



The exterior of the office of the *Gnowangerup Star* (left) and Margaret Walker (right) with the comped hot-metal pages of the final issue of the newspaper, which appeared on 26 June 2003. See ANHG 81.4.4 below.

## AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPER HISTORY GROUP

# NEWSLETTER

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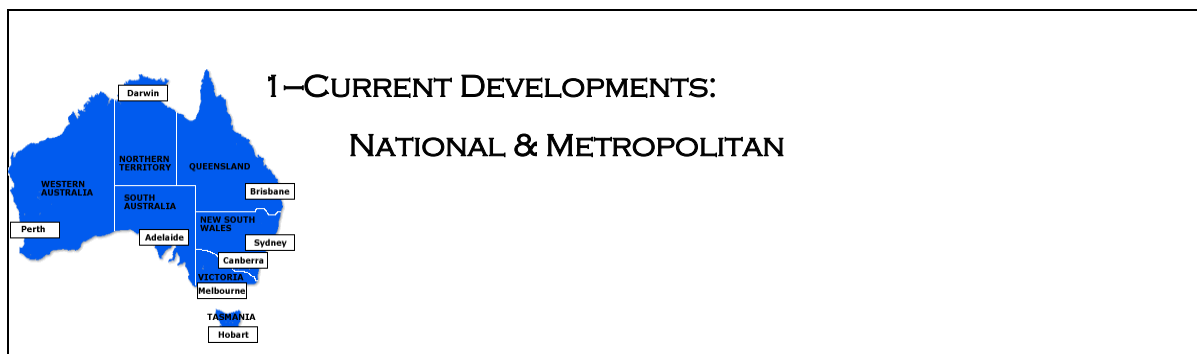
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**Deadline for the next *Newsletter*: 30 April 2015.**

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.



### 81.1.1. Gina Rinehart sells Fairfax Media shares

Mining mogul Gina Rinehart has sold off her entire portfolio of Fairfax shares worth \$300 million. She said she saw no chance of the media company recovering soon (*Business Insider Australia*, 7 February 2015). On the evening of 6 February, Rinehart sold her 14.99 per cent stake in the company — 352 million shares — to broker Morgan Stanley for 86.75c each after Fairfax shares closed at 96c that day. One of her 40 million share instalments was bought at 60 cents a share. The *Daily Telegraph* reports that Hancock chief development officer John Klepec said, on behalf of Rinehart: Fairfax has “no workable plan to revitalise the company”. He said, “Should the Fairfax Media leadership change, we may consider a future role in the company.”

Rinehart’s relationship with Fairfax broke down after the company’s board of directors rejected her bid to take it over in 2012. Since then Rinehart, Australia’s richest person, has continually tried to dump her remaining shares. She first bought into Fairfax in 2010, when she spent \$285 million at 18.6 per cent share in the publisher. Rinehart remains a major shareholder in Network Ten, along with casino operator James Packer and media entrepreneur Lachlan Murdoch. In December, her 9.5 per cent in the company was worth about \$58.97 million after paying approximately \$208.14 million.

### 81.1.2 New chair of Press Council

The new Australian Press Council chairman is Professor David Weisbrot, a former president of the Australian Law Reform Commission. Of the 23 members, nine are nominees of the publishers. The others consist of nine “public” members with no recent or significant connection to the media, and four “independent journalists” who are not employed by media organisations. Nobody in the “public” and “independent journalist” categories can join the Press Council unless they are first nominated by the chairman (*Australian*, 9 December 2014). See 81.1.13.

### 81.1.3 Newspapers and Martin Place siege

On 15–16 December 2014, a lone gunman, Man Haron Monis, held hostage 10 customers and eight employees of a Lindt chocolate café in Martin Place, Sydney. Police treated the event as a terrorist attack, and negotiated with Monis throughout the day. After a 16-hour standoff, during which areas of the Sydney central business district surrounding the site were cordoned off and nearby buildings locked down, police officers from the Tactical Operations Unit stormed the café upon hearing gunshots from inside. At least one hostage was shot by Monis, who himself was shot dead after police entered in response. Hostages Katrina Dawson and Tori Johnson died, while three other hostages and a police officer were injured during the police raid.

Here is a small round up of the Australian newspapers and their front pages on 16 December 2014:

- The *Sydney Morning Herald* carried the headline “Terror Hits Home” and led its main story with “a man brandishing a gun and an Islamic flag”. The paper had 12 pages of coverage of the siege including a story headlined “Hallmarks of ‘lone wolf’ attack say experts” which seemed to have been proved correct the next morning by the NSW police commissioner, Andrew Scipione, who said the gunman had been acting alone.

- **The Australian** carried the headline “Hostages’ night of horror” and described Man Haron Monis as an “Iranian self-styled sheik”. An analysis written by Greg Bearup said “this may all turn out to be more lone nut case, than lone wolf, but this man provided a template for others more radical, and more able, to follow”.
- The **Daily Telegraph** had the headline “Evil Strikes Our Hearts” and named Man Haron Monis as a “self-styled sheik and Islamic State preacher”. The newspaper had 16 pages dedicated to the coverage with a banner at the top reading “Sydney under siege”. The paper carried a report detailing a phone call from a 19-year-old hostage to the *Daily Telegraph* newsroom. The report said “This was an attack by the Islamic State. This was a lone wolf attack by a supporter or sympathiser of the evil Islamic terror group that had waged war with humanity.”
- The **Australian Financial Review** had the headline, “Islamic State-linked terror grips Sydney” and led its story with “A gunman sympathetic to Islamic State” but noted he did not fit the typical profile of a young Islamic State-inspired radical.



### Sydney siege coverage:

**Monday, 15 December**, the day the siege began:

*Daily Telegraph*, special 2pm edition. Main headline: “Death cult CBD attack”.

**Tuesday, 16 December:**

*Daily Telegraph*, 15 tabloid pages. Main headline: “Evil strikes our heart”.

*Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 tabloid pages as a wraparound. Main headline: “Terror hits home”.

*Australian*, 5 broadsheet pages “Hostages’ night of horror”.

*Age*, 7 tabloid pages, “Terror grips Sydney”

*Canberra Times*, 3 broadsheet pages (paper not expanded beyond its normal pagination). ““Terror in the city”

*Courier-Mail*, 13 tabloid pages, “No No No”

Each paper carried a Page 1 photograph of an escaped hostage employee and a policeman.

### Wednesday, 17 December:

- *Daily Telegraph*, 29 tabloid pages including 8 page tabloid liftout. ““Free pass to terror”.
- *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 tabloid pages wraparound, “A city mourns”
- *Australian*, 7 broadsheet pages. “Lone wolf on bail, unwatched’.
- *Age*, 12 tabloid pages wraparound, “United in grief”
- *Herald Sun*, 20 tabloid pages including 8 pages wraparound, “A nation mourns”
- *Canberra Times*, 5 broadsheet pages. “A city’s heart breaks”.



### 81.1.4 Fairfax and APN in radio moves

Fairfax Media and Macquarie Radio Network have confirmed their radio merger and APN News & Media has also completed a five-city network with the acquisition of Fairfax's Perth radio station 96FM for \$78 million (*Australian*, 22 December 2014). Fairfax's sale of the station comes as it cleans up its radio assets as part of the merger with Macquarie Radio (MRN). The high-rating Perth music station will be incorporated into the APN Australian Radio Network's (ARN) new KIIS network, which will incorporate the new Sydney 106.5 station, which won Sydney's FM ratings this year, the new Melbourne KIIS 101.1 station, which launches in January, Adelaide's #1 FM Mix102.3, Brisbane's #1FM 97.3FM and Perth's 96FM.

### 81.1.5 Rodgers and Ferguson new state editors for the *Australian*

**Queensland:** Shane Rodgers has been appointed Queensland editor of the *Australian*. Among the posts Rodgers has held are: deputy editor of the *Courier-Mail*, national chief of staff and economics writer for News Limited, editorial director of the APN News & Media Group in Australia, editor-in-chief of Quest Newspapers and general manager of Queensland Newspapers. His most recent position was chief operating officer of Brisbane's Economic Development Board.

**Victoria:** John Ferguson has been appointed Victorian editor of the *Australian*, succeeding Patricia Karvelas, who has joined Radio National. Ferguson is a former Canberra press gallery journalist, European correspondent for News Limited and state political editor for the *Herald Sun*. He had been the *Australian's* Victorian political editor since 2011 (*Weekend Australian*, 17-18 January 2015, p.2).

### 81.1.6 Recent events

#### 81.1.6.1 Deaths

**Armstrong, Leslie William, and Alan Kingo:** See 81.3.2.

**Gordon, Harry:** D. 21 January 2015 on Gold Coast, aged 89; had a distinguished career as a journalist, sportswriter, foreign correspondent, editor, author and historian; he had been the official historian of the Australian Olympic Committee since 1992; wrote more than 14 books, many of which were about the Olympic Games, including a biography of Dawn Fraser; in 2006; received the International Society of Olympic Historians Lifetime Award; his final book was *From Athens With Pride* (2014); a former editor of Melbourne's *Sun News-Pictorial*, editor-in-chief of both the Herald and Weekly Times (Melbourne) and Queensland Newspapers (Brisbane), and former chairman of Australian Associated Press (AAP, 22 January 2015).

**Lawson, Peter:** D. 10 January 2015 in Sydney, aged 75; was a sub-editor at the *Age* in Melbourne for more than 25 years; a genial, enthusiastic man, he was born in Scotland and worked in Broken Hill before moving to Melbourne [John Tidey, email].

**McRae, Mary Asunta "Toni":** D. 30 October 2014 at Dundowran, Queensland, aged 67; grew up in New Zealand; worked for Sydney *Sun*, and uncovered the infamous liaison between Labor Deputy Prime Minister Jim Cairns and staffer Junie Morosi; assistant press secretary to NSW Opposition Leader Peter Coleman; co-wrote a biography of Andrew Peacock; wrote and broadcast reports on the Iran-Iraq war for America's *NBC Today* and BBC Scotland; member of teams that won three United Nations Association Media Peace Awards; worked for *Fraser Coast Chronicle*, Maryborough-Hervey Bay, 2005-2011 (*Walkley Magazine*, Issue 82, December 2014-February 2015, p.33).

### 81.1.7 A course to keep pace with newsroom innovation

Fairfax Media is joining with RMIT University, Melbourne, and the Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, to launch a pilot course to help students and educators better keep pace with newsroom innovation. The "Innovation in Modern Journalism" unit will be trialled at QUT in Semester 1 of 2015 followed by RMIT in the second half of the year. The course will aim to arm young journalists with the creativity and practical tools to engage audiences and generate revenue, with a focus on digital platforms.

*Brisbane Times* editor Simon Holt created the course after having begun discussions with journalists and educators 18 months ago. “The coalface of journalism is changing so quickly – I can go on holiday for six weeks and everything changes,” Holt said. “The tertiary sector puts programs in place with their students and is good at keeping up academically and understanding, but keeping up with the coalface is very different. That’s where we can help – we can share with them our day to day challenges and provide students with an understanding of what tools available can be adapted to a working environment. Because it’s a course in innovation, we hope the course we teach in the next six months will be very different in three years’ time.” Holt said combining academic knowledge with practical newsroom experience was a potent partnership.

### 81.1.8 Cover prices rise

The weekday cover prices of the *Herald Sun*, *Courier-Mail*, *Daily Telegraph* and *Advertiser* (Adelaide) rose from \$1.30 to \$1.40 on 9 February. Cover prices of some country papers are higher: for example, your editor paid \$1.70 for a copy of the *Wauchope Gazette*, NSW, in the office of that newspaper on 10 February.

### 81.1.9 Circulation of printed newspapers

In the Audited Media Association of Australia circulation figures for the three months to 31 December, sales for the print editions of newspaper mastheads continued to fall as readers migrate from print to digital editions. The *Daily Telegraph* on Saturday was among the best print performers with a drop of 3.9 per cent to 275,380. Melbourne’s *Age* Monday-to-Friday was among the worst performers: its paid print sales plummeted 18.3 per cent to 106,843 to leave it marginally above the *Australian*’s print-only weekday circulation of 104,774 (down 6.7 per cent).

According to readership data for December, the *Herald* maintained its most-read status across print and digital platforms with a cross-platform audience of 5.129 million, ahead of the *Daily Telegraph* (4.355 million) and the *Herald Sun* (4.215 million). Fusion Strategy principal Steve Allen said the print circulation falls were “solid ... if slightly moderating”, and partly offset by growth in digital. “We have now had five consecutive audits with moderating losses of hard-copy circulation,” Allen said. “Like the last audit results, digital cannot presently replace the lost hard copies, though it (has) grown at 12.11 per cent this quarter.”

PRINT editions only	Oct-Dec 2014	Oct-Dec 2013	Percentage variation	July-Dec 2004	% variation over 10 years
<b>National</b>					
<i>Australian</i> [M-F]	104,774	112,269	—6.7	131,753	—19.72
<i>Weekend Australian</i>	227,486	242,158	—6.1	289,968	—21.55
<i>Aust Financial Review</i> [M-F]	57,451	62,455	—8.0	85,293	—32.54
<i>Aust Financial Review</i> (Sat)	63,621	71,733	—11.3	80,023	—20.50
<b>New South Wales</b>					
<i>Daily Telegraph</i> [M-F]	273,241	293,512	—6.9	390,410	—30.01
<i>Daily Telegraph</i> (Sat)	275,380	286,683	—3.9	337,263	—18.35
<i>Sunday Telegraph</i>	489,257	525,123	—6.8	716,326	—31.70
<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> [M-F]	114,634	131,737	—13.0	214,005	—46.43
<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> (Sat)	210,115	228,392	—8.0	352,482	—40.39
<i>Sun-Herald</i>	227,340	264,434	—14.0	513,888	—55.76
<b>Victoria</b>					
<i>Herald Sun</i> [M-F]	363,384	394,597	—7.9	553,100	—34.43
<i>Herald Sun</i> (Sat)	363,399	395,105	—8.3	512,000	—29.02

<i>Sunday Herald Sun</i>	417,442	453,268	—7.9	605,000	—31.00
<i>Age</i> [M-F]	106,843	130,767	—18.3	196,250	—45.56
<i>Saturday Age</i>	180,447	196,051	—8.0	292,250	—38.26
<i>Sunday Age</i>	147,017	164,243	—10.5	194,750	—24.51
<b>Queensland</b>					
<i>Courier-Mail</i> [M-F]	158,286	161,172	—5.3	208,902	—24.23
<i>Courier-Mail</i> (Sat)	197,963	214,603	—7.8	332,335	—40.43
<i>Sunday Mail</i>	363,068	397,481	—8.7	621,419	—41.57
<b>South Australia</b>					
<i>Advertiser</i> [M-F]	136,458	150,583	—9.4	198,172	—31.14
<i>Advertiser</i> (Sat)	178,350	197,900	—9.9	272,341	—34.51
<i>Sunday Mail</i>	214,609	236,261	—9.2	331,755	—35.31
<b>Western Australia</b>					
<i>West Australian</i> [M-F]	158,400	166,468	—4.8	204,403	—22.51
<i>West Australian</i> (Sat)	255,335	279,334	—8.6	373,153	—31.57
<i>Sunday Times</i>	204,892	237,721	—13.8	353,000	—41.96
<b>Tasmania</b>					
<i>Mercury</i> [M-F]	33,111	36,616	—9.6	48,451	—31.24
<i>Mercury</i> (Sat)	45,367	49,671	—8.7	63,414	—28.46
<i>Sunday Tasmanian</i>	42,645	46,909	—9.1	59,939	—28.84
<b>Northern Territory</b>					
<i>Northern Territory News</i> [M-F]	13,670	15,485	—11.7	22,957	—40.45
<i>NT News</i>	19,636	23,193	—15.3	32,588	—39.74
<i>Sunday Territorian</i>	14,450	16,691	—13.4	25,381	—43.07
<b>ACT</b>					
<i>Canberra Times</i> [M-F]	23,183	24,851	—6.7	37,272	—37.80
<i>Canberra Times</i> (Sat)	32,094	36,829	—12.9	68,446	—53.11
<i>Canberra Times</i> (Sun)	21,578	24,424	—11.7	37,610	—42.63

**Source:** Audited Media Association of Australia (and its predecessor, the Audited Bureau of Circulations), with percentages calculated by ANHG.

### 81.1.10 Peter Greste returns to Australia

Peter Greste returned to Brisbane on 5 February after spending 400 days in jail in Egypt. (*Australian*, 5 February 2015). It was a long haul from Cairo's Tora Prison to the waiting arms of his family, roughly 14,390km and 400 days in hell. The award-winning Al Jazeera journalist was flanked by his deeply relieved parents, Lois and Juris, and brothers, Andrew and Michael, who led a global media campaign to "Free Peter Greste" that touched everyone from Barack Obama to the students of Brisbane's Indooroopilly State High School, where Greste was once school captain.

"My family have been the bedrock throughout all of this," he said. "I couldn't have done this without them. You guys wouldn't be here without them. All I've done is sit in a cell and write a couple of letters. They've been the ones to drive this."

### 81.1.11 *HuffPost* launches Australian edition

The Huffington Post Media Group and Fairfax Media announced on 9 February a partnership to launch *HuffPost Australia* (Fairfax Media corporate website). The partnership combines the strengths of the *Huffington Post*, a leading global source of breaking news, opinion, entertainment and community, and the No. 1 news site in the US with Fairfax Media, a leading independent, digitally-led diversified media business in Australia. HuffPost and Fairfax will establish a team of independent editors and reporters based in Sydney. The site will launch in the second quarter of this year.

The announcement was made by Arianna Huffington, president and editor-in-chief of the Huffington Post Media Group, and Greg Hywood, chief executive officer and managing director of Fairfax Media. The *Huffington Post* had 117 million unique visitors in the US in December 2014 (comScore, December 2014). It was named the top publisher on Facebook in 2014 (Newswhip).

### 81.1.12 Fairfax: audience good, profit not so good

Fairfax Media has a larger audience than ever but is still struggling to commercialise its publishing offerings, despite bolstering its earnings with new revenue streams, according to its half year results released on 19 February (The Newspaper Works, 19 February 2015). The company reported a net profit after tax of \$26.3 million for the half year to December 2014, with a profit after tax of \$86 million for continuing businesses, down 0.6 per cent from \$86.4 million in the corresponding period last year. Earnings per share were 3.7 cents, down 0.6 per cent. However, total EBIDTA was \$85.3 million, down from \$291.1 million in the prior corresponding period. EBIDTA for continuing businesses was \$162.4 million excluding significant items, an outcome chief executive Greg Hywood described as “solid”. Total circulation and subscription revenues for Metropolitan Media were up 2.3 per cent, with digital subscription revenues jumping by 61 per cent. The *Sydney Morning Herald* continues to be Australia’s most-read newspaper, with 5.1 million print and digital readers and a 13 per cent year on year increase in digital subscribers for 2014. The *Age* recorded a 15.2 per cent jump year on year, with both mastheads having around 135,000 digital subscribers.

Print declines in Metropolitan Media eased, dropping 10 per cent in the half compared to a 24 per cent fall in 2014. Australian Community Media was undergoing transformational change, he said, with adjusted EBIDTA declining 31.4 per cent to \$56.6 million and total revenue down 7.4 per cent. Targets for the cost savings strategy introduced last year, which saw a process of decentralisation begin across the ACM network, has been ramped up from \$40 million to \$60 million. Fairfax New Zealand saw strong results in the digital sector with digital revenue growth of 25 per cent, with Stuff.co.nz’s unique audience jumping 18 per cent year on year in January 2015. An 18.8 per cent drop in EBIDTA was the result of investment in digital product development and marketing, as well as one-off printing transition expenses. The NZ business weathered tough economic conditions with advertising revenue down by 6.2 per cent. Fairfax has also announced a plan to buy back 5 per cent of its ordinary on-market shares, a total of 121 million shares, as part of the company’s ongoing management strategy. It is expected to commence on March 23.

### 81.1.13 Press Council and News Corp Australia

**Chris Merritt**, legal affairs editor, the *Australian*, 20 February 2015: The nation’s media proprietors have been urged to reconstruct the Australian Press Council because of a dispute over whether it has the authority to decide whether newspapers were making the right decisions about what appears on their front pages. This comes after recent rulings in which the Press Council informed the *Australian* and Sydney’s *Daily Telegraph* that it would have been better if front-page photographs had appeared on other pages. While the Press Council ruled neither incident had breached its standards, it triggered a major dispute with both newspapers asserting that it had now exceeded its authority.

“The Press Council needs to be reconstructed by the proprietors,” said Chris Mitchell, editor-in-chief of the *Australian*. “I absolutely promise to do everything I can to remove my paper from the activism of the Press Council, which has no business telling people what pictures to run. I am interested in publishing truth.” The editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, Paul Whittaker, said the Press Council’s members were “retrospectively second-guessing the placement of news articles and photographs in newspapers — all from the comfort of their plush leather armchairs months later

and outside the daily, intense pressure of a newsroom”. The Press Council had earlier expressed “deep concern” because the *Australian* had deliberately breached confidentiality to show that the Press Council was considering whether this newspaper had been wrong to publish a photograph on its front page of the Ukraine crash site of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17.

This disclosure was made in an editorial on Tuesday (17 February) that accused the Press Council of improperly seeking to expand its reach into matters beyond the competence of the non-journalists who form the majority on its adjudication panels. The Press Council issued a statement [on 19 February] denying it had exceeded its jurisdiction and accusing *The Australian* of misrepresenting its role and policies.

The breach with two of the major daily newspapers published by News Corp Australia came just days before Press Council chairman Julian Disney was to step down after five tumultuous years, in which the organisation’s procedures and effectiveness in defending press freedom have been questioned.



### 81.2.1 Digital subscriptions grow by double-digits

Paid digital subscriptions for newspapers grew by double-digit percentages across all major newspapers that declare their digital sales, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulations’ report for the December quarter last year (*Australian*, 13 February 2015). The *Australian* added 8457 paid digital subscriptions to attain a total of 65,739, an increase of 14.8 per cent, and the *Weekend Australian* rose 8404 for a total of 65,735, up 14.7 per cent on the previous corresponding quarter. Total sales across print and digital were flat at 164,619 on weekdays and down 4.1 per cent to 276,888 for the *Weekend Australian* among the best results for the quarter.

*The Australian’s* chief executive, Nicholas Gray, said the newspaper’s print and digital bundles had been well received by readers despite a 50 per cent price rise. News Corp Australia chief executive Julian Clarke said while printed circulation of newspapers had marginally declined, it was “more than replaced by significant growth in digital readership” which had helped to boost total News Corp audiences by 2.5 per cent in December to 15.1 million across all platforms, according to the Enhanced Media Metrics Australia readership figures. Meanwhile, total digital subscriptions across the company have surpassed 250,000, up 56 per cent year-on-year. The *Herald Sun* and the *Sunday Herald Sun’s* digital sales grew by more than 25 per cent across all seven days of the week to 49,425 on weekdays and slightly less on Sundays.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* added 15,231 digital subscriptions Monday-to-Friday to 135,274 across all digital platforms to record growth of 12.7 per cent, while its stablemate the *Melbourne Age* put on 17,884 to 135,776, an increase of 15.2 per cent. A Fairfax spokesman said the media company was continuing to “grow digital subscriptions, innovate and build value into our -subscriptions based on an understanding of the changing needs of our customers”. Combining digital and print, the *Herald* sold 213,759 copies on weekdays, down 0.7 per cent, because of a 13 per cent decline in sales of its printed masthead. “Our print circulation is more profitable than ever,” a Fairfax spokesman said. See print circulation figures in 81.1.9 above.





### 3—CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS: COMMUNITY & PROVINCIAL

#### 81.3.1 APN on path to recovery

The biggest institutional investor in APN News & Media has cheered the newspaper publisher's full-year result, in a further sign that old media stocks are on the path to recovery after years of being oversold by the market (*Australian*, 13 February 2013). Allan Gray director Simon Mawhinney, whose fund manages a 17.68 per cent stake in APN, said APN had delivered a "solid result" as the company's shares closed at a record high for the year.

Shares in APN gained 2.78 per cent, or 2.5c, to 92.5c on 12 February, erasing painful memories of record lows two years ago, when the stock was trading at about 20c. Operating in a tough advertising market, APN's result came in ahead of consensus, with net profit before exceptional items up 27 per cent at \$75.2 million for the 12 months to 31 December. Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation gained 1 per cent at \$164.1m, with revenue up 3 per cent at \$843.2m.

Much of the credit for the turnaround must go to APN chief executive Michael Miller, who has transformed the company since arriving from News Corporation in May 2013. Mr Miller has pulled off several major deals, including a \$123 million rights issue and the recruitment of radio stars Kyle and Jackie O. The group's results were buoyed by a string of acquisitions during the year, including a full takeover of its radio business, and the remaining 50 per cent stake in a Hong Kong-based outdoor advertising business.

Miller spent \$246 million buying full control of Australian Radio Network, which owns the KIIS and WSFM stations. In January he finalised the purchase of Perth radio station 96FM for \$78m to create a radio network with national audience reach, a must-buy for advertisers. Crucially, Miller has won the support of APN's largest shareholder, the Dublin-based media company Independent News & Media, as well as Allan Gray. Both shareholders revolted against previous management, forcing five directors including the CEO and chairman to resign two years ago.

#### 81.3.2 Kyneton: Deaths of Les and Alan Armstrong

**Rod Kirkpatrick** writes: Brothers Les and Alan Armstrong, who were members of a dynasty that controlled the *Kyneton Guardian* for 103 years from its foundation in 1862 have died within three months of one another. Alan died aged 78 on 6 December 2014 in Bendigo and Les at 83 on 19 February in Brisbane. They were sons of Mitchell Kingo Armstrong (1905-1969), who took charge of the paper on the death of his father, Arthur Mitchell Armstrong (1874-1952), and formed a proprietary company in 1958, with wife Florence and two sons, Leslie William (b. 27 December 1931) and Alan Kingo (b. 26 April 1936). In 1965, Les and Alan were left to run the newspaper virtually on their own. Their father, who was ill



**LES ARMSTRONG, AS A CADET REPORTER, OFF TO THE SHOW CARRYING PORTABLE TYPEWRITER, AND WITH COPY PAPER UNDER ARM, LABELLED WITH VARIOUS SHOW CLASSES READY FOR HIM TO TYPE IN THE RESULTS**

but did not disclose it, might not appear at the office for days at a time, but he arranged the sale of the newspaper to the Elliott Newspaper Group. Different versions of the sale have been told, but the undeniable outcome was that the fourth generation of the Armstrong newspaper family did not get the chance to run the paper on their own, even though both were involved in the family business for more than 20 years.

Les Armstrong continued as managing editor of the *Guardian* until July 1967 before becoming the assistant manager of the Victorian Lawn Tennis Association and later the manager. Alan stayed at the newspaper a year or two longer before joining a Shepparton printing firm. Reflecting on the sale of the *Guardian*, Les said in an email to me, “Sometimes in one’s history there are unexplained happenings and this part of our history is just one of those.” [I have emails that Les Armstrong wrote, dated 27 September 2006, 11 December 2009, 17 December 2010, 29 December 2010, and 18 January 2012. The final three were written specifically to me. They form part of my Kyneton research files. For wider Armstrong family context, see my section on the Armstrong family in my book, *The Bold Type: A History of Victoria’s Country Newspapers, 1840-2010* (2010), pp.207-210.]



#### 4—NEWSPAPER HISTORY

### 81.4.1 Douglas Lockwood: bombing of Darwin

On Melbourne Cup Day 1941, the Melbourne *Herald* sent reporter Douglas Lockwood, 23, to Darwin with his new wife, to cover the preparations for war and, if it came, the invasion. Lockwood was there for the bombing on 19 February 1942, and stayed another four months before joining the AIF. He served in the islands, and became a war correspondent in the dying days of the war. By coincidence he shared a tent for a while with Stuart Brown, later editor of the *Herald*. Lockwood was Darwin correspondent for the *Herald*, 1941-42, 1946-68, and worked for the Herald and Weekly Times in Port Moresby, Melbourne, Brisbane and Bendigo until he died in December 1980, aged 62. He scooped the world with his report of the defection of Evdokia Petrov in 1954 and won the Walkley Award for Best News Story (the equivalent of today’s Gold Walkley) in 1958. He wrote 13 books about the NT and its people. *I, the Aboriginal* won the Adelaide *Advertiser* Festival of Arts Literary Award in 1962 and was made into a TV film. His book on the bombing, Australia’s Pearl Harbour, was the first fully researched account of the occasion. Two of his books were translated into Russian, German and Danish.

What follows is an edited version of his recollection of the bombing of Darwin. If he learnt one lesson, it was to prepare his lines of communication, says son Kim Lockwood, who has contributed this to the ANHG.

*Douglas Lockwood* writes: I was at the post office just before 10 o’clock when the siren sounded with the kind of urgency that I knew instinctively meant “This is fair dinkum”. The post office, carrying the lines of communication to the south, was an obvious target. Ships were anchored under the cliffs below, and bombs meant for them would not have to be far astray to hit the PMG area. I left in a hurry. I had always wanted a scoop, though not of this kind, and when the ack-ack guns began to speak, I knew I had one—as long as I stayed alive to write it.

I drove to my home at a speed which would have made any traffic cop blanch. It took me no more than 30 seconds. Allow another 15 to find the deepest hole in the garden—a three-inch gutter—and five seconds while I crawled in. I was lying on my back, absorbing dirt on my perspiring body,

DOUGLAS LOCKWOOD

Did I close my eyes? Did I block my ears with my hands? I can't remember. I was far too scared. I had always supposed that bomb-bursts would be the most frightening part of a raid, but worse by far was the squeal of the bombs as they rushed invisibly towards their targets.

I was sure that the first stick I saw released was heading for me, and the increasing noise, like a bottle filling with water, convinced me. Yes . . . perhaps I did close my eyes. By my watch, the raid lasted 42 minutes. When the “All Clear” sounded, I ran to my typewriter and wrote the first “take” of what I knew must be a scoop, because I represented all the evening newspapers. The story would be stale by the time the morning papers got it.

I was aware that the bombing had not been confined to the harbour. I saw bombs falling on the town, the hospital and the aerodrome, and I described all this briefly in my first urgent-rate, spare-no-expense story. I then drove to the telegraph office to file. Alas, no telegraph office! No post office! No cable office!

Nineteen bombs had crashed down on buildings housing the entire PMG [Postmaster-General's] communications system. Now it was a heap of rubble. I was in time to bow my head as the shattered bodies of nine men and women with whom I had had daily dealings were carried out and placed on the tray of an open truck. Axel Olsen, of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, came along, ironically bemoaning his luck that such a story should have broken in evening-paper time.

Just before noon the bombers were back for a second strike at the aerodrome. I could see the puffs of ack-ack smoke bursting under them—from shells fired by nude gunners. The men had been in the showers when the alert sounded, and sprinted naked to their guns.

My problem was to get the story to Melbourne. In early 1942 there was no telephone link between Darwin and the south and we depended on the telegraph, which was shattered. I tried to have a message sent through military channels but the signals officers laughed. They had enough high priority service traffic to keep them busy for days. Axel Olsen and Merton Woods of the Sydney *Daily Telegraph* had similar trouble, so we agreed to make a dash for the nearest telegraph office, which we believed to be at Adelaide River. We pooled our meagre petrol rations and arrived two hours later. "Where is the telegraph office?" I asked an army major.

“None here.”

“We have urgent messages to send.”

“Then you’ll have to send them from Darwin, but you’ll have to wait until the line is repaired.”

Like batsmen waiting to be run out, we were hopelessly caught in mid-wicket. It seemed that our best course would be to drive to Katherine, 140 miles farther on. I asked the major, "What is the road like to Katherine?" "There is no road. You can go on the evacuee train tonight or in the morning."

"Couldn't we try driving? There must be a track of some kind."

“There is, and it’s under 2ft of water. This is the wet season; between here and Katherine the road is cut by four major rivers and hundreds of creeks. You have no chance of getting through in any kind of vehicle yet invented. If you try, you do so at your own risk; we’re not going out to pick up the pieces of damn-fool reporters.”

He was firm, and seemed to know what he was talking about, so Axel, Merton and I tossed a coin: heads for Darwin, tails for the train to Katherine. The train won.

[illegible]

PART OF FRONT PAGE OF *DAILY NEWS*,  
PERTH, 19 FEBRUARY 1942.

That night I slept on the ground by the track, waiting for a train which arrived at dawn. We sat in the broiling sun on flat-top trucks all day. We had nothing to eat, and nothing to drink except lukewarm water from the railway tanks.

At Katherine we lodged our stories, more than 30 hours late. The heavily censored version of mine made me want to weep. I tried to sleep against the worry of knowing that I had failed to get through to my office in time with the most sensational Australian story ever to come the way of an Australian journalist.

[Lockwood's son, Kim, who in 1974 was the *Herald's* man in Darwin when cyclone Tracy hit, had the same problem his father had in 1942. All communications were lost. He lodged his first story 36 hours later.]

**Next issue:** How Douglas Lockwood was the only journalist to get the story of Evdokia Petrov's defection out.

### 81.4.2 Newspapers and the Great War

When the Great War (World War I) began in August 1914, the Australian mainstream press was "strident" in its support for Australia's involvement, writes Joan Beaumont (*Broken Nation*, pp.17-18). The Melbourne *Age* agreed on 3 August that Australia should follow Canada and New Zealand and "maintain inviolate the fabric of the [British] Empire". Britain had been driven to abandon its policy of splendid isolation in Europe "in order to preserve a balance of power ... that was menaced by the portentous development of the Teutonic hegemony". The Adelaide *Register* declared on 4 August that "the Dominions regard the mother country's quarrels as their own". Lapsing into an execrable piece of imperial poetry, it intoned:

To all the loyal hearts who long  
To keep our British Empire whole!  
To all our noble sons, the strong  
New England of the South Pole!  
To England under Indian skies,  
To those dark millions of her realm—  
Hands all around!  
God the traitor's hope confound!  
To this great name of England, drink, my friends,  
And all her glorious Empire round and round!

The *Sydney Morning Herald* joined the chorus, claiming on 3 August to speak for the whole of Australia when it said that Australians would support Britain "to the utmost limit of their resources". It said: "We know that our security and our independence depend on the victory of the British arms. We know that if we were to stand aside we could not be certain of our national existence for a year or for a day." On 6 August it trumpeted: "It is our baptism of fire. Australia knows something of the flames of war, but its realities have never been brought so close as they will be in the near future." In Western Australia, too, there were assurances in the press that: "No shadow of doubt rests upon the loyalty of the Australian people [to the Motherland]."

### 81.4.3 Chinese-Australian papers digitised

The National Library of Australia celebrated Chinese New Year on 19 February with the digitisation of three of the earliest known Chinese-Australian newspapers. They are the *Chinese Australian Herald*, 1894-1923 (*Guang yi hua bao*) [see extract next page], *Chinese Times*, 1902-1922 (*Meilibin bu ai guo bao*) and the *Chinese Advertiser* (1856) which later became the first bilingual newspaper, the *English and Chinese Advertiser* (1856-8). All these newspapers are now available through Trove, the National Library's award-winning free discovery service.

Director-General of the National Library of Australia, Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, said, "These newspapers are a rich resource for researchers interested in the history of Chinese migration to Australia and there are over 21,000 pages available across the three titles. The *English and Chinese Advertiser*, for example, was printed by Englishman Robert Bell at the height of the gold



rush in Ballarat. He became known as ‘Chinese Bell’ for standing up for the Chinese who were discriminated against and forced to live in special camps.”

The three Chinese newspapers bring the Trove tally of digitised newspapers to nearly 16 million pages from 843 newspapers. Like other newspapers delivered through Trove, the text of the Chinese newspapers is fully searchable and available for text correction by Trove users. Schwirtlich also paid tribute to the Ballarat Library in Victoria for helping fund the digitisation of the *Chinese Advertiser/The English and Chinese Advertiser* and to the Sovereign Hill Museum, the State Library of Victoria and the State Library of NSW for their support with the project.

**報 華 益 廣**  
THE CHINESE AUSTRALIAN HERALD. February 10, 1893

張附報華益廣 單貨定家店人華

## THE CHINESE STOREKEEPERS' ORDER LIST.

CHINESE STOREKEEPERS MAY SAVE THEMSELVES A LARGE AMOUNT OF TROUBLE  
BY USING THIS LIST IN MAKING UP THEIR ORDERS FOR GOODS.  
也勞煩之信寫省減可則行洋至付字英華單此將後然單此在寫者貨取行洋家各到信寫家店有凡

Name of Article.	目名貨各	Where to be purchased.	貨買店某從要處此於明書
COFFEE (Fry's)	茶告得德文	ANY WHOLESALE GROCER	貨有店貨雜行發家各
ARNOIT'S BISCUITS	乾餅號字律晏	W. ARNOTT, Newcastle	店乾餅律晏埠時卡島
HACKSHALL'S BISCUITS	乾餅路樹黑	THE HACKSHALL BISCUIT CO., Parramatta Road	仔牌巴在店乾餅路樹黑

#### 81.4.4 Times flies (8): Gnowangerup and Albany

**Rod Kirkpatrick** continues his career reminiscences: Join me in Esperance, Western Australia, on a chilly August morning in 2003. It's about 7am as we leave to drive west through Dalyup, Munglinup and Ravensthorpe to Jerramungup. There I have to decide whether I will veer south to the coast and then south-west for Albany, or whether I will detour—and take a longer route to Albany via Ongerup and Gnowangerup and Tambellup.

I'm making good time and decide on the detour because I believe I can still run fairly close to time for my 2pm appointment at the *Albany Advertiser*. I am drawn magnetically to Gnowangerup where, until nine weeks earlier, the Walker family had produced the *Gnowangerup Star*, just as they had since August 1915—by hot-metal and letterpress methods. I couldn't travel this close to Gnowangerup and not visit the *Star*, even if it has closed. I have spoken to the owner, Margaret Walker, who is 82, by phone a couple of times over the years, but she does not know I am in WA.

We pull into Gnowangerup shortly after 11am and, because I want to do more than simply see the *Star* office, I call at the Post Office and ask where the *Star* is and where I might find Mrs Walker. The postmaster tells me the *Star* office is down



**MARGARET WALKER IN THE OFFICE OF THE GNOWANGERUP STAR, 29 AUGUST 2003, NINE WEEKS AFTER THE PAPER CLOSED.**



near the National Australian Bank and I'll find Mrs Walker sitting behind the desk in the office.

We find the *Star* office with no difficulty and take some exterior photos before knocking at the door. Mrs Walker opens the door and she is soon sitting behind her desk again, talking and talking, and she is happy to allow me to turn on my micro-cassette recorder to catch the story of how a country newspaper was allowed to die.

Amongst other things, she tells me about the local Telecentre established by the West Australian Government that had savagely eroded the *Star's* job-printing income. Locals could go there and do their own printing for the cost of photocopying and not have to worry about job printing. The *Star* had become too much for Margaret Walker and son Bill, who lives next door to the office. They needed another employee but could not afford \$800 a week to hire another person, so they'd had to shut the paper. She shows me the ninety-odd letters that she received when news spread that the *Star* would rise no more. One came from New Zealand, and one from local Federal Member Wilson Tuckey, who said: "WA and the newspaper industry have lost an icon through lack of public support and I think it is very sad."

Margaret Walker talks about her sixty years of involvement with the paper, about the death of husband Isaac (always known as Zic) and the dwindling support in recent years. At times she wipes away the tears. The tape keeps running and I take photos of her at her desk, and photos of her gazing at the formes containing the metal type comprising the pages for the final issue of the *Star*. I look down the length of the very narrow building, and it's a little like looking at a bedroom that has been left the way it was when the occupant suddenly disappeared (or died). Everything is just the way it was after the final issue was produced on 26 June 2003. Eighty-eight years of newspaper activity flash before my eyes, and they soon fill with tears.



**THE GNOWANGERUP STAR PRODUCTION ROOM NINE WEEKS AFTER THE FINAL EDITION: THE COMPED PAGES STILL SITTING IN THEIR FORMES.**

the editor who was never available when I rang from Brisbane is too busy – on Friday afternoon on a non-daily – to allow me five minutes, but not too busy to tell another journalist that the company's Code of Conduct forbids him to speak to media people and such, without the permission of the general manager who happens to be out. The *Albany Advertiser* is owned by West Australian Newspapers.

Bewildered, I leave my Mobile number for the manager and drive to the other side of Albany to book into overnight accommodation. When the manager rings, he asks me what sort of questions I wanted to ask. I tell him and he says he'll email me the answers. He doesn't invite me to call at the

We have to get to Albany by about 2pm, and I try to drag myself away, but Mrs Walker talks for another quarter of an hour in the street as we say our goodbyes. I don't really want to leave, but duty calls and we grab a pie at the local service station and eat it on the road as we head south for windy Albany. I find the *Advertiser*, take a photo or two, and then hit a brick wall that makes me wonder why I didn't just spend a few more hours at Gnowangerup.

At Albany, the journalist whom I have arranged to meet is not even on duty, and

office to meet him. I have travelled from Brisbane to Western Australia to research a book that no one has ever attempted, but for the manager of the *Albany Advertiser*, in this techno-stupid age, an email interface will do. The next day, I write him a snail-mail letter, asking a few more questions. [He never did email me or contact me.]

### 81.4.5 Tamworth: Visionary newspaper chairman

**Rod Kirkpatrick** writes: Few country-town department store owners win an obituary in the *Melbourne Age*, especially when they have lived interstate. Bruce Treloar is an exception to the rule (*Age*, 21 January 2015). Born in Tamworth, NSW, on 23 July 1926, Bruce Morison Treloar took over the family business, Treloars department store in Tamworth, when he was 27 because of his father's death. He had wide ranging interests and served on the board and the *Northern Daily Leader*, and later became its chairman. I interviewed him on 23 April 1996 and what he said helped shape the following few paras from *Country Conscience* (pp.296-297):

In contrast to the Packers, Rupert Murdoch did not actively seek out provincial newspaper acquisitions – at least in NSW. In NSW, the *Barrier Miner* was one of the few papers which he was bequeathed by his father, Sir Keith Murdoch, and able to continue to operate. He closed it in 1974, four years after News Ltd had agreed to take a twenty-five per cent interest in the *Northern Daily Leader*, a NSW provincial newspaper which had “always fiercely prided itself on its independence of the major combines”. This is how it happened. Bruce Morison Treloar, a third-generation member of a Tamworth retailing firm, was invited by the managing director of the Tamworth



EXTERIOR OF THE *NORTHERN DAILY LEADER* BUILDING, A TAMWORTH LANDMARK.

Newspaper Co, Harold Joseph, to become a member of the board. The company published the *Northern Daily Leader*, that staunch organ of the New State movement and the Country Party. Treloar said the custom followed by directors of taking it in turns to serve as chairman for a year had meant the person at the top “never got the feel of the place”. During his “turn” as chairman, the director who was next in line, Bob Curran, asked him if he would like to take his (Curran's) turn, and the same thing happened a year later with Basil Regan. Treloar thus served a three-year term as chairman and had the

opportunity to provide some leadership. From separate overseas trips, Joseph and Treloar concluded that the *Leader* needed to install a web offset press in place of the Hoe, which had been in operation at the *Leader* since 1925 and at the *Sydney Morning Herald* before that. They were impressed by the Swedish-manufactured Solna press (cost, \$122,860), which became the centrepiece of a proposed \$800,000 redevelopment program. The problem was paying for it.

I said we've got to get a big brother; we're not in the ball park to raise those sort of funds. I don't think the Shalders (an old established family of shareholders) would be prepared to raise it ... we were paying a reasonable dividend. I went to Sydney and I approached: the *Herald*, the Henderson paper as we called it then; the Packer paper; and the Murdoch paper. John Menadue was at News Ltd at that stage. I went off to see Murdoch and Menadue and they were very helpful. I asked them (we'd worked out a price): would you be prepared to buy a twenty-five per cent share in NDL? And they did that, they came in. And that was the turning point of the paper; we really went through the roof after that.

News Ltd, which soon increased its scrip to 33.3 per cent and by 1979 owned the company, used the *Leader* as an academy for its string of aspiring managers. One was Matthew Handbury, nephew of Rupert Murdoch and later the proprietor of his own company, Murdoch Magazines. Treloar was disappointed that News Ltd sold the *Northern Daily Leader* in 1987 in the wake of the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd takeover. “I don’t think Murdoch appreciated the full worth of country press. I don’t think he was that interested in it. I think he wanted a different style of paper altogether.”

[Footnote: The *Northern Daily Leader* advertised in mid-1980 for an editor. I applied and was interviewed by Handbury on 3 July. I stayed at the Calala home of Matt and Fiona Handbury on the nights of 2 and 3 July; that felt awkward. I didn’t get the job (James Crown did), but Handbury said he hoped I wouldn’t mind if he used some of the ideas I had put forward at the interview.— R.K.]

#### 81.4.6 ‘Headless’ headline: some background to top it off

Alan Howe writes (*Australian*, Media section, 26 January 2015): Journalists don’t talk about Charles Dingle any more. They barely ever did. He pops up in the news every few years and will do so again in December when lodging yet another application for bail. He lives at the Wende Correctional Facility in upstate New York alongside Mark David Chapman, who made headlines in 1980 by shooting dead John Lennon. Dingle made the headline in 1983 — “Headless Body in Topless Bar” — with an appalling crime that has long been overshadowed by the *New York Post* front page that reported it.



Last week *The West Australian*’s Nick Butterly made headlines himself when a security guard at Parliament House in Canberra denied him entry because of his “offensive” T-shirt; it bore the image of that headline from Friday, April 15, 1983. The story behind the headline had begun 24 hours earlier when Charles Dingle, drunk and sniffing cocaine, became angry with Herbert Cummings, the owner of Herbie’s Bar in Queens, New York. Dingle shot him dead and took four women hostage, one of whom he raped.

While robbing another, he saw her business card. She was a mortician. He instructed her to remove the bullet — it was evidence linking Dingle’s gun to the crime — from Cummings. With only a steak knife from the kitchen she couldn’t, so Dingle had her remove Cummings’s head, which he placed in a cardboard box. He released two hostages and took the others off in a stolen cab. At the corner of Broadway and 168th Street he fell asleep and the victims escaped and alerted police.

It is an incomprehensibly grim story — and you can debate the merits of the headline that accompanied it — but I challenge anyone to tell it in fewer than five words.

In any case, the *New York Post* decision has been vindicated by those words being quickly subsumed by popular culture — in which they clearly resonate today.

It didn’t take long before “Headless Body in Topless Bar” adorned not only T-shirts, but mugs, ties and placemats — and even spawned a film of the same name starring Raymond J. Barry. I was working on the *New York Post* on the 10th anniversary of that famous front page and — proving the adage that success has many fathers — a debate broke out about whose words they were. But the issue was settled that night. It had long been argued that Drew MacKenzie, brother of legendary London *Sun* editor Kelvin, wrote that headline. But MacKenzie conceded he had changed just one letter, removing the indefinite article (as written on a piece of copy paper the original words were “Headless body in a topless bar”) to make it fit.

They had been written by Vinnie Musetto, a short, bearded, bespectacled and mostly quiet professorial type whose remaining strands of hair flowed at length over his black shirt collar. Musetto had been given the bare facts of the crime that, a reporter had been told, took place in a topless bar. But others urged caution. No staffers had been to Herbie’s and none knew the dress code for certain. “It’s gotta be a topless bar!” Musetto is reported to have said, standing on his desk. “This is the greatest [expletive deleted] headline of my career!”

A reporter — a woman — was sent to Herbie's to find out. Musetto was on edge. His brilliant splash head might yet be undermined by the facts. "Tell her if it's not a topless bar to take her top off and make it one," he suggested. Herbie's was closed, but the woman was able to spot a sign inside that read "Topless dancing".

Musetto and his headline were the toast of New York talkback shows and were feted by *Saturday Night Live* and *Late Night with David Letterman*, to whom Musetto described the *New York Post* as "the best newspaper in America". Opinionated tabloids make friends and enemies in equal number and the *Post's* critics jumped instantly on a noisy bandwagon that quickly lost its way to the circus. "Headless body in topless bar" is a brilliant distillation of the facts of a dark crime. Literary critic and academic Peter Shaw described it as having a "trochaic rhythm . . . the line implied the appropriate ancient truth about sex, violence, and death." As the *Post's* most famous reporter, former Sydney *Daily Mirror* cadet Steve Dunleavy, said at the time: "What should we have said? Decapitated cerebellum in tavern of ill repute?"

### 81.4.7 Bradman and Trove

**Gideon Haigh**, *Weekend Australian*, 3-4 January 2015, p.31: Sir Donald Bradman ... there, that got your attention, didn't it? Call it The Don Whistle. Just three little words and a host of images, sensations, recollections and opinions come flooding back, in probably much the same form and fashion as they did the last time.

But just lately, something a little different has emerged. The Summer 2014-15 edition of the cricket journal *Between Wickets* includes 27 of the most illuminating pages about Bradman published for some time — illuminating because they concern not the Don directly, but his family. "The Bradman Family of Cootamundra District and Bowral" is a collaboration of former NSW Labor minister Rodney Cavalier, a local resident, and Bernadette Mahony, a local historian.

Making extensive use of the minutiae of public records, and the marvels of the National Library's Trove, which has enabled their digital searching of such newspapers as the *Wollondilly Press*, the *Albury Banner* and *Wodonga Express*, and the *Scrutineer and Southern Mail*, they have accumulated background biographical information on about three hundred kinfolk and antecedents.

The name "Bradman", whose origins lie in Suffolk, has a solidly Anglo-Celtic ring, but turns out to obscure a far more colourful and involved story. For example, Bradman's great-grandfather on his mother's side, Emanuel Neich, was a Genoan merchant mariner who became one of Australia's first Italian migrants when he boarded a ship under the mistaken impression it was sailing for Holland — its destination was, in fact, New Holland.

Neich, a quoits and skittles champion, provides an early glimmer of sporting prowess among Bradman's forbears. During a successful career as an hotelier, he also struck up an enduring friendship with a stonemason, Andrew Menzies. It would be Menzies' granddaughter Jessie who became Lady Bradman.

Neich fathered 24 children in two marriages, and at least one extramaritally. Mary Cupitt, born out of wedlock in 1827, had a daughter Sophia, also born out of wedlock in 1846. Mary then married an indigenous man, Henry Emmett, aka 'Black Harry', so that Sophia, Bradman's grandmother, grew up in a household with aboriginal half-siblings. There's much more, and it's a pleasure to read something that actually contributes to the sum of knowledge about Bradman rather than trying to slice and dice that sum to suit a preordained purpose.

### 81.4.8 *Argus* reunion

**Peter Gill**, of Ashburton, Melbourne, writes: Former *Argus* (Melbourne) employees, their families and others interested in the newspaper's history reminisced on 23 January at the Duke of Kent Hotel, Melbourne, four days after the anniversary of the final edition of the paper. The Duke of Kent was well patronised by people from the newspaper from 1926, after the office moved to 365 Elizabeth Street. However, as the hotel has been sold, probably for development, this was possibly its last goodbye from *Argus* people. Indeed, we have been holding reunions at the hotel for a longer period than the 30 or so years the *Argus* was published just across the road! Dr Francis (Frank) Palmos who had commenced at the *Argus* in the era of Jim Usher and Bob Murray, had not been



able to attend previously as he is based in West Australia. Frank spent most of his career in journalism as a foreign correspondent in Asia or writing about Asia for Australian newspapers. Frank is mentioned in *Australian Newspaper History: A Bibliography*, pp.139 and 150.

If any ANHG readers know of copies of *Home Brew*, the *Argus* and *Australasian* staff publication from the 1950s or the *Staff Journal* from the 1930s, Peter Gill (email: janpeterg@bigpond.com) would be delighted to hear about them, because the State Library of Victoria has only a few issues. They are important records about the newspaper and staff with details that are not available elsewhere.

### 81.4.9 *School Magazine* reaches 100<sup>th</sup> edition

The first edition, back in February 1916, promised boys and girls tales of “birds and beasts and fairies and their wonderful doings.” There would be stories from the “mother country” and a guarantee children would learn what “brave men did and wise men thought thousands of years ago.” (guardian.com.au, 17 February 2015). Almost a century on and 100 volumes later, the *School Magazine* has evolved into a glossy magazine with stories, poems and plays about Martians, superheroes and different cultures within Australia. Thousands of students from public and private schools across the country devour it each month. The *School Magazine* is now the longest continually published children’s literary magazine in the world. It is also the oldest magazine in Australia.

Most people who attended a NSW school in the past 100 years probably read the *School Magazine*, published monthly by the state’s Department of Education, but its popularity has meant schools in other states now subscribe and 1.5 million copies are printed each year. The 100th volume was launched on Monday, 16 February, at Haberfield Public School, which has been subscribing to the magazine for decades. For the launch, one of the school’s grandfathers offered his collection, dating back to the 1930s and including a special coronation edition for the crowning of King George VI. Principal, Karlynnne Jacobsen, said she read the *School Magazine* when she was in primary school at the same school she now runs. “We have a long tradition of using the *School Magazine* and even though we have so many great books and a wonderful library, the *School Magazine* is a great motivator to more reading, to go on and read books by authors who you may get a taste of in the magazine,” Jacobsen said.

The magazine’s editor, Alan Edwards, said some of Australia’s most well-known children’s authors, including Ruth Park and Pamela Allen, had written for the publication over the years and illustrator Noela Young, best known for her drawings in *The Muddleheaded Wombat*, has been a contributor for 60 years. Young joined the *School Magazine* straight out of art school in 1952 and she still drops off her watercolour illustrations at the magazine’s city office to be scanned and printed in the publication.



### 5—RECENTLY PUBLISHED

### 81.5.1 Books

**Fitzgerald, Julian**, *On Message: Political Communications of Australian Prime Ministers 1901-2014*, 526pp, hardback, illustrations, Clareville Press, Mawson ACT, \$30. How Australian Prime Ministers from Barton to Abbott have communicated with the media.



**Northern Territory News**, *What a Croc: Legendary Front Pages from the NT News*, Hachette Australia, 2014, paperback, 118 pages, \$19.99. A collection of some of the outrageous front pages from the NT News in recent years.

### Review by Kim Lockwood

Griffen-Foley, Bridget (ed.), *A Companion to the Australian Media*, Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2014

Macquarie University's Professor Bridget Griffen-Foley, with the help of a 13-person board of advisers, has spent the past six years pushing, reminding and pleading with 300 contributors to produce a remarkably comprehensive account of Australia's media.

It is a work of detailed reference on the print media, radio, television, advertising and public relations in this country from the first hesitant news sheet in 1803 to today's exploding electronic universe. The contributors include media practitioners, academics and independent researchers. All worked pro bono. The most prolific was the editor of the ANHG newsletter, Rod Kirkpatrick, with 28 entries. He also sat on the advisory board. The almost 500 entries range from advice columns to blogging, from Chris Masters to Alan Reid to Ita Buttrose, from weather reporting to radio documentaries. Every conceivable aspect of the country's media is examined. The index alone covers 37 pages.

Despite the advisers, the book is Professor Griffen-Foley's: she chose the subjects, decided on word lengths and authors and edited entries. It deserves a place on the bookshelves of all those interested in media in this country. Its prime function is as a work of reference, but browsing through it is also immensely rewarding.

### 81.5.2 Recent articles

**Griffen-Foley, Bridget**, "A worthy companion", *Walkley Magazine*, Issue 82, December 2014-February 2015, p.32. The author introduces the labour of the past six years of her life—*A Companion to the Australian Media*—and reveals the pleasure and pain of the compiling and editing process.

**Jensen, Erik**, "Giving birth to a blue heeler cross", *Walkley Magazine*, Issue 82, December 2014-February 2015, p.23. The author unpacks the rationale behind starting up the *Saturday Paper*. Quote: "There is nothing controversial in saying that the internet stole from newspapers their classifieds. What I refused to believe—and still refuse to believe—is that the internet had stolen people's attention spans or their seriousness. It had not stolen what people wanted from newspapers: depth, importance, trustworthiness. If anything, the internet's frivolity and unreliability made people want these things more."

**Meade, Amanda**, "Ch-ch-ch-changes...", *Walkley Magazine*, Issue 82, December 2014-February 2015, p.14. The author talks journalism, social media, audience and data with optimistic US digital news guru Vivian Schiller.

**Pilhofer, Aron**, "The digital dream teams", *Walkley Magazine*, Issue 82, December 2014-February 2015, p.15. It's time to start acting and doing like the new generation of digital news start-ups, says the author.

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