously be part of the mix in the future ... it's always a matter of consideration," he said in an interview.

The gradual spread of editorial sharing has seen Fairfax adopt the standard use of the phrase "told Fairfax" in news stories, replacing individual mastheads. The introduction of this new style allowed Fairfax also to redeploy editorial content across its websites, tablet and mobile applications. Hywood said it was "absolutely important" that individual mastheads remained "differentiated brands".

## 72.1.8 RECENT CHRONOLOGY

### 72.1.8.1 DEATHS

**Allen, Rod:** D. 31 March 2013 in Sydney, aged 45; reporter for *Daily Telegraph* in 1980s; managing editor, sport, for *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Sun-Herald*; managed the Australian press centre at the 2012 London Olympics; died after falling from cliff on Cockatoo Island, Sydney Harbour (*Australian*, 1 April 2013, p.3).

**Claiborne, William (Bill):** D. in Melbourne aged 77 spent more than 30 years on the news staff of the *Washington Post*, which described him as "a courageous journalist whose career would take him all over the world, covering everything from natural disasters to wars". He directed *Post* bureaus in Toronto, Johannesburg, New Delhi and Jerusalem and domestic ones in Chicago, New York and Los Angeles; after retiring from the *Post* in 2001 Claiborne – born in New York City in 1936 – settled in Melbourne with his wife, Alma (*Age*, 8 March; obit from the *Washington Post*).

**Jones, James Edwin Russell:** D. age 89; joined *Ballarat Courier* after service in World War II in army and air force; married Mary Cameron, a *Courier* cadet; appointed editor of *Ararat Advertiser* in 1963 and then returned to Ballarat as *Courier* editor; become strongly involved in Ballarat community; moved to *Newcastle Morning Herald* in 1968, where he was at various times features editor and chief sub-editor; retained Ballarat link and was special guest at *Courier's* 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in 2007; retired 1988 (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 March 2013).

**Lockwood, Allan Wright:** See 72.3.1 below.

**Lupton, Roger:** D. aged 73; spent most of a long career in journalism and public relations in Tasmania. After working at the *Age*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Australian*, joined Launceston *Examiner* as its chief political reporter based in Hobart in 1969; a stellar career followed as a respected newspaper and television journalist, poet, documentary film maker and PR consultant; wrote *Lifeblood* (2000), the 150,000 word definitive history of Tasmania's Hydro-Electric Commission (*Mercury*, Hobart, 19 March 2013).

**Hornadge, William "Bill":** D. 21 March 2013 on the NSW Central Coast, aged 94; began temporary job with the iconic and irreverent *Smith's Weekly* in 1933 at 16; began selling stamps from family home at Catherine Hill Bay and shortly after his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, launched a bi-monthly the *Australian Stamp Collector*, with his mother Lily as its sub-editor; continued publication until 1939; established *South Seas Stamp Club*, a wholesale stamp magazine, a wholesale approvals business and a small printing entity; in 1942 joined *Northern Star*, Lismore, as a junior journalist; rose through the ranks; established the *North Coast Review* at Murwillumbah with his father Thomas, but when the *Review* didn't meet his expectations, joined the *Sydney Morning Herald* as

a sub-editor; at 31, won position of editor of the *Dubbo Liberal*, then a tri-weekly; implemented sweeping changes with blessing of owner Leo Armati; was thrown into managing (and editing) the *Liberal* after Armati and his young wife, Patricia, were seriously injured in a level-crossing smash; resigned after various clashes with Armati; began creating a philatelic business, Seven Seas Stamps (SSS), which grew rapidly and as additional staff was employed the business literally took over the entire house, forcing Hornadge to move the business to larger premises; published first issue of *Stamp News* in April 1954; SSS became largest mail order operation of its kind in the world; in 1971, Hornadge sold SSS to Sydney businessman Kevin Duffy to concentrate on developing *Stamp News* and a comprehensive range of stamp catalogues; self-published a string of books on obscure subjects such as *The Yellow Peril – A Squint at some Australian Attitudes towards Orientals* (1971), and *The Australian Slangage* (1980) (source: John Leo Armati, emails to ANHG).

### 72.1.9 CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST REPORTERS

Victoria Police has confirmed that three journalists have been charged with unauthorized access to restricted data under the Commonwealth Criminal Code Act (1995). Royce Millar, Nick McKenzie and Ben Schneiders, of the *Age*, will appear in the Melbourne Magistrates Court this month, accused of illegally accessing an electoral roll database holding personal information about Victorian citizens, collected by the ALP. The journalists subsequently wrote reports in the lead-up to the 2010 state election about the collection of data by political parties under an exemption of the Privacy Act.

### 72.1.10 JOURNALISTS HAVE COURT VICTORY

A former executive of a Reserve Bank of Australia subsidiary had “embarked upon a fishing expedition” by attempting to force two investigative journalists to reveal their sources, the Victorian Court of Appeal found on 18 April. The court upheld an appeal by the journalists against subpoenas issued last year by a magistrate requiring the pair to give evidence and reveal confidential sources during a committal proceeding into bribery charges. The appeal was brought by Fairfax journalists Nick McKenzie and Richard Baker, whose investigative reporting uncovered bribery allegations against executives employed by RBA subsidiary Note Printing Australia and Securrency, a company previously half-owned by the RBA. Magistrate Philip Goldberg issued subpoenas compelling both journalists to give evidence and provide documents to lawyers for former Note Printing Australia chief executive John Leckenby following a report in the *Age* that Indonesian businessman Radius Christanto had agreed to provide evidence against Mr Leckenby. The report was published on 8 December 2012, two days before final submissions were due to be heard in the committal hearing against Leckenby and fellow former NPA executives.

Lawyers for Leckenby intended to submit the case against him should be dismissed, in part because of “saturation prejudicial publicity” within the *Age*. In his reasons for allowing the appeal, Justice David Harper said investigative journalists “served an important public interest” in uncovering the truth and that the use of anonymous sources was “appropriate in some but not all circumstances”. He said magistrates did not have jurisdiction to dismiss or permanently stay criminal charges in committal proceedings and Leckenby, in seeking to force the journalists to give evidence, “in reality embarked upon a fishing expedition in the hope something might turn up as a result of the applicants’ appearance in the witness box.” The decision was supported by fellow judges Pamela Tate and Paul Coghlan. The court ordered costs against Leckenby (*Australian*, 18 April 2013).

### 72.1.11 PEOPLE

**Mark Hawthorne**, national business editor for Fairfax Metro Media, was “Person of the Week” in *Mediaweek* (25 February 2013, p.6).

**Joanne McCarthy**, of the *Newcastle Herald*, won the Graham Perkin Award for Australian Journalist of the Year in 2012 (see ANHG 72.3.3 below).

**David Marr**, of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, has been hired by *Guardian Australia*. The appointment was announced by the local editor-in-chief Kath Viner on 10 April. Marr has worked as a journalist at the ABC, is the biographer of Australia's Nobel Prize winning author Patrick White, the author of other books and is recognised for his national affairs reporting and commentary. *Guardian Australia* launches later this year as a digital publication (*Australian*, 10 April 2013). On 1 May, seven more writers were appointed: Helen Davidson (formerly SBS), reporter; Bridie Jabour ([brisbanetimes.com.au](http://brisbanetimes.com.au)), and Oliver Milman (editor of [StartupSmart.com.au](http://StartupSmart.com.au)); Nick Evershed (a multimedia editor at Fairfax Regional Digital Media), as a data journalist; Simon Jackman (professor of political science at Stanford University), and Greg Jericho (Grog's Gamut blog), as members of the political team; Mike Ticher (foreign desk, Fairfax Media), as editor for the Asia-Pacific timezone.

#### 72.1.12 CBA SPONSORSHIP LOST AFTER FAIRFAX SACKING

The Commonwealth Bank has withdrawn its sponsorship of a column in the *Australian Financial Review* one week after a senior Fairfax business journalist was sacked for publicly criticising the arrangement and its contents. BusinessDay journalist Paddy Manning was sacked after he published a scathingly critical comment piece on the Crikey website about the AFR's "First Person" column. After negotiations with the journalists' union, Manning was allowed to resign. On 16 April the *AFR* published the column—an interview with Qantas chairman Leigh Clifford—without the CBA logo or the accompanying advertisement. The agreement had been billed as "an initiative supported by Commonwealth Bank of Australia" to run over "the next 20 weeks". The deal, including video on the AFR website, would have been worth hundreds of thousands of dollars to cash-strapped Fairfax Media.

The original "First Person" column was published on April 8 and featured Graham Bradley, president of the Business Council of Australia, who was critical of the federal government and its relationship with the business community. Manning wrote the column was "a perfect example of why the business sections of The Sydney Morning Herald and The Age should not be merged with the Financial Review Group" (*Australian*, 17 April 2013).

#### 72.1.13 BLACK CAVIAR IN THE PINK

On 14 April all pages of the sports section of the *Sunday Telegraph* were printed on a pink background as a tribute to the champion racehorse, Black Caviar. On 18 April the *Daily Telegraph* included a four-page wraparound about Black Caviar whose retirement from racing had been announced the previous day. The sprinter won all her 25 races, including a record 15 Group 1 victories.

#### 72.1.14 ANZAC DAY: HOW IT WAS REPORTED

*Mediaweek* (online, 26 April 2013) observed: Few depictions of the day were more moving or evocative than the beautiful rendering of the dawn service at The Shrine in Melbourne by **Konrad Marshall** in the *Age*. "The day is in many ways about that which most of us cannot and should not know. We are here to look inside, muted for a moment, and offer gratitude and grief in equal measure for the more than 100,000 of us lost to war since 1915. The ceremony is brief, perfect in its precision. The commemorative elms in the forecourt, the warmth of the eternal flame, the recitation of the Ode, the volley of shots shattering the tranquillity of "Abide with Me", the creak and squeal of flags being raised, the placing of poppies on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the anthems, and the new millennium's contribution – the silent wink of Blackberry, Android and iPhone screens punctuating the darkness."

In the *Australian*, **Chip Le Grand's** piece on a World War II veteran nudging his century was a delight. "For 97-year-old Frank Myer, certain things about Anzac Day never change. This year, like every year, he reached for his best wool suit, the same navy blue number with tailored cuffs he bought as a 23-year-old, the year before he joined the navy. Under the banner of the Merchant Marine, he marched through Melbourne, declining the offer of a lift in one of the shiny vintage Rollers provided by Legacy. When the World War II veteran can't walk on his own two feet, he'll stop coming, he defiantly told march organisers. From there, it was straight to the train station

and on to his local pub, suitably named the Waltzing Matilda Hotel, where he began his ritual of scouring the form for the day's races at Flemington. 'I like to have a punt on the horses,' he explained. "I reckon money won't grow in your pocket."

#### **72.1.15 BILL LEAK RETURNS TO FULL-TIME CARTOONING**

Cartoonist and artist Bill Leak has returned to the *Australian's* full-time staff. The multi-award-winner, who first joined this newspaper in 1994, has worked part-time since January 2009 as he recovered from a brain injury he suffered after falling from a balcony. Leak says his return marks the final stage of his recovery, and he has never felt so confident about his work. "I love riling and upsetting people, or prompting thought or laughter, and it's wonderful to be able to do that for a living," he said. "There's another very positive aspect to it too though, and that is, by taking the extra work on, I've knowingly placed myself at extreme risk of solvency. And that can't be a bad thing, either." Leak is the winner of eight Walkley Awards and 19 Stanley Awards from the Australian Cartoonists' Association, including eight Gold Stanleys for cartoonist of the year. He is also a noted portrait painter, having had his work for the Archibald Prize shown 12 times. He has twice been awarded both the Archibald Packing Room Prize and the People's Choice Award (*Weekend Australian*, 27-28 April 2012).

#### **72.1.16 DISTRIBUTION TRIAL ENDS**

In August 2012 News Ltd introduced their new distribution model, T2020, with an initial trial in Southern Brisbane, consolidating newspaper delivery areas. On 7 March 2013, News announced that they are discontinuing the trial as it "does not allow us to move quickly enough given the current rate of change". Instead, News will consider, on a case-by-case basis, proposals for consolidation of delivery territories. There will be no minimum volume requirements, recognising that some newsagencies are ready to collaborate with neighbouring newsagents to consolidate services. News has also undertaken to review delivery and retail fees.

#### **72.1.17 MARK HOLLANDS HEADS NEWSPAPER WORKS**

Mark Hollands took over from Tony Hale as chief executive of The Newspaper Works on 22 April. Hale had been in charge since the organisation, the newspaper publishers' peak body, was founded seven years ago. It represents major publishers, including News Limited, Fairfax Media, Seven West Media's *West Australian* and APN News & Media. Hollands says The Newspaper Works will become more outspoken on industry issues like press freedom. He wants to challenge the unofficial role of journalists union the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance as the industry's chief advocate. Hollands said commentary on media ethics had also too often been "handed off" to the MEAA. "We want to be true advocates of the industry. It's important that we stand up for our industry," Hollands told Media. "I've got nothing against the union, but they don't represent the industry and they don't represent our ethics. We have to build society's confidence in our journalism and how we do it so they recognise we know our responsibilities. And we can do more in the public domain around that."

The other priority for Hollands is delivering the first results from the long-awaited readership survey, which is being developed for The Newspaper Works subsidiary The Readership Works by research firm Ipsos MediaCT. There is still no firm date for the release of any data. The newspaper publishers announced in 2009 that they would develop an alternative readership metric after years of dissatisfaction with the survey provided by Roy Morgan Research. Hollands said the survey would represent an historic change in the way the sector represented itself to advertisers and ad agencies. "I cannot think of a bigger project that any industry association has done anywhere in the world for its membership ... in terms of communicating data, influencing buying decisions, making buying decisions better informed and presenting the industry with a new generation of metric," he said. "It's a step change." (*Australian*, 29 April 2013).

#### **72.1.18 REDEVELOPING FORMER NEWSPAPER BUILDINGS**

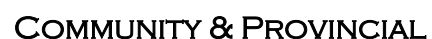
In Melbourne and Bendigo, old newspaper buildings are being redeveloped. A massive apartment development with an expected population of 5000 has been approved for the site of the former *Age* building on the corner of Spencer and Lonsdale Streets, Melbourne. There will be almost 3000 apartments in six towers of up to 63 storeys. The unnamed development by super fund ISPT is expected to take more than a decade to complete and cost more than \$800 million. The former

At Bendigo, the former *Advertiser* building on the Pall Mall site has been sold to make way for the multi-million dollar development of a five-star hotel plus restaurant, 60 suites, a function centre and gymnasium. Construction is expected to begin late this year (*Age*, 30 January 2013, p.6; and *Weekly Times*, 19 September 2012, p.52).



Dennis Shanahan (*Australian*, 1 April 2013) writes: James Griffin's Twitter column in [the Media section of the *Australian* on 25 March] was, sadly, typical of what is said when anyone promoting social media tries to assess or compare the performance of citizen journalists using Twitter and professional journalists working in traditional media. That is, it doesn't value accuracy, it contains gross errors of fact, it is detached from reality, it is self-serving, it builds arguments on a false premise, and it is arrogant and unnecessarily insulting. Griffin is entitled to opine on any absurd argument he wishes, including that Twitter caused the latest Labor leadership spill, to create outrage and get a reaction, but he is not entitled to cite gross errors of fact to create a completely false narrative designed to promote the importance of social media at the cost of mainstream media and its professional practitioners.

For someone who boasts of providing analysis and intelligence rather than just social media monitoring, Griffin's attempt to argue Twitter's superiority and influence shows a decided lack of gathering intelligence and a faulty analysis. Why is it that promoters of social media have to adopt a winner-take-all attitude when dealing with mainstream media and rush to declare reporting or opinion as wrong and social media as always right? Julia Gillard's misogyny attack on Tony Abbott is the classic example where reporters who queried the logic of the speech, not the presentation, were bagged as being wrong because it was popular on social media and made it on to some websites. The two aren't mutually exclusive but the Prime Minister's spinners are able to use social media popularity as a smokescreen for political misjudgment. [Shanahan then proceeded to discuss Twitter and the leadership spill.]



**Lachlander Office 1938**  
William Street, Conshohocken  
L./H. Frank Beck (Compositor/Printer), Doug Stone (Stairtype Operator), Jack Nelson (Junior Printer),  
William Tamm (Director), Ruth Condon (Bookbinder) Mesquite M.A. Condon (Composition/Editor)

One of Australia's most respected country newspapermen died in Natimuk, Victoria, on 11 March 2013. Allan Wright Lockwood, OAM, was founding editor of the *Wimmera Mail-Times*, Horsham, which, under his leadership, became the biggest tri-weekly in Australia, winning many awards in the process. He died peacefully in Natimuk Nursing Home at the age of 90. He was the last survivor

of the Lockwood dynasty of children born to newspaperman Alfred Wright Lockwood and his wife Ida. Their first son became Rear-Admiral Surgeon Lionel Lockwood in the navy; second son Rupert was a renowned communist journalist and author of Document J in the Petrov affair; Raymond, a businessman, and Freda, the only daughter, moved to Sydney; journalist Douglas became Northern Territory correspondent for the Herald and Weekly Times and wrote 13 books about the north and its people; and Frank and Allan ran the *West Wimmera Mail* and its successor, the *Mail-Times*. Allan wrote five books, including *Ink in His Veins* (a biography of his father) and *Olive Shoots in Natimuk* (an autobiography).

Allan Lockwood was a hands-on newspaperman all his life. He set type by hand, designed pages, wrote editorials and operated Linotype machines. He scribbled cricket scores over the phone on Saturday nights, rode to meetings by horse and buggy, thumped out countless stories on his typewriter and helped on the printing press when it came to life on publication nights. When he was 13 his father took him out of school to work on the family newspaper at Natimuk, the *West Wimmera Mail*. Apart from service during World War 2, he worked on the *West Wimmera Mail* and its successor, the *Wimmera Mail-Times*, for 50 years. He was editor of the two papers for an unbroken 34 years, from 1951 until his retirement in 1985. Lockwood married Natimuk farmer's daughter Winifred Uebergang in 1944. Both lived at Natimuk from the cradle to the grave. Mrs Lockwood died in 2007. They are survived by seven children, 22 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren. Of the next generation of Lockwoods, only two became journalists: Douglas's only son, Kim, who worked for the *West Australian* in Perth, the *NT News* in Darwin, the Herald and Weekly Times in Darwin and the *Herald*, the *Australian* and the *Herald Sun* in Melbourne before retiring in 2006; and Allan's fourth son Keith, who worked for the *Mail-Times* and the *Sun News-Pictorial* before becoming the *Mail-Times*' chief sub, a position he still holds (*Wimmera Mail-Times*, 13 March 2013, p.2; see also Rod Kirkpatrick, "Lockwood line lingers—just", *Australian Printer*, December 2006, p.40).

### 72.3.2 TAMWORTH: SOMMERLAD LINK CUT

The century-old Sommerlad link with NSW country newspapers, especially in the north of the state, was reduced to a thread last month when John Sommerlad resigned as managing editor of the *Northern Daily Leader*, Tamworth. He is now the director of business and events for Tamworth Regional Council. Sommerlad's grandfather, Ernest Christian Sommerlad (1886-1952), became a journalist at the *Inverell Times* in 1912. Before the close of the year he was the editor of the *Inverell Argus*. In later years he emerged as probably the most dominant NSW country press personality of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (see *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 12, p.16). His son, Ernest Lloyd (b. 1919) and David (b. 1929), also played a big part in the newspaper world. John, son of David, has been a leading NSW country editor for a generation.

David Sommerlad said it was "a bit sad to realise that shortly there will be no Sommerlad directly involved in producing newspapers". That's how life is., he said. However, the link would not be totally broken. "I remain directly involved with various jobs as associate director of both CPA [Country Press Australia] and CPNSW and as a life member of both." He remained "active" on the CPNSW board.

In his new role at Tamworth Regional Council, John Sommerlad is responsible for overseeing the operation of council venues, including the Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre, Capitol Theatre and TRECC, Destination Tamworth, the Tamworth Regional Airport, council's environmental laboratory and six public swimming pools. Sommerlad said the newspaper industry was an ideal launching pad to enter local government, because both were focused on community outcomes. At the *Northern Daily Leader*, news editor Ann Newling is acting as editor. (David Sommerlad, emails, 27 March and 22 April 2013; *Northern Daily Leader*, 23 April 2013).

**Flashback** (extract from Rod Kirkpatrick's *Country Conscience*): E.C. Sommerlad (1886-1952), the first of three generations of Sommerlad editors, articulated the standards for provincial newspaper editors in the final half of the twentieth century. In Sommerlad's view, the provincial editor who had "a right conception of his office", and was not afraid to offer constructive criticism, was the most important citizen in the community. "He can be a local king-maker if he guards jealously the sacred flame and wins and holds the confidence of his readers." Sommerlad told a NSW Country

Press Association conference that he was always “deeply pained” when he saw a country paper, no matter how small, without an editorial.

To me, such a paper is like a man without a head, and I cannot help thinking ‘here is a paper immobilising itself and voluntarily surrendering one of the most effective weapons in its armoury’. It is not enough for a paper to be a mere recorder of what happens, or a follower where others are leading. The virile and enterprising paper leads rather than follows, and its editor, if he exercises his traditional prerogatives aright, can be the most powerful man in his district. He is its spokesman to the outside world.

When he was editing the *Glen Innes Examiner*, Sommerlad would sometimes put a banner across the front page, below the masthead, declaring, “The *Examiner* Does Not Shirk a Clear Cut Editorial Opinion”. In his handbook on journalism, *Mightier than the Sword*, Sommerlad wrote that it was an unchallengeable fact that when newspapers respected the privilege and responsibility society accorded them, and were actuated by sincere motives, the influence they wielded through the editorial column was still one of the great factors in moulding public opinion. “It is a thrilling experience deliberately to set about achieving a certain end through the use of the press, and to feel your reading public react to the lead given them. To me it is like sitting at the controls of some mighty machine...” He saw the newspaper as an integral part of modern society. “Its success as an institution of modern life is determined by the character of the information it imparts, the quality of its literary content, and the sense of public responsibility which it exhibits.”

When Sommerlad died in 1952, the NSWCPA subscribed to and established the annual E.C. Sommerlad Memorial Awards for Journalism, with one award specifically for distinguished editorial leadership.

### **72.3.3 NEWCASTLE: JOANNE McCARTHY WINS PERKIN AWARD**

When Joanne McCarthy, of the Newcastle *Herald*, was presented with the Graham Perkin Award for Australian Journalist of the Year on 15 March, it was the culmination of six years of extraordinarily dedicated work. McCarthy’s relentless exposure of the child abuse problems deeply ingrained within the Catholic Church and other religious organisations greatly increased the pressure on politicians to act, wrote Neil McMahon (*Mediaweek*, 25 March 2013, p.8). Last November they did act” the Federal Government established a national royal commission into child sexual abuse. On the day that the Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, announced the commission in a nationally televised media conference, McCarthy was in the Newcastle *Herald* office, although, normally, she works from home. Her phone rang; it was a friend telling her to “get to a television now”. She went into the office of editor Chad Watson and together they watched as Gillard made her statement. “I just fell apart,” McCarthy told *Mediaweek*. She says she does not go in for awards. It’s not her thing. “With this award, the editor nominated me, and I suppose it was for the newspaper as much as for me and I was happy with that, because clearly one journalist doesn’t do these things; it’s a whole newspaper.” The Newcastle *herald*’s last Perkin winner was Denis Butler in 1976, the first time the award was made.

### **72.3.4 ARMIDALE, PORT MACQUARIE, ETC: VICTORIAN GROUP’S ACQUISITION**

The Star News Group, headquartered in Pakenham, Victoria, has acquired the Evans group of newspapers (*Armidale Independent*, *Port Macquarie Independent*, *Tweed Coast Weekly* and *Southern Free Times*, Warwick). The *Tamworth City News* closed before the takeover took place. Visit: <http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/about>

### **72.3.5 APN (1): SALE OF SOME NZ PAPERS TO MAINLAND PRESS**

APN News & Media, the Australasian publisher of the *New Zealand Herald*, has sold its Christchurch and Oamaru newspaper businesses. It announced the twice-weekly giveaway Christchurch paper, the *Star* (a daily evening paper until 1991), the daily *Oamaru Mail* and a clutch of weekly community newspapers in Christchurch had been sold to independent publisher Mainland Press. Mainland operates community paper and directories in Christchurch and is privately owned by Pier and Charlotte Smulders. APN New Zealand chief executive Martin Simons

says staff at both businesses will transfer to the new ownership. “The decision to sell was based on our determination to concentrate our efforts on the North Island where most of our businesses are located,” he said. APN posted a \$455.8 million loss last year and increased write-downs on the value of goodwill and its newspaper mastheads.

The company’s managing director and most of its board resigned in February after major shareholders opposed plans to raise new capital. In New Zealand it is also involved with legal action with the Inland Revenue Department over a \$48m tax dispute. APN put the titles, and its Wellington community publications, on the market last November. The Wellington operation, Capital Community Newspapers, was sold in February with the owner of the *Blenheim Sun*, Les Whiteside, buying the four titles (AAP, 18 April 2013).

#### **72.3.6 APN (2): MONAGHAN IS NEW CEO OF AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL MEDIA**

APN News & Media Ltd has replaced the CEO of its Australian Regional Media division, Warren Bright, with the former group operations and procurement director, Neil Monaghan. The APN board said it recognised “the ongoing structural challenges in media and the difficult operating environment compounded by factors such as the mining slowdown, the decline of government advertising and more recently the Queensland floods”. Chairman Peter Cosgrove said: “APN believes there is a strong future in regional newspapers to provide local news to local communities and our strategy will be clearly focused on meeting this need for our readers and advertisers.” (*Mediaweek* online, 26 April 2013.)

#### **73.3.7 APN (3): BRIAN MCCARTHY ‘PIVOTAL’ IN 2 DEPARTURES**

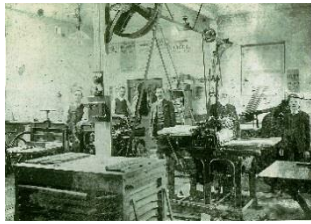
Brian McCarthy, a former Rural Press and Fairfax chief executive, was a pivotal figure in the surprising departure in late April of two of APN News & Media’s top executives, according to company insiders (*Australian*, 29 April 2013). However, McCarthy, who was overseas the time, is understood, once and for all, to have ruled himself out of the running as a candidate for the company’s vacant chief executive role. It is believed APN is “a month or two” away from finding a new chief to replace Brett Chenoweth, who resigned in February, according to insiders, with the shortlist made up of “local people with media experience”. McCarthy has been acting as a high-level consultant to the APN board on the future direction of the company’s Australian Regional Media (ARM) newspaper business in Queensland and northern NSW, and whether it should be adopting a “digital first” strategy. The two departed executives, former ARM boss Warren Bright and ex-APN chief development officer Matt Crockett, had both championed a significantly expanded digital presence for APN.

#### **72.3.8 WOLLONGONG: PRINTED IN CANBERRA**

Fairfax Media Ltd has shifted the printing of the Wollongong daily, the *Illawarra Mercury* (estab. 1855), from North Richmond to Canberra. It is printed on the same press as the *Canberra Times*.

#### **72.3.9 NEW NORFOLK: GAZETTE 60 YEARS OLD**

On 27 March 2013, the New Norfolk *Gazette*, Tasmania, published a 16-page commemorative liftout plus a reprint of its first edition to mark the paper’s 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Elizabeth Emily Howell The paper began as the *Derwent Gazette* and appeared initially as a broadsheet. Later it became the *Derwent Valley Gazette* and in 2000 just the *Gazette*. Peter Howell, who with wife Betty, started the paper, wrote a detailed historical article about the *Gazette* in the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary issue, 26 March 2003, p.2. Davies Bros (now a subsidiary of News Ltd) has owned the paper since 1981.



## 4—NEWSPAPER HISTORY

### 72.4.1 YALE BUYS RICHARD NEVILLE'S PERSONAL ARCHIVE

Richard Neville, one of the key figures of the 1960s counter-culture movement, has sold his vast personal archive to Yale University after the National Library of Australia failed to make a competitive offer, reports **Helen Trinca** (*Weekend Australian*, 23-24 March 2013). Neville said he would have preferred the collection—which covers his decade of co-editing *OZ* magazine in Sydney and London, as well as a period in New York in the early 1970s—to remain in Australia, but the library's offer "was not enough to live on". Neither he, nor Yale, would reveal the sum paid by the university's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, which lists the archive among its notable acquisitions. Disclosure of the loss of the valuable historical material to the US came as Neville and co-editors Richard Walsh and Martin Sharp celebrate the 50th birthday of *OZ* on 1 April 1963. The satirical magazine spawned a London version four years later, which evolved into an important underground, counter-cultural publication.

Sydney antiquarian Nicholas Pounder, who spent 2½ years helping Neville build and catalogue his material, said it was a spectacular collection and would have been "an enormously fine resource in understanding the counter cultural phenomenon in Australia". "Richard is an international figure," he said. "There was a great amount of material that contextualised him as an Australian emerging on the world stage at a very important time." But the NLA could not match the financial resources at Yale. Pounder and Neville chased down correspondence and traced material across the world to add to the suitcases and garbage bags of material the peripatetic Neville had held on to through the years or stashed under his mother's house in the NSW Blue Mountains. Among the gems are seven A2 scrapbooks created by Neville and his then girlfriend, Louise Ferrier, in the 60s and 70s, telegrams from John Lennon and Yoko Ono, personal journals and diaries, and correspondence with major figures from the times. There is also comprehensive documentation of the notorious *OZ* obscenity trials in 1964 and 1971.

### 72.4.2 NEWSPAPER DIGITISATION AT GOULBURN

**Lynn Bonomini** (Local Studies Librarian, Goulburn Mulwaree Council) writes: Along with many other public libraries in New South Wales, the Southern Tablelands Library Cooperative (STLC) is currently working with the National Library of Australia (NLA) to digitise a series of newspaper titles for Trove ([www.trove.nla.gov.au](http://www.trove.nla.gov.au)) as part of their Australian Newspapers Digitisation Program. Trove is of particular interest to public libraries where family history inquiries can form a major part of their reference work. Trove, with its range of freely accessible, Australia-wide digitised newspapers has rapidly become one of the most valued tools in the genealogist's toolkit!

The STLC (formerly the Southern Tablelands Regional Library – STRL) incorporates the local government areas of Goulburn Mulwaree, Yass Valley and Upper Lachlan, with library facilities provided in Goulburn, Yass, Crookwell and Gunning. Early in 2012, the STRL was successful in obtaining a Library Development Grant (LDG) from the NSW State Library. This grant provided funds for two major initiatives: the first was to purchase microform scanners for the libraries in Goulburn, Yass and Crookwell. The second part was to fund digitisation of a selection of little-known and now defunct newspaper titles of particular relevance to the Southern Tablelands region.

At the time of applying for the LDG in 2011, no library in the STRL had a functioning microform scanner, though both Goulburn and Yass did hold a range of newspaper titles on microfilm, including some of the earliest regional titles: the *Goulburn Herald* (1848-1907), *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* (1870-current) and the *Yass Tribune* (1857-current). Though technically these films were popular library resources, they were effectively useless without a workable scanner to copy required articles. With the successful grant, the scanners have now been purchased and are consistently in operation. Goulburn Mulwaree Library (GML) has a Mekel Mach 2 unit, whilst Crookwell and Yass each have a Konica Minolta SL1000.

Six newspaper titles were chosen for digitisation including: the *Argyle Liberal and District Recorder* (1903-1907 & 1910-1930), *Goulburn Chronicle and Southern Advertiser* (1860), *Southern Argus* (1882-1885), *Taralga Echo* (1924-1927), *Southern Morning Herald* (1920-1923) and *Werriwa Times and Goulburn District News* (1910). All titles are available in microfilm, but they are actually held in very few libraries. Some were only in the NSW State Library, thus knowing of their existence, let alone being able to access their content, was a real challenge for potential users.

To allow the digitisation project to proceed, microfilm masters were made available to the NLA from the NSW State Library. A Memorandum of Understanding agreement signed with the NLA has required Goulburn Mulwaree Library to “establish a standard wiki page to provide information on the title being processed”.<sup>1</sup> Research and preparation of pages for Wikipedia ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)) is currently being undertaken by Lynn Bonomini, Local Studies Librarian at Goulburn Mulwaree Library. Information is being gathered from a wide range of sources, not least of which has been Trove itself, also data from other researchers in the field such as Rod Kirkpatrick (Rod has also kindly assisted with the editing process). Perhaps not surprisingly, this research has highlighted some interesting inconsistencies, which have at times been regurgitated as fact by prior researchers in the local area. To be fair, they were working in less information-rich and accessible times, so it is appropriate to be able to provide some fresh material for a new era of research.

#### 72.4.3 POET WRITES OWN EPITAPH

Swan Hill *Guardian*, centenary souvenir edition, 12 August 1988, p.61: “Silky Oak”, a regular contributor of topical poems to Swan Hill’s *Guardian* over many years, wrote his own epitaph shortly before he died. Francis Singleton, of Swan Hill, a prolific verse writer under the “Silky Oak” *nom de plume*, died on 9 August 1949, aged 71. His farewell piece, entitled “My Swan Song”, was published in the same issue of the *Guardian* as his death notice. In that poem he revealed he had also written for the Cygnets’ (children’s) page as “Betta Dunn”, as well as penning verses such as “Watchful”. Singleton’s poems, eagerly read and enjoyed by thousands of district residents, dealt with a wide variety of subjects, including war., the council’s dog catching efforts, food rationing, Swan Hill’s water supply, football, the seasons and the religious connotations of Christmas and Easter. His daughter, Mrs McGrath, of Lake Boga, was unaware he was “Silky Oak” until after his death.

Born at Benalla in 1878, Francis Singleton was the youngest of a family of eight. His parents were among the earliest pioneers of that district. They settled there in 1859. Francis Singleton’s first job was with his brother, Alfred, in his grocery and ironmongery store at St James. After that he went on to work at similar shops in Queenstown (Tasmania), Macorna, Lake Boga and Warragul. He took up employment at the Swan Hill Cooperative Stores in 1920 and remained with that firm until his death. A keen weather watcher, he was the official recorder of rainfall during his years at Swan Hill. He measured the rain at the post office on his way to work from his Mitchell Street home. The weather records he collated were invaluable for district primary producers. A member of the Australian Natives Association Swan Hill branch, he was president in 1921-22.

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<sup>1</sup> National Library of Australia and Goulburn Mulwaree Council (2012), *Memorandum of Understanding*, Ref No.06-0043-3683, p.3.

The first two verses of “My Swan Song” by “Silky Oak” were:

I’m heading for that one-way track  
From which no trav’ler ventures back;  
I’m going home. But ere I go  
Would send a final cheerio.

It was my aim with modesty,  
To bring you in poetry  
The idle thoughts of simple man  
Who tries to do the best he can.

#### 72.4.4 THE PHANTOM DINER

When I read the above item, writes **Rod Kirkpatrick**, I kept thinking of some of the poets who used to contribute to the *Central Western Daily’s* Page 4 when I was the editor in the mid-1980s. One was “’edley”, who wrote in similar vein to C.J. Dennis. Ron Basford, of Forest Reefs, was superb, Joyce Bell, of Cudal, was prolific. And I keep recalling the “Phantom Diner”, a restaurant reviewer who created lively interest. He wrote some wonderful reviews and many a reader wanted to know the identity of the “Phantom Diner”. I did not tell anyone who he was, not even my wife. His name was not on the record at the newspaper because he was not on the payroll. He wrote the reviews for the fun of it. Sometimes I asked a contributing cartoonist, “Thor”, to illustrate a “Phantom Diner” review. Oh the fun of it all! Now I cannot remember who the “Phantom Diner” was. That is true anonymity!

#### 72.4.5 WORTH NOTING

**Rod Kirkpatrick** writes: Sometimes there are newspaper historical dates that remain elusive over many years. And then along comes Trove to help track down those Pimpernels of the press: those darned elusive dates! Over a period of about three weeks last year, I zoomed in on four such dates, obtaining two specific dates and two narrowed down to the month. They were: the *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* began in January 1870; the *Lithgow Mercury* began in October 1878 (previously it was known that the Goulburn paper had begun by mid-1870, but no month was known for the Lithgow paper—see also 72.5.2, Kirkpatrick, below); the *Mackay Standard* closed on 15 March 1919; and the *Cairns Post* (Mark 1) closed on 20 May 1893.

#### 72.4.6 WHEN MAUDE WENT TO THE DOGS

It’s not often you find a country correspondent who writes as colourfully as the Maude correspondent for Hay’s *Riverine Grazier* did. Here’s a sample.

*Riverine Grazier*, 14 May 1937 (from a correspondent): A travelling showman visited Maude over the week-end and advertised a dog parade, each child leading a dog to receive a prize, with specials for the “best” and ugliest. “Dogs! They came out of the cellars and rolled on the mats, and barked at the women and chased all the cats.” There was big boys leading little dogs and big dogs leading little boys. Fat ’uns were bartered for thin ’uns with one budding business “man” coming around a corner with six for sale, find “yer own chain”.

Chains did I say; rope, string, motor tube, and in one case I noticed father’s braces were all requisitioned to lead ’em to the fray. The appearance of a stilt man to lead the procession was a “gem”; two burly “heelers” endeavoured to have a piece of him and being frustrated turned around and had a piece of one another. Women screamed and children cheered, but the show goes on. Dogs escaped and were caught, they whined and were cuffed, they snapped and they snarled, but were dragged upon their way. In endeavouring to take a census I counted 130, but I think I got the dogs and spectators all mixed up. Yes, sir, Maude went to the dogs last week all right.

#### 72.4.7 ARDEN OFF TO SYDNEY

At 18, George Arden, editor, joined the 27-year-old Thomas Strode, printer, in launching the first legal newspaper in Melbourne. They published the first issue of the *Port Phillip Gazette* on 27 October 1838. In the next four years Arden experienced highs and lows, but mainly lows: he was jailed for libelling a judge, was declared bankrupt and lost control of the newspaper. He headed for Sydney in 1843, as we read below, to launch a magazine of politics and literature.

*Australasian Chronicle* (Sydney), 12 August 1843, p.2: New magazine—From the Port Phillip papers we learn that Mr George Arden, the late Editor and Proprietor of the *Port Phillip Gazette*, has been for some time preparing himself to establish a periodical in this city, under the name of *Arden's Sydney Magazine*; and by the notices which are made by the provincial papers on Mr Arden's capabilities and views, the project is likely to be sustained with spirit and talent; of the latter we know there is no dearth in this country were it duly searched for and judiciously remunerated. As the conductor of the intended magazine has announced his intention of paying for all contributions deserving to be published, he cannot fail in obtaining that variety in style and matter of which the late specimens in literature of the same class have been woefully deficient. *Arden's Sydney Magazine* is to appear for the first time on the 1st of the ensuing month, price 3s 6d, and will contain matter equalling one-third more than the periodical which we believe is now in existence.

The magazine received positive reviews, such as this one, from which an extract is provided:

*Australasian Chronicle*, 13 Sept 1843 for comments on first issue.

ARDEN'S SYDNEY MAGAZINE. We have hardly the time or space we wish for to give the results of our examination of this work, but we will substitute, in the place of a more elaborate criticism, a running sketch of the papers of the first number. Next to the leading political essay, which is on the new colonial constitution, and which is at once judiciously and forcibly written, is a paper on the subject of the "Aerial Machine," written in a vein of quiet and half concealed satire, which ends in the record of the writer's scepticism as to even remote success of this new and wonderful invention. "The Representatives of the People" is a biographical memoir, compiled with freedom of opinion and correctness of general detail. "The Review of the Colonial Markets," announced to be upon the "True Principles of Political Economy," may be overlooked, as one of those dry treatises which legislators as well as newspaper scribblers are nowadays pouring out with unremitting speed, and clothed in the most startling novelties of doctrine. It will be found, on the contrary, a very humorous and sly attack on the prevailing weaknesses and prominent failings of society in these colonies. It is, as an entire piece, a felicitous imitation of *Punch*, or the *London Charivari*. "Gilbert Christian" is a story, which is made the vehicle of some remarkable thoughts on the "Punishment of Death," and is written evidently by an eye witness of the scenes and circumstances described, wherever they may have taken place. The introductory chapter on "The Early History of Port Phillip," will be read with avidity by the inhabitants of that district. It contains the author's view of the "separation question," which, as a leading political topic of the day, may have our early attention.

But *Arden's Sydney Magazine* survived only two issues (September and October 1843). You can read more about Arden in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 1, pp.26-27.

#### 72.4.8 NEWSPAPER 'SCOOPS' AT ALBANY

*West Australian*, 17 April 1936, p.22: Every film fan and reader of the thrillers knows all about newspaper "scoops" and how one young man wearing his hat on the back of his head beats a lot of other young men (also wearing their hats on the backs of their heads) in telling the world that a corpse has been found. In this State, however, an interesting variation from the stock pattern of "scoop" was possible in the late [1870s]. There was no cable service from Europe in those days and newspapers depended on the mails for their foreign news. The first Australian port of call was Albany. Let a traveller from India by the P. and O. liner *Assam* in 1878 tell what happened there. "The anchor had hardly been dropped," he wrote, "when the steamer was invaded by three or four excited individuals inquiring wildly for the purser." These were the representatives of the big papers of the Eastern States, and their object was to grab the telegrams and summaries of mail news sent from Ceylon and put them on the newly-opened overland telegraph line from Albany to Adelaide. "There was quite an exciting race among these gentlemen in getting to shore, each trying to reach the telegraph office first," said the traveller. "The man in the winning boat told me afterwards with a smile of triumph that he had won by 20 seconds, and had thus secured the exclusive use of the telegraph line for a period of two hours." Those were the bright days of newspaper work when a world champion in sport might justifiably have been engaged as a journalist because of his physical prowess. Without the necessity of teaching him to spell, he could have earned his newspaper salary by pulling a dinghy from the mailboat to the shore at Albany.

#### 72.4.9 MELBOURNE MUSEUM OF PRINTING MOVES

The Melbourne Museum of Printing ([printingmuseums.com/museum/](http://printingmuseums.com/museum/)) has moved to larger premises to allow it to show all of its collection. It is now at 266 Geelong Road, West Footscray (300m from West Footscray station). It is open on Thursdays and Sundays, 2pm-6pm.

#### 72.4.10 MANUSCRIPT PAPERS AT SWAN RIVER

On 4 January 1833, the day before the printed newspaper, the *Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal*, appeared for the first time, the *Hobart Town Courier* reported (p.4): We have recently received several letters and newspapers in manuscript from Western Australia, that is, Swan river. The newspapers are in manuscript, not from any Germanic hatred of printing on the part of Governor Stirling, but simply because there is no press at work in the settlement. The descriptive writers speak favourably of the present state of affairs there, but those who deal in details of facts throw a shade on the picture. Kangaroo flesh, for example, sells at 1s. 6d. per pound, when it can be got. A descriptive tourist speaks of excellent dinners and beaf (sic) steaks... We observe also among sales, &c. chiefly such articles as rum, brandy, Geneva, London porter, ale, wine of the choicest descriptions, silks, lace-caps, silk shoes, fine India mats, and many other things not exactly suited to a new Settlement, however necessary they may be to the comfort of settlers just emerged from the refined circles of a highly luxurious society.

#### 72.4.11 THE GLEANER BEGINS

*Colonial Times*, Hobart, 9 March 1827, p.4: Another Weekly Newspaper is about to be instituted at Sydney, upon Independent principles, making the seventh Newspaper in these Colonies. Its designation is to be the *Gleaner*. Mr Eager, who already carries on the printing business at Sydney, is to be the printer and publisher. Mr [Robert] Howe, just like a lunatic, has again altered the size and days of publication of the *Sydney Gazette*. It is first a weekly paper—next a twice-a-week—then a daily and, oh!, the vicissitudes of human life, it is so weak, that it is now published no more than thrice-a-week. God help the poor fellow that has to conduct it under Mr. Howe -his place must be no sinecure. The Government, it is now pretty well understood, are quite disgusted with the wretched and abominable principles of that dirty rag. In fact, the *Australian* states, it will be the ruin of the Government. The Government have therefore taken the hint, for it is said that General Darling intends to follow the example of the Government at the Cape, in confining the Official Gazette to official matter. The Papers printed in the Colonies will be as follow: *Sydney Gazette*, instituted in 1803; *Colonial Times*, established as *Hobart Town Gazette*, 1816; *Australian*, 1824; *Monitor*, 1825 (sic; in fact, 1826); *Tasmanian*, 1827; *Hobart Town Gazette* [governor's version], 1825; *Gleaner*, 1827. Besides, one sheet and two pocket Almanacks.

#### 72.4.12 WAR CORRESPONDENT

*Australian Town & Country Journal*, 24 November 1900, p.41: Bert F. Toy was born at Cobar, NSW, in 1878, completed his education at Whinham College, Adelaide, SA. While at school he displayed great liking for journalism and after school he went to Parkes, NSW, where his parents lived, and entered the office of the *Parkes Independent*, and before he was 18 years old was its editor. After 18 months he went to Coolgardie, WA, and attached himself to the *Pioneer*, and in a very short time became editor of that journal. Many critics think he will make his mark as an artist, a great number of specimens of his work having appeared in the *Pioneer*, *Clare's Weekly* and other journals in WA and SA. When on the *Pioneer*, he was editing the daily in the same office, the *Miner*. From there he went to Perth and was attached to the *Perth Morning Herald* and was appointed war correspondent in South Africa. He was specially mentioned by Major Vials, commander of the WA contingent, in dispatches to the Defence Department for having most pluckily exposed himself to a very heavy enemy crossfire to assist horseholders. Was mentioned in *Evening News*, October 16. This was at the battle of Koster River, near Reutenberg.

#### 72.4.13 PRINT'S PAST: A QUESTIONABLE SOLUTION TO A MISPRINT

**Mick Grayson** writes (*ProPrint*, 18 March 2013): We used to make Klischograph blocks. At the Toowoomba newspaper, the *Downs Star*, we used to mount them on solid metal. This fellow called Pooker Hilderson – I don't know why we called him Pooker – used to take all the ink off, clean the blocks with petrol and put them down nicely beside the machine. One day we were doing the *Western Star*, which was a Roma paper that we used to print there. Of course we were running late again, because we had to catch the train with the papers on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Pooker put the blocks on, but he put one of them on upside down. So instead of it having a lady's face, it was black, six by four, just pure black. This was a front-page block of course!

The page came out on the press with a ruddy big black square on the front. Pooker said, you can't reuse that block. We'll have to make more blocks because the pressure will have taken the image off the other side. We couldn't run it through again. So a fellow called John Higgins, who was the editor, said: "We're going to have fun with this. Get the plates off the machine and chip and chisel out a big question mark." About 50 pages had been printed, so we threw them away. Then we ran the newspaper with a big question mark on the front page. In the following week's paper, the editor ran a competition to see if the readers could guess what the story had been. So we got out of it that way.

#### 72.4.14 CHARLES DE BOOS INQUIRY

Peter Crabb, a visiting fellow in the Fenner School of Environment and Society at the Australian National University. He is researching a biography of Charles de Boos, who worked for the *Sydney Morning Herald* and other Fairfax papers from 1856 to 1872, with some of his writings almost certainly appearing after this date. From 1850 to about 1855, he had worked for the *Argus* in Melbourne. He was the first reporter in Australia with a knowledge of shorthand. Crabb seeks pointers to any research on reporters who worked in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Sydney and Melbourne, and if there are any archives of the companies involved that may contain records relating to these reporters (e.g. wages and expenses registers). [Peter is at peter-crabb@bigpond.com]

#### 72.4.15 MARK DAY IS WRITING A BOOK ON THE AUSTRALIAN'S FIRST 50 YEARS

Mark Day declared in his "On Media" column (*Australian*, 29 April 2013, p.23) that reporting was not the worst job in the world, as one US website, but the best. He explained why in a fascinating ramble over his more than 50 years of journalism. And, at the end of his column, he announced: "It is my intention, given good health and the editor's indulgence, to carry on tapping away. I ignored the standard 65 retirement age, so I'll ignore 70. And anyway, I have a big project under way and I would like your help: I am writing a book for the *Australian's* 50th anniversary in July next year. It is not an academic assessment of where this illustrious journal fits in the weft and warp of the fabric of Australian life; rather, a collection of yarns about the people who made it happen—the larrikins, gifted writers, drunks, steady hands and improbable personalities who have managed to produce a daily miracle more than 15,000 times over the past half century." If you want to contribute, email Day at mday@ozemail.com.au/



#### 5—RECENTLY PUBLISHED

##### 72.5.1 BOOK

**Maras, Steven**, *Objectivity in Journalism*, Wiley, 2012 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). ISBN: 978-0-7456-4734-0.

Objectivity in journalism is a key topic for debate in media, communication and journalism studies, and has been the subject of intensive historical and sociological research. In the first study of its kind, Steven Maras surveys the different viewpoints and perspectives on objectivity. Maras critically examines the different scholarly and professional arguments made in the area. This book examines debates around objectivity as a transnational norm, focusing on the emergence of objectivity in the US, while broadening out discussion to include developments around objectivity in the UK, Australia, Asia and other regions.

##### 72.5.2 ARTICLES

**Abbott, Tony**, "Taking on change but staying true to quality journalism", *Sydney Morning Herald*, Monday 4 March 2013, page 28. On the day the *SMH* adopted a tabloid format.

**Adams, Phillip**, "Citizens Kane", *Weekend Australian Magazine*, 6-7 April 2013, p.42. Discusses the role of opinion columns and their greater frequency of use in newspapers.

- Blainey, Geoffrey**, "A city's story, told one day at a time", *Age*, Monday 4 March 2013, page 28. A very brief history of the *Age* on the day it adopted a tabloid format.
- Gillard, Julia**, "Struggling journal became a great newspaper of record", *Sydney Morning Herald*, Monday 4 March 2013, page 28. On the day the *SMH* adopted a tabloid format.
- Guthrie, Bruce**, "The shrinking newspaper may be just what the doctor order", *Sunday Age*, 3 March 2019, p.19. Readers will benefit as media giants battle over the coming weeks, argues the writer, a former editor of the *Age* and the *Herald Sun*. Discusses the conversion to tabloid format of the *Age* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*.
- Hull, Crispin**, "Creating tabloid from broadsheet can be chemistry", *Canberra Times*, Saturday 9 March 2013, Forum section, page 2. Discusses the conversion of the *Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald* to tabloid size.
- Kirkpatrick, Rod**, "Moving Targett they missed", *GXpress*, March 2013, pp.38-39. Piecing together the story of Walter Scott Targett, the editor of newspapers in four Australian colonies, and wrongly named by the *Lithgow Mercury* as its founder.
- Maskell, Vin**, "Stop the presses", *Big Issue*, 13 August 2012, pp.18-19. Around the world, newspapers are dying. As the Fairfax Media company was crumbling, or perhaps recreating itself, the writer was processing census forms in the old *Age* offices in Melbourne. He wrote for the *Age* on and off for about 20 years. Various reminiscences.
- Nelson, Fraser**, "Revenge of the lamppost against dog of journalism", *Australian*, 28 March 2013, p.12. Britain's royal charter to regulate media is an attack on press scrutiny of politicians.
- Ray, Chris**, "Veteran reporter pushed boundaries", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 April 2013, p.38. An obituary of John Loizou, 1943-2013.
- McMahon, Neil**, "Jill Stark on booze, books and broadsheets", *Mediaweek*, 22 April 2013, p.9, and "Aussie freelancer covers Boston bombings", 29 April 2013, p.7. (1) A *Sunday Age* writer, Stark praises tabloid upbringing for making her a better journalist. (2) Carmel Melouney covers one of the year's big stories, the Boston Marathon bombings, for the *Australian*.
- Trinca, Helen**, "The sum of Oz", *Weekend Australian* (Review magazine), 23-24 March 2013, pp.6-8. Also by Trinca: "Wizards of satire put on the map", *Australian*, 25 March 2013, p.13; and "OZ era's feminist offspring", 26 March 2013, p.14.
- White Dominic**, "Design of the times", *Financial Review* Monday 11 March 2013, pages 52-53. Discusses the redesign of the *Financial Review* on the first day of the new layout (and of a price increase).

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