

■ NINE SWOOPS WITH \$4.2BN TAKEOVER ■ JOURNALISTS' UNION WANTS DEAL BLOCKED ■ REGULATOR HOLDS FINAL SAY

THE DAY FAIRFAX DIED

BARRON EDWARDS
MEDIA EDITOR

The historic Fairfax publishing empire is to disappear from Australia after the company's board agreed to a \$4.2 billion cash and stock takeover by Nine to create a \$4.2bn newspaper and television company chaired by former Ford and Treasurer Peter Costello.

The deal marks a dramatic turn for the 177-year-old company, sparking anger among staff and prompting the journalists' union to call for the deal to be blocked.

MediaLink Toronto announced the merger of the companies which will trade under the Nine name while the latter expects several of regional jobs losses and dropping a local content arm from the deal.

Fairfax Media's share price rose 84 per cent to \$11.50 in the wake of the announcement, while Nine's share price jumped 41.26.

If the deal is approved by regulators and shareholders, the new entity would be valued at more than any local broadcaster — including the Kerry Packer-owned but now West Media and US media giant CBS Network. The deal would lead to further media mergers.

The deal ends The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Australian. Instead of being sold, Nine's second-played free-to-air television network, Ten, will be sold to Fairfax. National Rugby League will also be sold to Fairfax and will join the Australian Open bank's ownership.

Following digital saturation, the move marks the end of the historic coal-mining linkage between Fairfax and changing ownership. Skanska, home of SodaStream, 'Colgate's White Jar' and...

THE DEAL

- Nine shareholders to keep 51.1 per cent of the combined entity
- Fairfax investors to receive 0.1657 Nine shares for each Fairfax share held, plus a 5¢ cash per Fairfax share
- Transaction worth \$4.2bn post-Fairfax share handover on yesterday's close
- Cost savings of merged entity of \$55m
- These Fairfax directors linked to it as Nine board
- Nine CEO Hugh Marko to lead merged company

MARKET REACTION

INSIDE

With the Fairfax deal on top of Nine and the Future Fund, Costello has power



Fairfax chief executive Greg Hywood, left, with Nine counterpart Hugh Marko at the television network's headquarters in Sydney yesterday

Hywood payout \$6.3m and rising

Facebook shares dive on slow growth

Packer's man nets deal boss never did

INSIDE STORY

DAMON STUMBY

If there was one of Kerry Packer's former lieutenants to finally deliver Fairfax Media to the hands of its old boss, he would be Hugh Marko.

For decades, Packer conspired with, controlled and at times even owned the Sydney Herald.

For many years, the newspaper publisher's former chairman, Hugh Marko, made the top-level call in the Packer family's Park Street Tower and he worked as CEO. Yesterday, Fairfax was able to announce the deal. The deal long assumed had to wait for confirmation by those long considered to be former boss.

If that was one of the last days, Marko and Packer, with their global reach and control of the digital advertising market, had bought Fairfax and Nine together, underwriting the respective interests and ownership of the companies. Packer admitted yesterday that he felt, reported in the Sydney TV coverage of his proceedings, would have been a success at the pace of change it marks since his death in Boxing Day 2005.

The speed at which that has occurred over the past decade would have been a surprise to my father," Packer told The Australian.

"The coming of the digital revolution...

Above: The top half of the front page of the Australian on 27 July 2018, reporting the imminent merger of the Nine television network and Fairfax Media Ltd. The paper labelled it a "takeover" rather than a merger. The name Fairfax had been associated with the Sydney Morning Herald for 177 years.

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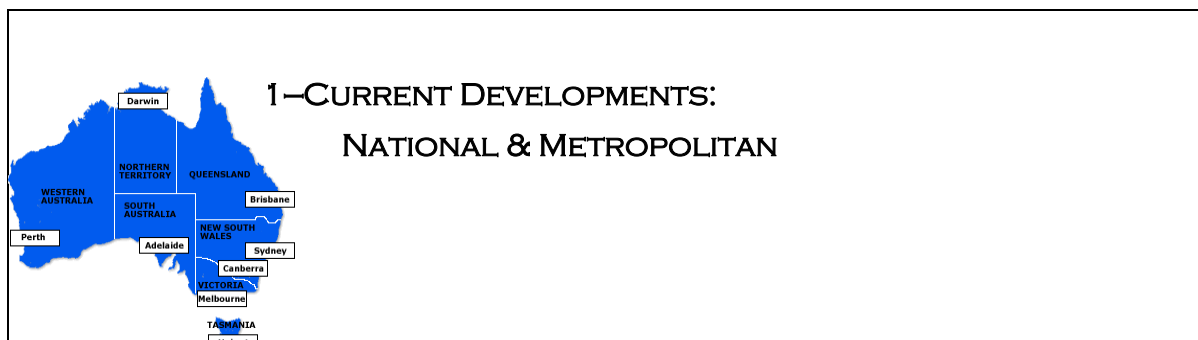
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99.1.1 Fairfax (1): The end

Darren Davidson writes (*Australian*, 27 July 2018, p.1): The historic Fairfax publishing name is to disappear from Australia after the company’s board agreed to a \$2.1 billion cash-and-stock takeover by Nine to create a \$4.2bn newspaper and television company chaired by former federal treasurer Peter Costello. The deal marks a dramatic turn for the 177-year-old company, sparking anger among staff and prompting the journalists’ union to call for the deal to be blocked. Malcolm Turnbull welcomed the merger of the companies which will trade under the Nine name, while the Labor opposition warned of regional job losses and disappearing local content arising from the deal. Fairfax Media’s share price rose 8.4 per cent to 83.5c in the wake of the announcement, while Nine’s dived 10.3 per cent to \$2.26.

If the deal is approved by regulators and shareholders, the new entity would be valued at more than any local broadcaster — including the Kerry Stokes-controlled Seven West Media and US media giant CBS’s Network Ten — and could lead to further media mergers. The deal unites the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Age* and the *Australian Financial Review* with Nine’s second-placed free-to-air television network, broadcaster of *Married At First Sight*, *The Block*, *Ninja Warrior*, National Rugby League matches including State of Origin, breakfast show *Today* and from next year the Australian Open tennis tournament. Fast-growing digital businesses, the crown jewels in the deal, include real-estate listings business Domain and streaming service Stan, home of Sacha Baron Cohen’s *Who is America?* Other assets include digital platform 9News and radio interests through Macquarie Media, operator of talkback station 2GB, where Alan Jones and Ray Hadley top the ratings.

99.1.2 Fairfax (2): A date to remember

The world changed for the Australian media on 3 December 1986 when Rupert Murdoch’s News Ltd launched his second takeover bid for the Herald & Weekly Times Ltd. That date is indelibly written in the chronology of Australian media history. It led to about a year of turmoil in Australian media ownership generally remembered as “the great media shakeup”.

And now 26 July 2018 is going to be remembered as another date when “the world” changed for the Australian media. It was the day when the imminent merger of the Nine Network and Fairfax Media was announced. It was, in the words of the banner headline on Page 1 of the next day’s *Australian*, “THE DAY FAIRFAX DIED”. Former *Sydney Morning Herald* editor-in-chief and publisher, Peter Fray, wrote (*Australian*, 27 July 2018, p.7), “The Nine-Fairfax merger is a watershed moment for Australian journalism.” He was blunt about Fairfax CEO Greg Hywood: “Rightly or wrongly, Hywood will be remembered as the man who did what a Murdoch or a Packer never managed to do: he killed off the name Fairfax.



The name carries weight, history and instant meaning. So do the mastheads and they will survive, though for how long in print is again a pertinent question.”

The *Australian* of 27 July devoted much of its front page, all of five internal general-news pages and the equivalent of a full page in the business section to the “Fairfax Takeover”. The casual reader needs to be careful not to take all of the information presented as historically accurate. For instance, there are some generalisations in the “Timeline” that are misleading. John Fairfax did not buy the *Sydney Herald* in 1841; he and Charles Kemp bought it. In fact, “for as long as the partnership [between Fairfax and Kemp] lasted Kemp’s name was to take precedence on their imprint”, Gavin Souter noted (*Company of Heraldry*, p.27). The Fairfax family did not become sole proprietors until 1 October 1853. In 1936, the statement about Frank Packer has a couple of holes in it: “Frank Packer founds Australian Consolidated Press upon the death of his father; assets include the *Telegraph* newspapers.” Frank Packer’s father, Robert Clyde Packer, died on 12 April 1934. When Consolidated Press was formed in 1936, Hugh Denison was involved, too—Packer and Denison “consolidated” some interests. And there was only one *Telegraph*, the daily edition. The *Sunday Telegraph* did not appear until 19 November 1939.

99.1.3 Fairfax (3): Reduction of diversity

Here’s an extract from what Margaret Simons wrote on *Inside Story* (online), on 26 July 2018:

Today’s announcement of the merger of Nine and Fairfax is the biggest and most significant media deal for decades, and one of the most significant in the nation’s history. The implications for Australian public life are enormous. Not that it is a complete surprise. Ever since last year’s change to media ownership regulations — including the removal of the ban on any entity owning print, television *and* radio platforms in a single market — something like this has been almost inevitable. This deal is effectively a Nine buyout of Fairfax. Over the next few months and years, the Fairfax name will disappear. Thus ends a long and mostly honourable period in which the company has been associated with quality journalism and has stood as the main counter to Murdoch’s News Corporation.

This announcement also means a reduction in the diversity of ownership of mainstream journalism outlets in Australia, and that is very bad indeed. Most obviously, Fairfax’s rural, suburban and regional publications, including important local titles such as the Launceston *Examiner* and the *Newcastle Herald*, clearly have no future as part of the new entity. In the teleconference for investors and analysts this morning, Nine CEO Hugh Marks was quite clear about that. The focus of the new entity will be on high-growth digital assets, and the regional Fairfax newspapers would do better “in some other environment”, he said. In other words, they will be dumped. Probably they will close, unless they are bought up by local people who value their content. Given that the deficits that have emerged in journalism over recent months are mostly about the hollowing out of local journalism, this is devastating to the civic and democratic health of local communities.

What about the flagship Fairfax mastheads — the *Age*, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Australian Financial Review*? It is by no means certain that the *Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald* have a healthy future either. The new entity will “review the scope and breadth of the combined business to align with its strategic objectives and its digital future.” That statement contains a chilling message for print journalism. Fairfax CEO Greg Hywood said that the metropolitan publishing business is sound — and more cost efficiencies were announced recently, in the form of shared printing presses with News Corporation. So the mastheads will probably have a diminished future, for a while, but the medium-term implications are dire.

The main value of the mastheads to Australia is, of course, their journalism — not the dollars they earn. Without Fairfax journalism, we would not have a royal commission into the banks, and we wouldn’t have had one into institutional sexual abuse either (with Joanne McCarthy’s *Newcastle Herald* reporting being key). But as far as the dollars are concerned, today’s announcement sees the mastheads’ main value to be their role as a vehicle for Domain’s real estate advertising. But this value seems likely to be reduced by the buyout, since the new entity has a much bigger reach through its broadcast assets.

From a business point of view, of course, it’s all gravy. Both Nine and Fairfax have been written off as legacy media businesses going out backwards. From that perspective, this is a bit of a

turnaround — and Marks and Hywood were not backward in pointing out their cleverness this morning. Hywood has stripped costs — reducing the newsrooms to a size he claims is sustainable — while overseeing the growth of valuable businesses including Domain and the subscription television service Stan, already owned in partnership with Nine. The result is a sufficiently tasty morsel for sale.

Marks opened his remarks to investors and analysts this morning by foreshadowing that the new Nine will pioneer highly targeted advertising using data gleaned from across the platforms — including Stan and Fairfax Digital. But if it's targeted, it comes at you on the web, not necessarily linked to quality journalism. The risk is that the journalism becomes no more than a cost centre, and thus at risk of being further diminished. In Marks's teleconference this morning there was the usual rhetoric about journalism being central to the new entity — but the hard facts and figures are all about advertising separated from the mastheads. For its part, Domain might be a success story for now, but it is hardly a sure thing in the medium to long term. The other headlines on Fairfax's news sites today are about a dip in the real estate market. The potential for estate agents to start up their own platform hangs as a constant threat over the Domain enterprise, should it ever try to gouge or otherwise annoy them. Domain might well be at its peak right now — which probably drove some component of the timing behind today's announcement.

99.1.4 Fairfax (4): Other developments, day by day

28 July: Nine CEO Hugh Marks did not hesitate in consigning the Fairfax family name to history, saying it was “no longer relevant”. Nine was not going to call the company a hyphenated name incorporating both Nine and Fairfax; and “the Fairfax brand is not an audience brand” in the same way that a newspaper title is (*Weekend Australian*, 28-29 July 2018).

Nick Tabakoff, “The wall comes tumbling down”, *Weekend Australian*, p.15. To Paul Keating's dismay, a queen of the screen picks up a prince of print. In Keating's view, Nine has the ethics of “an alley cat”.

Editorial, “Media match faces rocky road”, *Weekend Australian*, p.23.

Pamela Williams, “Under Packer's gaze, Marks takes 177-year-old prize”, *Weekend Australian*, pp.25, 29.

Ben Butler, “Hywood's \$440m redundancy bill”, *Weekend Australian*, pp.25, 29. Departing Fairfax Media chief executive Greg Hywood presided over a brutal seven-year program of staff cuts that cost almost \$440 million but failed to put a rocket under the publisher's share price, company documents show. The company's annual reports show that between 2011, when Hywood took the top job, and last year, the cost of restructuring projects averaged more than \$60m a year. Over the same period, the company shed 45 per cent of its staff in wave after wave of redundancies, reducing its total head count from 10,631 to 5780.

30 July: Darren Goodsir, “The least-worst way to secure Fairfax journalism's future”, *Australian*, p.24: The proposed Nine merger/takeover has started yet another bout of fear and gnashing of teeth [at Fairfax]. But this corporate consolidation—aimed at achieving scale to compete in a now global, as well as local, market—makes sense in the current media environment.

Cameron Stewart, “Changes inevitable, says a saddened ‘Young Warwick’”, p.26: Warwick Fairfax Jr, the last family head of the Fairfax media empire, says he is deeply saddened by the loss of the Fairfax name in the company's merger with Nine, but he gets “the economics of it”.

31 July: Stephen Brook, “Fairfax bid in doubt as Nine shares wobble”. Nine Entertainment's bid for Fairfax Media remained under pressure as sustained weakness in Nine shares continued to erode the premium offered to Fairfax shareholders. Despite rising 2.74 per cent yesterday to \$2.25, Nine Entertainment shares were still well below the \$2.52 price shares were trading at before the free-to-air television company announced its shock bid for the newspaper publisher on 26 July.

6 August: Darren Davidson, “Nine could sell Fairfax's NZ arm”, *Australian*, p.24: Nine has opened the door to selling non-core Fairfax assets on an investor roadshow including the New Zealand business. **Also see 99.3.2 below.**

99.1.5 Fairfax (5): Enters printing arrangement with News

News Corp Australia and Fairfax Media have struck a commercial printing arrangement as part of a historic deal between the two publishers to tackle costs (*Australian*, 19 July 2018). After talks lasting several years, News Corp and Fairfax Media have put rivalries aside to tackle costs in a media market under siege from the Facebook and Google digital advertising duopoly. News Corp Australia will provide seven-day printing services to Fairfax in NSW and Queensland. Fairfax will print some publications for News Corp out of its North Richmond plant outside Sydney. A deal to share facilities and minimise truck route duplication is designed to make the print newspaper more sustainable in the long term and help accelerate the newsroom's digital transformation.

News Corp Australasia executive chairman Michael Miller said the printing arrangement with Fairfax demonstrated the company's "confidence in the future of printed newspapers" and "influence and impact of trusted newspaper journalism".

"As a publisher, we have absolute confidence in the ongoing significance of newspapers. Within this framework, we need to continue to look at the most effective and efficient ways to produce newspapers," Miller said in a statement to the stock market. The arrangement mirrors that in place in New Zealand where HT&E Media (formerly APN Media) prints certain Fairfax newspaper titles; and in Britain where News UK prints the newspapers of its competitors the *Daily Mail*, *Evening Standard*, *Daily Telegraph* (UK) and *Daily Express*. Fairfax Media chief executive Greg Hywood said the arrangements with News Corp were "landmark initiatives" that showed a "rational approach to the complex issues facing the industry".

99.1.6 Recent chronology

99.1.6.1 Deaths

Carter, Ron: D. 19 August 2018 in Melbourne, aged 85; reported football and athletics for the Melbourne *Argus* 1949-57 and the *Age*, 1957-1993; contributor to the *Australian*, 1990s; covered eight Olympics, beginning with Helsinki, 1952; highly regarded sports writer; had two great areas of expertise and interest: the Olympic movement – and its sports, however obscure – and footy; reported the old-fashioned way, forming close relationships with people in power, or – just as importantly – all but anonymous people who knew things and wanted the truth, and often the nonsense, revealed; never had a scoop drop in his lap – he worked at his craft seven days a week for his entire career; that dedication was in him from the beginning, when, as a 20-year-old, he paid his own way to Helsinki (and back) to cover the 1952 Olympics, for the *Argus*, and right to the end, when he retired as chief footy writer of the *Age* (Geoff Slattery, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 August 2018).

Columb, Nick: D. 10 August 2018 in Spain, aged 72; began his working life as a finance journalist at the *Herald*, Melbourne, before leaving to pursue business interests; an obituary in Melbourne's *Sunday Herald Sun* (12 August) described Columb as "a mercurial figure and someone who helped put himself (and Australian thoroughbred racing) on the map with a rare blend of knowledge, intuition and luck" (John Tidey).

Harris, Paul Geoffrey: D. 7 September 2018, aged 69; fifth generation member of the Harris ownership family at the Burnie *Advocate*; joined the family firm in 1975 and was appointed company secretary and finance director the following year; in 1991, when his father, Geoffrey Harris, who was 74, relinquished the chief executive's position, Paul took over; masterminded the eventual \$28 million takeover of the Launceston *Examiner* –with Rural Press taking a 60 per cent interest and the Harris family, 40 per cent; left company's employment on 26 April 2001; when Rural Press Ltd acquired the *Advocate* in December 2003, it was Paul Harris's decision to sell his 22 per cent stake that was seen as the turning point (Rod Kirkpatrick).

Hawker, Denis Newton: D. August 2018, aged 92; editor, Hobart *Mercury*, 1970-1982; joined *Mercury* in 1944; had some overseas experiences through awards and scholarships (*Mercury*, 30 August 2018).

Hook, Geoffrey Raynor ("Jeff"): D. 20 July 2018 in Melbourne, aged 89; born in Hobart and attended Si Virgil's College; started at Hobart *Mercury* at age 20 as a cadet press artist; completed a course in Graphic Art at Hobart Technical College; before shifting to Melbourne in 1964 to join

the *Sun News-Pictorial*; became their full-time cartoonist; Melbourne *Herald* cartoonist Bill “Weg” Green long claimed credit for suggesting the hidden hook in Hook’s cartoons; in 1987 Hook won the award for humorous illustration in the Australian Black and White Artists Club’s Bulletin Awards; also in 1987 won the award for the Best Political Cartoon at the International Cartoon Festival at Knokke-Heist, Belgium, and in 1991 he won the award for Best Press Cartoon at the same festival; once described his role as that of a “self-appointed spokesperson for the poor suffering public and a permanent member of the Opposition”; his favourite caricature was Gough Whitlam—“a very tall man with magnificent eyebrows” (*Herald Sun*, 21 July 2018, p.8).

Paul, Anthony Marcus (“Tony”): D. 14 July 2018 in Brisbane, aged 81; edited University of Queensland newspaper before becoming cadet journalist at *Courier-Mail*, Brisbane; sub-editor for Australian Associated Press-Reuters in late 1950s; won World Press Institute Fellowship to US; became editor of Australian edition of *Reader’s Digest* (then an influential publication); editor-in-chief of the Asian edition of the *Digest*, roving editor of the US edition of the *Digest* and *Asiaweek* magazine, editor-at-large (Asia) for *Fortune* magazine, founding editor-in-chief of *Asia INC*, editor-in-chief of *Business Tokyo*, and contributor to Singapore’s *Strait Times*; his great coup was to be among the first to break the story of the Cambodian genocide, in a book, *Murder of a Gentle Land*; reported on the Soviet-Afghan war and the communist insurgencies in Thailand, Malaya and the Philippines (*Courier-Mail*, 4 August 2018, p.57).

Perry, Ronald Alfred (Ron): D. aged 84, *Daily Telegraph* 1950-58 and 1961-65, Southdown Press 1965-81, London suburbans, Commonwealth Trade Publicity, Deakin University.

Searby, Richard Henry: D. 8 August 2018, aged 87; lawyer, company director, academic; born in South Yarra; boyhood and university friend of Rupert Murdoch; worked for three years as an associate to Sir Owen Dixon, chief justice of the High Court of Australia; later known as Murdoch’s problem solver; as part of the News Corp negotiating team, it was down to him to “nickel-and-dime” the deal when they were trying to establish the precise nature of the assets; chairman of News Corp, 1981-91, and a director, 1979-92; retired from News Corp shortly after 60th birthday but took non-executive roles at the parent company and News Ltd, its Australian arm; Chancellor of Deakin University, Geelong, 1997-2005 (*Australian*, 20 August 2018).

Whitton, Evan Morn: D. 16 July 2018 in Sydney, aged 90; born in Muswellbrook, NSW, where his father was a partner in the *Muswellbrook Chronicle*; spent some childhood years in Murgon; attended Downlands College, Toowoomba; went to Teachers College; taught at Downlands, became senior English master and coached the rugby XV; was a representative rugby five-eighth for Toowoomba while president of the Toowoomba Rugby Union at age 23; joined Toowoomba *Chronicle* as a cadet journalist in his thirties; joined Solly Chandler’s *Truth* in Melbourne in 1966, winning his first Walkley Award, in 1967, with a series of features on “Life on the pension” (he actually lived on the pension of \$15 a week for a fortnight); won a Walkley in 1970 with articles implicating Victorian detectives in an illegal abortion ring; he regarded *Truth* as a tabloid where he could do “something noble in the art of muckraking and shedding light”; joined the *Sunday Australian* in 1970 before joining Fairfax where he worked at both the *National Times* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*; wrote a column for the *Australian* in the 1990s; remembered for his 26,000-word, three-part Walkley-winning *National Times* series in 1975 on the grand folly of Australia being drawn into the Vietnam war (also won Walkleys in 1973 and 1974); was named Graham Perkin Australian Journalist of the year in 1983 for “courage and innovation” in reporting the royal commission into Premier Neville Wran’s alleged misconduct; often wrote special articles on big rugby matches for *Sydney Morning Herald*; described his coverage of the Fitzgerald inquiry into Queensland police and political corruption in the late 1980s as “the biggest and most important story I ever worked on; the experience of a career”; mentored a string of young journalists who went on to become highly successful, such as Paul Kelly, Andrew Clark, Anne Summers, Wendy Bacon, David Marr and Brian Toohey; authored a number of books, including *Can of Worms*, *Amazing Scenes*, *The Hillbilly Dictator* and *Our Corrupt Legal System*; employed as a Reader in Journalism in the Department of Journalism at the University of Queensland for two or three years at start of 1990s (various sources; also see 99.4.1 below).

99.1.7 Former editor becomes new chief of staff for PM

The Prime Minister, then Malcolm Turnbull, named a former editor of the *Australian*, Clive Mathieson, as his chief of staff, as part of efforts to sharpen the government's political focus ahead of the next federal election, reported the *Australian Financial Review*, 30 July 2018. Mathieson, a former business writer for Adelaide's *Advertiser*, replaced former diplomat Peter Woolcott, who was appointed to replace outgoing Australian Public Service Commissioner John Lloyd from 9 August. Mathieson was well placed to take over after the Coalition's policy preparation was complete for the next election. Mathieson joined Turnbull's office as deputy chief of staff in September 2017 after working for NSW Liberal premier Gladys Berejiklian.

99.1.8 Her first letter to the editor

Victoria Evans, of Sydney, wrote (*Weekend Australian Magazine*, 4-5 August 2018, p.8): "I've never written to a newspaper before but the article on Nhill was one of the most inspiring, wonderful stories I've read in a paper. Thank you." [Greg Bearup wrote, "Where there's a Nhill", *Weekend Australian Magazine*, 21-22 July 2018, pp.18-22.] There were three other letters published about the Nhill article, all positive.]

99.1.9 Senior revamps for its audience

The *Senior* newspaper, in its 40th year of publication, has undergone a revamp. It is sporting what editor Cheryl Field describes as "a brand new look" (*Senior*, August 2018). The makeover comes as the *Senior* introduces innovative digital-first technology into its newsroom. The August print editions (there's a slightly different edition for each State) boast design enhancements including larger text to make articles much easier to read and faster to load on smartphones, tablets, laptops or desktops. The streamlined functions are optimized for faster page and story navigation and a more engaging user experience, plus easier sharing on social networks.

99.1.10 Newspaper advertising revenue: roller-coaster

Chris Mitchell writes (*Australian*, 16 July 2018): The Commercial Economic Advisory Service of Australia quotes inflation-adjusted free-to-air TV advertising revenue figures for 2007 to 2017 falling about 10 per cent from \$3.47bn to \$3.18bn. Television, always a brasher industry than publishing, is weathering the storms of media fragmentation better than print, but there are signs publishers are starting to slow declines and even reverse them. Print has fallen faster and further. In June 2018 market research firm IBISWorld published a report on Australia's newspaper industry showing total annual revenue of \$2.7bn and profit of \$147 million. The report says annual revenue has fallen an average of 8.4 per cent a year since 2013; it forecasts falls will continue at 3.2 per cent a year until 2023.

CEASA quotes total newspaper revenue including inserts in 2007 of \$4.08bn and last year of \$1.87bn including digital revenue and inserts, so on its numbers print has more than halved. Once \$500m a year larger than FTA, it is now \$1.4bn smaller. IBISWorld points to growing digital subscription revenue as a ray of sunshine, especially at the *Australian* and the *Australian Financial Review*, both sources of premium, unique news. Last year this newspaper announced its return to profitability, largely on the back of 100,000-plus digital subscribers paying \$8 a week.

6 August (Australian): After four years of disappointing results for newspaper advertising, the tide has turned. The latest statistics show the decline has eased. The lowest quarterly decline in the Australian news media market shows publishers have made strides in expanding their digital advertising revenue and in making print newspapers more sustainable for the long haul. Demand for news media ads fell a more modest 3.7 per cent to \$494.3 million in the second quarter of calendar year 2018, the lowest quarterly decline. The data is produced by the News Media Index, which measures advertising sales bookings between publishers, advertisers and media buyers.

99.1.11 Fairfax papers increase cover charges

From Monday 3 September prices of Fairfax metropolitan newspapers *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Age*, *Sun-Herald* and *Sunday Age*, increased by 20 cents to \$3.20 weekdays (compared with \$1.70

for News Corp tabloid competitors; and \$3 for the *Australian*), Saturdays to \$4.20 (News products at \$2.50; and the *Weekend Australian*, \$3.80) and on Sundays to \$3.70 (News at \$3).

99.1.12 Glasgow publication changes

The Glasgow-based *Sunday Herald* closed on 2 September. The publisher, Newsquest, now issues both the *Herald* and the pro-independence *National* seven days a week. This started on 9 September (*i*, 25 August 2018; and <https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/uknews/glasgow-based-newspaper-the-sunday-herald-axed-by-newsquest/ar-BBMI0CH>).

99.1.13 Who's been printing my newspaper?

On 6 August 2018, the imprint on the *Sydney Morning Herald* stated: "Printed in Brisbane by News Ltd, Lytton Road, Murarrie, for the publisher. Printed in Sydney by News Ltd, 25-52 Hume Highway, Chullora, for the publisher."

On 6 August, the imprint on the *Age*, Melbourne, stated: "Established in 1854. Published by The Age Company Pty Ltd (ABN 85 004 262 702) of PO Box 257, Melbourne, Victoria, 3001. Printed by Fairfax Media Print and Distribution, Ballarat (ABN 55 004 810 511), Grandlee Drive, Wendouree, for the publisher. To find out more about The Age and its people, history and services, go to about.theage.com.au/ [Across the top of this notice and the one alongside about the Australian Press Council was the line: "Mark Hawthorne is publisher, Victoria, Australian Metro Publishing."]

99.1.14 Musical chairs at the top

The following screen shot from the top of Page 6 in the *Australian* on 22 August presented front pages from that paper during changes of Prime Minister over the previous 50 years. The latest change, on 24 August, is featured in the front page of 25-26 August 2018.



In the politically chaotic working week of Monday to Friday, 20-24 August 2018, Australia had two leadership spills within the ranks of the Federal Parliamentary Liberal Party. On Tuesday, 21 August, the incumbent Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, won the first spill, 48-35, against Peter Dutton. On Friday, 24 August, Malcolm Turnbull called a leadership spill after being presented with a petition of 43 names calling for such an action. This time there were three candidates: Peter Dutton, Julie Bishop and Scott Morrison. Bishop was excluded after the first ballot, and Morrison won the second ballot, against Dutton, 45-40.

Turnbull's prime ministership had ended after 1075 days. Josh Frydenberg was elected the new deputy leader.

99.1.15 Media moguls and the prime ministership

ABC TV News political editor, Andrew Probyn, reported on 18 September that newspaper owners Rupert Murdoch (News Corp) and Kerry Stokes (Seven West) actively sought the overthrow of Malcolm Turnbull as Prime Minister. David Crowe supported this on 20 September by reporting in Fairfax metropolitan papers (*Sydney Morning Herald*, *Age*, *Canberra Times*) that Turnbull spoke to Murdoch two days before the Liberal Party leadership spill in August, urging the media mogul to stop a campaign against him. Turnbull challenged Murdoch over the coverage of his government in News Corp newspapers and its Sky News television channel, arguing the media company was intensifying the leadership turmoil. Fairfax Media had been told Murdoch played down his part in fuelling the leadership speculation, saying it was primarily a matter for his son Lachlan, who is his co-chairman and a stronger presence in the company's Australian operations. Only later, according to sources familiar with the conversations, did Turnbull learn of a private discussion in which Murdoch told fellow media mogul Kerry Stokes that the government leadership had to change. "Malcolm has got to go," Murdoch is said to have told Stokes.

Stokes told Fairfax Media he did not interfere with editorial opinions at Seven West outlets. "The ABC's headline asked what did I have to do with the Liberal leadership spill. The answer is absolutely nothing," Stokes said. "I do not enter into speculative political gossip nor interfere with editorial opinions. The ABC was wrong in asserting that the *West Australian* backed Scott Morrison at my direction. That is not the way I operate. Furthermore, the characterisation and supposed details of the private conversations assigned to me are wrong." News Corp general manager Liz Deegan also disputed the account. "The ABC and *AFR* reporting is merely that – speculation and conspiracy," she said.

Columnist Chris Kenny, of the *Australian* and Sky News, blasted the "far-fetched" claims that Murdoch "directed the dispensing of a Prime Minister" through his newspapers and pay-TV channel. He cited editorials in the *Australian* as proof the paper did not campaign to remove Turnbull. On 20 September the *Australian* also responded, vigorously denying contact between Rupert Murdoch and Stokes, pointing to and quoting from editorials in the *Australian* over the years and recently supporting the Prime Ministership of Malcolm Turnbull. News Corp papers also pointed out that two principal anti-Turnbull people, radio commentators Alan Jones and Ray Hadley, are part of the Fairfax Media group.

Kerry Stokes of Seven West Media (which includes the *West Australian*) also strongly rebutted the allegation. He said, "I have never received a text from Rupert Murdoch on this or any matter. I don't think he has my number nor I his." Prime Minister Scott Morrison also dismissed the ABC's report on Wednesday. "I don't think it happened," Morrison said. "I don't believe it happened at all, and you'd think I'd know, given I was involved."

See also, Gerard Henderson, "Aunty tries spicing up a stew that lacks basic ingredients". *Weekend Australian*, 22-23 September 2018, p.22.

The ABC reporting of various political issues and pressure to sack journalists Emma Alberici and Andrew Probyn were reportedly part of the reason for the turmoil when the ABC board sacked managing director Michelle Guthrie on 24 September (see newspapers, 25 September); and when ABC chairman Justin Milne resigned on 27 September (see newspapers, 28 September).

99.1.16 'Fairwater': Fairfax and Cannon-Brookes

15 August 2018: The late Lady Mary Fairfax's \$100 million-plus Sydney Harbour trophy home "Fairwater" could be in the famous family's possession for decades to come, according to never before published provisions in her will (Margin Call, *Australian*, 15 August 2018). And while the Fairfax family name looks set to slip from the boards of the stock exchange following a \$4 billion merger with Hugh Marks's Nine Entertainment, the wishes of Lady Mary will ensure some ongoing prominence for the family name thanks to a \$600m-plus vehicle, the Lady (Mary) Fairfax Trust. "Margin Call" has obtained the 35-page last will and testament of Lady Mary, who died aged 95 last September. It outlines the until now private inheritance

plans for one of the Australia's richest families and will be of particular interest to eastern suburbs property aficionados. The vast fortune has been left entirely to her four children.

27 September: Tech billionaire Mike Cannon-Brookes and his wife Annie have bought Australia's most expensive house, Fairwater, ending more than a century of Fairfax family ownership. Cannon-Brookes is believed to have paid close to \$100 million.

99.1.17 News Corp revenue climbs

News Corp reported a 29 per cent increase in revenue for the fourth quarter (*Australian*, 10 August 2018). This reflects the consolidation of Foxtel and Fox Sports into a merged subscription-TV player and strong performances in digital real estate and book publishing. For the quarter, the company reported a net loss of \$US355 million, which includes a non-cash impact of \$US337 million resulting from the Foxtel-Fox Sports deal, compared with a loss of \$US424 million in the same period a year earlier. News Corp reported total revenue of \$US2.69 billion for the three months ended 30 June. Revenue at the news and information services business, which accounts for 48 per cent of the company's top line, rose 1 per cent at \$1.3 billion. News Corp said digital revenues now represented 30 per cent of news and information services segment revenues, compared to 26 per cent in the previous year, reflecting efforts to attract more paid digital subscriber growth at mastheads.

99.1.18 Grammar: are it worth mentioning?

Your ANHG editor often sees sentences in newspapers with more than one subject but a singular verb. He often thinks of keeping a file of examples. At last he has done something about it. Here are some recent ones.

- *Weekend Australian Magazine*, 7-8 July 2018: Tasmania's Anglican Bishop, the Right Reverend Richard Condie: "Our discipleship, our following of Jesus, our trust and hope and life **is** so much more than real estate." [Yes, I know that's a quote.]
- *Courier-Mail*, 7 July 2018, p.84: (By Peter Badel) But not even a recall to the Queensland team as a winger and a \$30,000 payday for Origin III **is** sufficient reward to convince Oates to abandon his dream of playing in the forwards.
- *Australian*, 30 August 2018: (By Peter Lalor). Time and the human tide **is** against cricket.
- *Weekend Australian*, 1-2 September 2018: Headline over a Gideon Haigh cricket story: Board's line and length **is** way off
- From msn.com, citing *Daily Mail*, 26 September 2018: Cassandra [Thoburn, former wife of Karl Stefanovic] was appearing on the Network Ten breakfast show to discuss her new children's book, but it wasn't long before her famous ex-husband and their relationship breakdown **was** brought up.
- *Australian*, 2 October 2018: (By Peter Lalor). Speculation and a degree of anxiety **surrounds** this week's announcement of the first new chief executive at Cricket Australia since James Sutherland took the role in 2001.

99.1.19 *Weekend Australian Magazine* marks 30th birthday

The *Weekend Australian Magazine* of 15-16 September was a special 84-page issue to commemorate its 30th anniversary. Editor Christine Middap wrote: "The year 1988. It began with a bang for this was our bicentennial year and who could forget the First Fleet re-enactment that drew two million people to the shores of Sydney Harbour on Australia Day. Bob Hawke was prime minister; the median house price in Sydney was \$141,000 (Melbourne \$109,000, Brisbane \$71,000). The \$1.1 billion new Parliament House opened. Michael and Lindy Chamberlain's convictions over the death of baby Azaria were quashed and the \$2 coin was issued. Novelist Peter Carey won the Booker Prize for *Oscar and Lucinda*, INXS was riding the top of the charts with *Kick*, and *Home and Away* debuted. And in September 1988 this magazine was launched.

"We've published roughly 10,000 features since then: mountains of words and photos that tell the story of Australia. For this special anniversary issue we've asked 30 influential Australians to reflect on the past three decades and their hopes for the future. We thank them for their

involvement and thoughtful answers. And we thank our readers—those who have grown old with us and those just discovering us. As I flick back to the very first issue produced by the redoubtable Peter Blunden, a lot has changed. But one thing hasn't: our history is built on quality storytelling—and that is our future, too."

99.1.20 Press Council removes member

The Australian Press Council has removed GetUp deputy chair Carla McGrath as a council member (*Weekend Australian*, 1-2 September 2018). Chairman Neville Stevens moved to eliminate conflicts of interest on the media watchdog at a general meeting that voted overwhelmingly to remove McGrath. McGrath, who had been a member of the council for 15 months, had rejected an invitation for her to resign.

99.1.21 Contentious cartoon

In the women's singles at the 2018 US Open tennis tournament, the mighty Serena Williams was defeated by Japan's Naomi Osaka on 8 September. Williams harshly criticised the umpire, in what many called a tantrum. The Melbourne *Herald Sun* printed a cartoon by regular cartoonist Mark Knight lampooning Williams. This cartoon attracted much attention on social media in the US and elsewhere. It was criticised as racist. The *Herald Sun*, supported by other News Corp newspapers, responded strongly, pointing out that the lampooning was no greater than that of other well-known people in their cartoons. Indeed, on 12 September, the *Herald Sun* devoted five pages to the controversy, including reprinting the cartoon. Its front page was a montage of cartoons that had fiercely lampooned many public figures.

99.1.22 Fairfax: Defamation judgment

On 12 September the Queensland Supreme Court awarded \$3.75 million in damages for defamation by Macquarie Radio broadcaster Alan Jones to four Wagner brothers, developers in the Toowoomba area. This resulted from allegations Jones made in connection with the 2011 Grantham floods. This is a record defamation judgement in Australia. As Macquarie Radio is owned by Fairfax Media, this may impact on their earnings and on their future merger with the Nine Network.

99.1.23 Readership

Readership figures show that the *Weekend Australian* was averaging 598,000 readers in June, compared with 620,000 for the Saturday *Sydney Morning Herald* and 510,000 for the Saturday *Age* (*Weekend Australian*, 8-9 September 2018, p.2).

99.1.24 Darren Davidson off to New York

Darren Davidson, media editor of the *Australian*, is off to New York to become editor-in-chief of *Storyful*. He will be in charge of the long-term vision and day-to-day operations of the global editorial team (*Telum Media Alert*, 26 September 2018).



99.2.1 *Teacher's Pet* podcast attracts 11 million downloads

The Teacher's Pet, the investigative podcast series by the *Australian*, released its final episode on 17 August—for now (*Australian*, 17 August 2018). Launched three months earlier, the acclaimed weekly series had been examining the 1982 disappearance and suspected murder of Sydney wife and mother-of-two Lyn Dawson. Two coroners found, in 2001 and 2003, that Lyn was killed by a "known person", her husband Chris Dawson, a former star footballer with the Newtown Jets.

Dawson was not charged, with the DPP citing insufficient evidence. He denies killing his wife. National chief correspondent Hedley Thomas said the 14th episode would be the last until new leads were run to ground. “The investigating and reporting job has largely been done in examining and bringing to light the new evidence that’s out there,” Thomas said.

The case is now in the hands of the NSW Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, which is considering whether there is enough evidence to prosecute. “The DPP has more evidence before it as a result of this series that it could act on,” Thomas said. *The Teacher’s Pet* was created by Thomas, a five-time Walkley Award winner, and producer Slade Gibson, a former guitarist with Savage Garden. It has uncovered new evidence and brought forward witnesses who had never before spoken to police.

With more than 11.6 million downloads of the series so far, *The Teacher’s Pet* is the first Australian podcast to top the US iTunes podcast charts. It remains the No 1 Australian podcast and also reached No 1 in the UK, Canada and New Zealand.

12 September: NSW Police announced the re-opening of its investigation into the murder of Lyn Dawson who was killed in 1982.

99.2.2 Daily Mail Australia accused of pinching stories

Increasingly frustrated editors and journalists claim *Daily Mail Australia’s* “theft” of news stories has become more brazen and an almost daily occurrence, undermining investment in quality journalism (*Australian*, 13 August 2018). The free news website has long antagonised newspapers by regurgitating their stories, but several editors told the *Australian* it had reached new levels that were “destructive” to serious journalism. *Daily Mail Australia* executive editor Lachlan Heywood defended the website, saying it credited and linked to original sources and regularly broke stories. However, tweets from disgruntled journalists and editors have in recent months become increasingly bitter, accusing the Mail of plagiarism and theft. The editor of the *Weekend Australian Magazine*, Christine Middap, said the *Mail’s* replication of the magazine’s cover story on August 4 — revealing new theories on the fate of US pilot Amelia Earhart — was particularly galling. The *Mail* piece, published hours after the magazine expose, drew in part on a website set up by Earhart enthusiast David Billings, who was interviewed in Sam Buckingham-Jones’ original story. However, Middap said this did nothing to excuse a blatant “rip-off”.

99.2.3 Digital newspaper access

Victor Isaacs writes: The following information may be useful to readers who wish to access digital copies of interstate newspapers.

All daily newspapers these days offer digital subscriptions providing the chance to see online versions of the hard copy. However, most subscriptions are for minimum periods of three or six months, meaning it is an expensive exercise for those curious about interstate dailies.

A subscription to one of the major News Corp newspapers offers electronic access to all of them. Thus an electronic subscription to any of the *Herald Sun*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Courier-Mail*, *Advertiser*, (Hobart) *Mercury*, *NT News*, *Geelong Advertiser*, *Gold Coast Bulletin*, *Townsville Bulletin* or *Cairns Post* provides online access to all of them, as well as to their Sunday siblings. This access does not extend to the Queensland and northern NSW newspapers that News Corp acquired from APN at the end of 2017. It also does not extend to the *Australian*. However, electronic subscription to the *Australian* does include similar access to the (US) *Wall Street Journal*, and, for a small additional premium, the (UK) *Times*.

In addition, free online access is possible to the front pages of all News Corp dailies.

A very few non-capital city dailies very conveniently also offer digital access on a cheap, single copy basis. These are the (Newcastle) *Herald* (owned by Fairfax Media) at <http://theherald.mybigcommerce.com/>, the (Mildura) *Sunraysia Daily* (owned by Elliott, but closely aligned with Fairfax) at <https://sunraysiadaily.pressreader.com/sunraysia-daily> and the (Broken Hill) *Barrier Daily Truth* (owned by the Barrier Industrial Council) at <http://bdtsales.com/>

Mention of the (Newcastle) *Herald* also provides an opportunity to note that this seems to be the only surviving example of a newspaper offering an online book shop service offering interesting publications related to its local area.

Almost all local, free weeklies also provide free online access to digital copies.

It seems that there is only one New Zealand daily that offers single issue digital purchase. This is the small *Greymouth Star* (on the West Coast of the South Island, owned by Allied Press) at <https://subscribe.realviewtechnologies.com/global/subscribe/rvportal/subscribe.aspx?cpid=7961&iid=160859>

99.2.4 BuzzFeed asks readers to help

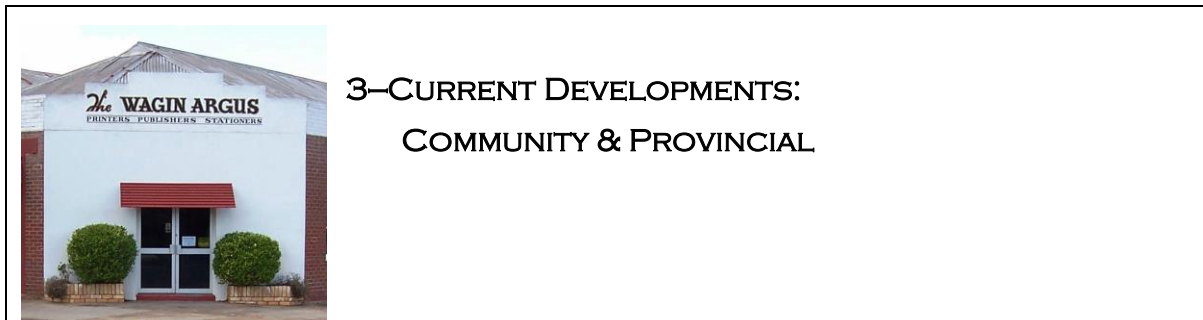
BuzzFeed News is becoming the latest newsroom to ask its readers to help shoulder the cost of newsgathering. The digital media company plans to unveil a feature at the bottom of its news pages that allows readers to donate between \$US5 and \$US100. The donation feature asks readers to “help us report to you” and calls upon them to join a community that will shape the future of BuzzFeed News. Contributors would get timely updates on big investigations and new programming from BuzzFeed News, a person familiar with the program said. If successful, it could be a prelude to a membership program with more perks, the person said, noting that the company had no plans to charge its readers for content (*Australian*, 29 August 2018).

99.2.5 Mobiles to hit No. 1 for news readership

More Australians will read their digital news using their mobile phone than any other device by the end of the year for the first time on record, Enhanced Media Metrics Australia (Emma) data released on 3 September shows. In June, 72 per cent of Australians were reading news media on their smart phones, tablets and laptops. This was a 2 per cent jump over the year to 13.2 million people (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 September 2018, p.27).

99.2.6 Digital print editions of Launceston and Burnie papers

Online readers of the Launceston *Examiner* and the Burnie/Devonport *Advocate* received access to a digital print edition of their newspapers from Tuesday, 18 September, if they subscribed for full website access. The two papers launched local news subscription packages for unlimited access to their websites (*Examiner* and *Advocate*, 15 September 2018).



99.3.1 Temora: Newspaper identity honoured

Arthur Stafford Bradley, former owner-editor of the *Temora Independent* and a third-generation member of the Bradley family of newspaper owners, was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in the Queen’s Birthday Honours in June. The honour was for service to the print media and to the community of Temora, NSW (*Australian*, 11 June 2018). Bradley has been a member of the Country Press NSW Council for 43 years. He was the president twice and was made a life member in 2008. His community involvement over many years has included Apex and Rotary.

99.3.2 Nine-Fairfax: The regional papers

Ian Willis writes (this is an extract from “Despite the doom and gloom in Australian media, the outlook for regional papers remains strong”, *theconversation.com*, 7 August 2018): Is the “local rag” doomed under the Nine-Fairfax merger and the re-shaping of the Australian media landscape? Does the creation of the new media-entertainment conglomerate threaten the very existence of the

local newspaper? Media commentary has justifiably questioned the continuation of quality journalism and editorial independence of the metropolitan dailies in Sydney and Melbourne. Yet there has been a silence on the threat to small country and suburban mastheads.

The Australian Community Media division of Fairfax Media controls 16 Sydney suburban mastheads, around 110 local newspapers across New South Wales and ACT and a further 50 or so local mastheads across the country. Media consolidation and rationalisation threaten the viability of these small community newspapers. Studies in the United States have shown that communities suffer when local newspapers shut their doors. The level of scrutiny of government declines, along with governance standards and the health of local democratic processes.

But will the local newspaper actually disappear for good? British newspaper historian Rachel Matthews has stated that the death of the local newspaper has been predicted more than once over the past 250 years. Local papers have a long history in Australia. Newspaper historian Rod Kirkpatrick states that the first regional newspapers outside the capital cities appeared in Launceston in 1825, Geelong in 1840 and Maitland in 1841. Some local newspapers became part of family press dynasties across rural Australia, and local press barons protected their interests by forming country press associations to lobby colonial governments.

Journalism in local colonial newspapers was driven by parochialism and notions of progress. Little has changed today.

The essence of local newspapers is that they are a mirror of the small communities that produce them. Regional historian Louise Prowse says the local newspaper is central to the life of country towns. Country and suburban journalists and editors are embedded in their communities, and as Belinda Sanders, the editor of the *District Gazette* in regional NSW, points out, readers have direct access to them. Lee Abrahams, the owner and editor of the *District Reporter* in Camden, NSW, aims to tell the “local people about their local area and their stories are part of that agenda”.

99.3.3 Perth suburbs: 5 titles close

Perth’s Community Newspaper Group has announced the closure or consolidation of five titles: the *Midland/Kalamunda Reporter*, *Comment News*, *Hills/Avon Valley Gazette*, *Advocate* (Ellenbrook), and *North Coast Times*. Four of the five are from Perth’s east, including Midland, Kalamunda, Ellenbrook, the Swan Valley, Armadale, Gosnells, Serpentine and Jarrahdale areas. The *Comment News*, the founding paper of the group, was nearly 50 years old.

The changes will affect only print editions, with communities continuing to be serviced by a website that will include localised news and a masthead-specific landing page. Some existing mastheads will expand distribution areas to include suburbs that will no longer be serviced. Final issues of the papers were published in the week beginning 3 September (*Telum Media Alert*, 10 August 2018, and *watoday.com.au*, 9 August 2018).

99.3.4 Cape York: Newspaper delivered by aircraft

The *Cape York News* is distributed by air to 50 remote properties on Cape York Peninsula, the newspaper declares. It claims a readership of 5000 people and covers news in Aurukun, Coen, Cooktown, Hope Vale, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Mapoon, Napranum, the NPA, Pormpuraaw, Weipa and Wujal Wujal.

Regional & Remote Newspapers publishes *Cape York News* and *Torres News*, covering the Cape York Peninsula and Torres Strait regions. *Cape York News* was launched on 22 February 2017 through the merger of the Western Cape Bulletin and Cooktown Local News (<http://regionalandremote.com.au/>) Thanks to Peter Gill, of Melbourne, for sending ANHG a copy of *Cape York News*.

99.3.5 Cairns: *Sun* sets after 22 years

The weekly *Cairns Sun* has ceased publication after nigh on 23 years. The first issue appeared on 18 October 1995; the last on 24 July 2018. The following information is drawn from Roz Pulley’s “Sun sets on two decades of stories” in the final issue. The *Cairns Sun* incorporated the *Northern Beachcomber* and offered an independent source of news delivered to every home from Palm Cove to Centenary Park. Its mission was simple—to focus on “local news, sport and advertisers”. Robyn

Holmes was the founding editor and Charlie McKillop was the first journalist. The final editor was Lauren Pratt and the final journalist, Roz Pulley.

99.3.6 New England, NSW: Various

Barry Blair, of Uralla, writes (6 September): It's interesting to note a range of happenings in/around New England North West/Mid North Coast.

At Armidale, the monthly glossy lifestyle magazine *Focus* is alive and well. The current September 2018 edition is issue 130 with 64 pages with pages measuring 23.5 cm wide by 34 cm. Their web address is www.focusmag.com.au which should lead you to their sister editions at Tuncurry Forster, Port Macquarie and Kempsey. The Armidale produced edition is door-to-door throughout New England.

Although *Focus* is deemed independent, it does have an arrangement with Fairfax Media, which as I understand involves printing and accounting. I twigged recently when Armidale *Focus* advertised for a photographer, when I noticed they had lifted a Fairfax Media advert, but had left small print behind where such adverts use certain phraseology such as, "Fairfax Media is not responsible for...". However, the arrangement works, Fairfax Media won't allow *Focus* to launch a Tamworth based edition.

Meanwhile, the bi-weekly *Armidale Express*, ranging from 12-20 pages an issue, trundles along, having lost the Domain supplement a couple of years ago to an enterprising group of Armidale real estate agents. This week's 20-page *Armidale Express Extra* has only two pages devoted to Domain.

Down the road at Tamworth, all appears to be alive and well at the *Northern Daily Leader* with their Saturday weekly glossy Domain usually running at 48 pages, with an occasional seasonal 80 pages. Last Saturday the *Northern Daily Leader* itself ran 52 pages plus Domain.

Walcha News on 30 August ran 12 pages, while the *Inverell Times* on 28 August ran 12 pages. Both papers carried the weekly 12 pages insert, *Country Leader*.

Uralla has done without a newsagency for a few years, but a limited service is provided at local supermarket Foodworks, with state/local/regional titles and a good range of glossy mags keeping readers satisfied. The supermarket also handles all gambling (Scratchies) since the newsagency folded.



4-NEWSPAPER HISTORY

99.4.1 Evan Whitton eking out a living on the pension

Evan Whitton's obituary appears above in 99.1.6.

An edited extract from John Hurst, *The Walkley Awards: Australia's Best Journalists in Action* (1988), pp.117-118, follows:

In the winter of 1967 Evan Whitton, then a reporter for the mass circulation Melbourne newspaper, *Truth*, was asked by the editor, Sol Chandler, to do a series on *Life on the Pension*. Chandler wanted gutsy realism, not gushing sentiment, about how the poor coped. To Whitton that meant giving up the comforts of home for a while and learning to live as they did, the hard way. For two weeks he eked out an existence on the equivalent of the pension, then \$15 [a week], setting aside \$2 for expenses such as shoe repairs, tram fares, writing paper and postage. Out of the remaining \$13 he had to pay \$5 a week rent for a room in a Fitzroy doss-house, leaving him \$8 for food and other essentials. He got by, as other pensioners did, by scrimping and scrounging, eating one good subsidised meal a day in the Brotherhood of St Laurence canteen, queueing up for free soup and

sandwiches at other welfare hostels, tramping the streets and gazing into shop windows for diversion and spending many hours in public libraries, as much for warmth as for the relief from boredom. He could afford only a few small luxuries—a packet of tobacco and papers for roll-your-owns (75 cents), a flagon of cheap plonk \$1.55) and a couple of beers in a pub where he sheltered from the rain...

Life on the pension, Whitton soon found, was a daily struggle to get enough to eat, to keep warm, and to stave off boredom. The reading rooms of public libraries helped take care of the last two needs. One day, while browsing through an old copy of *Encounter* magazine in the State Library in Swanston Street, Whitton came across some correspondence between the American writers, Tom Wolfe and Frank Kermode, on the techniques of New Journalism...

Reading about the New Journalism, Whitton remembered what his boss, Sol Chandler, had told him. “My dear boy, I want every detail—not just the significant details, all of them...”

Normally, journalists don’t get much time or space to go into great detail. Whitton had plenty of both and his diary of life on the pension was a stab at the New Journalism techniques, recording snatches of dialogue and noting many details to give colour to each scene. Here are a few extracts from the diary, beginning at Day Three, by which time Whitton was already broke and looking for a free meal:

Day Three—Thursday

Restless night, culminating in a mild bout of asthma at 4.30 am. What causes this, the first hint of the disease for nearly four years? Is it the trauma of living on the pension, dust shaken from the torn curtains, or the slog back from the library in the night air? The blue and red capsules must be four years old, but still have kick.

The attack passes in 20 minutes and a cigarette completes the process. Relieved at this fortunate turn of events, I reflect on my warmth and lack of hunger. No further sleep, but make it to the kitchen at 8 am, boil up and return to bed to drink coffee and subject the pink walls to further scrutiny...

He came to realise that it was not merely the struggle to make ends meet that made life difficult for pensioners. The lack of money not only turned them into beggars but restricted their mobility and the kind of things they could do to pass the time. The houses of charity could assuage their hunger with plain, filling food but not their loneliness and boredom. They would wander the streets aimlessly for hours, sometimes chancing to meet a crony in a similar state of lassitude, who, like them, was perhaps looking for a little bit of excitement. If they had managed to scrounge a few extra bob they might pool their resources, buy a flagon of cheap plonk and, for a while, obliterate all sense of reality...

Whitton lived among these men yet apart from them. It would have been pointless for him to pretend that he could share their experiences or feel exactly as they felt. He had fewer miseries to lack back upon, a better life to look forward to...

When the time came for Whitton to resume his normal way of life he had lost six pounds [2.7 kg] and was feeling extremely ragged. His nights had been disturbed by bad dreams and in the morning he had found it difficult to get out of bed but had forced himself up because of his need for solid food. He awoke exhausted from his last night at the doss-house, imagining that the rats were racing around his head. For most of his two weeks on the pension had had been constipated and for the next week he had diarrhoea and, now that he could satisfy it, a craving for protein—meat, cheese and eggs.

[Several months later Whitton’s series won the 1967 Walkley award for the best feature. His boss, Sol Chandler, said that what clinched it was the detail about Whitton getting constipated. He reckoned that the judges were old men who could identify with the problem.]

99.4.2 Leon Oberg’s reflections (1): Wool classer lost to newspapers

Leon Oberg, of Goulburn, writes: Despite being one of the longest serving journalists to work on the *Goulburn Post* – and one who was associated with many of the paper’s prestigious industry awards—I simply gravitated into the newspaper industry. It was not something to which I had

aspired. Upon leaving school I started work as a trainee wool classer with Farmers and Graziers. Like many at the time, I enrolled in a three-year night study course through what is now TAFE. But throughout that time, I nursed a burning interest in train photography and found myself offering some of my “more newsy” images to the *Goulburn Evening Post* editor, Ray Leeson. These included district rail accidents along with other interesting events. Significantly, I scored a front page from my very first contribution, a fatal head on collision between two freight trains at Robertson. My coverage appearing in the paper’s 6 August 1962 edition and also on the front of the company’s sister publication, the *Highlands Post* out of Moss Vale.

Despite the fact that I completed my wool-classing studies, Ray Leeson managed to wrest me away from wool, offering me a job in the paper’s photographic department, initially engraving blocks from which pictures could be transferred onto plates and newsprint. Within a year I was the paper’s photographer and over time I headed up a staff of three photographers responsible for not only news and sport, but much of the paper’s advertising content.

We photographed a diversity of products for our advertisers which included shoes, handbags, cars, alcohol, toys and fashions. In addition, we provided photographic services to smaller district newspapers during special events such as Governors-General or Prime Ministerial visits, rodeos, shows and special features. It was a busy newsroom made even busier because the *Goulburn Evening Post* at that time was a daily paper serving a diverse community producing on average some 96 pages of news, sport and social subjects a week. Ray Leeson was a terrific mentor and he employed many talented news practitioners. To a young newsman like me, it was a case of learning and developing, growing with the job, and achieving greater goals. We picked up regular industry [Country Press Association] awards along the way. One year I collected all three possible photographic gongs—News, Sport and Feature Photography!

The only way up from that was journalism and as part of a company restructure in 1985, I was invited to launch and edit a brand new newspaper, one that would appear in the company’s circa 20 sister papers throughout the South Eastern Region. That publication became the *Town and Country Magazine* with an emphasis on rural affairs. The magazine allowed me to dust off my earlier wool, sheep and pasture studies and apply them to cattle breeding, crop production and other rural pursuits while combining that knowledge with my writing and photography and create a newsy weekly paper written in such a way to interest both townspeople and the farming communities. Despite making some silly mistakes along the way, I think we achieved that for at one stage we were producing regular 24-page magazines and our pages attracted almost all of the region’s leading livestock agencies, stud sheep, cattle and horse breeders. The hardest thing I have ever done was building that paper up virtually from scratch. I would insist on covering major livestock sales and shows including spending several days each year at the Sydney Royal with a philosophy of only reporting the best performers from the region.

Perhaps one highlight was the 1988 Bicentennial Sydney Royal where I shadowed Princess Anne around the ground as she presented ribbons to firstly the champion dairy cow which fortunately gave me a page one pic and story for the recipient came from the South Coast, part of my readership region. And unlike today, newsmen could get within metres of her as she moved around the ground presenting ribbons hither and yon. I always remember how she appeared to have little empathy for her husband, Captain Mark Phillips, who at that time was on crutches and could barely keep up with the ‘cavalcade’ as Princess Anne strode out at full pace in front, totally ignoring the hapless man’s plight struggling on at the rear.”

99.4.3 Boy labour in printing industry

Following is an extract from *Young Caxton: A history of aims in printing education in Melbourne 1870-1970* by Kenneth Eric Eckersall (1980), p.41ff.

Journeymen printers were particularly vulnerable [in the 1870s] as growth in the number of printing houses brought “pain” through intensified cut-throat competition between proprietors who often resorted to employing boy labour. “Yes, we have distressed printers in Victoria, a place once called a land of gold,” cried unionists in 1875 on behalf of the unemployed. Expansion in the trade through the seventies did not bring about stability in employment for skilled operatives. It had the reverse effect of encouraging the greater use of cheap labour. Protection over entry and regulation of apprenticeship were important issues throughout the period—due in part, as Fitzgerald has noted, to the prevailing youthful employment situation, for over a third of those persons engaged in printing in the colony were under the age of twenty.

Printing unions had long held that the craft status of journeymen must be protected. An aim in the 1851 rules of the Victorian Typographical Association was to exclude apprentices “totally unfitted by incapacity and want of education ever to become creditable workmen...” Skilled workmen, especially compositors, feared there would be a diminution of craft standards resulting in comps being appreciated merely as “type-snatchers” or “type-shovellers” instead of skilled operatives in all facets of the job, in setting, make-up, imposition and lock-up. No doubt the unionists were motivated by concerns in which extrinsic and intrinsic values were intertwined. Words from “Caleb”, a correspondent to the *Australasian Typographical Journal* in 1880, provide a precis of union objections to boy labour:

...the boys are so often turned out upon the world as mere hobble-de-hoys, ignorant alike of the “mysteries and art” of orienting, beyond the mere mechanical operation of “type lifting”; unable to take their places among the skilled workmen of the Colony; and therefore for the remainder of their professional existence placed entirely at the mercy of any unscrupulous employer who may engage their services.

... Particular criticism was levelled at the use of boy labour at night on the metropolitan dailies, and in mid-1872 the Typographical Society took steps to remedy the situation. According to the *Journal*, the dailies were tempted to use boys as cheap labour because of strains on resources due to the race to be first with late news and recently arrived “foreign intelligence” and competition in printing illustrated articles. Hugh George at the *Argus* and C.F. Somerton of the *Daily Telegraph* [Melbourne] categorically rejected the *Journal’s* suggestions, but David Syme of the *Age* probably hinted at the true state of affairs when he said that he would comply with the prohibition of boy labour “so long as all the daily newspaper offices in Melbourne are treated alike.”

99.4.4 Press freedom in Australia

Chris Mitchell, former editor-in-chief of the *Australian*, has written an article about the addition of Andrew Bent to the Australian Media Hall of Fames (“Hall of fame honours a pioneering crusader of press freedom in Australia”, *Australian*, 10 September 2018). The ANHG editor picks up on one inaccuracy in Mitchell’s article and offers a clarification of another statement that could mislead:

- (1) “Bent’s [Hobart] *Gazette* would end up as the Hobart *Mercury*...” Not so. The *Hobart Mercury* started on 5 July 1854 and it was only on 24 August 1857 that it incorporated the *Colonial Times*, the title which Bent chose after Governor Arthur virtually forced him to ditch the *Gazette* title. Note, the *Mercury* was an independent publication and was not incorporated in the *Colonial Times*. The *Mercury* made a habit of incorporating or swallowing other titles and the *Colonial Times* was just the first. In June 1858 the *Mercury* swallowed the *Tasmanian Daily News*, and in June 1859, the *Daily Courier*.
- (2) “Newspapers across the colonies at the time were printed only under the authority and censorship of the colonial governors.” In 1824, Van Diemen’s Land (Tasmania from 1855) was still a sub-colony of New South Wales. [It became a colony in 1825.] There was no other colony in Australia at the time. What we now know as Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia were not colonies at the time. By June 1824, when Bent won freedom of the press for the Hobart *Gazette*, the only other newspaper in Australia was the *Sydney Gazette*.

99.4.5 Who was ‘The Caravanner’?

Your editor received the following inquiry on 3 September from Jennifer Freeman, a librarian at the State Library of Queensland:

We’ve received a query regarding the identity of ‘The Caravanner’ who wrote a column for *The Queenslander* from 1928-1935 entitled ‘Northward Bound – Caravanning through Queensland’ by our ‘Journalist Photographer’. Many of his columns have been tagged in Trove (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/list?id=13852>)

We are trying to establish what his real name was.

Can you help? If so, please contact Rod Kirkpatrick at rodk99anhg@gmail.com/

Here are some starting points. The first article under “The Caravanner” byline appeared in the *Queenslander*, 24 May 1928, p.6. It was headed: “Northward bound: Caravanning through Queensland”, and began with an introduction to the series:

The first stage of a journey, that is to embrace several thousands of miles is, naturally, fraught with many unforeseen difficulties, even if the most careful thought has been devoted to the initial preparations. When, as in the present case, the journey is one that has been organised for a special purpose—to give subscribers to the “Queenslander” a pictorial insight into the possibilities and vastness of their own State—the obstacles to overcome are not lessened. To the enterprising newspaper publisher, however, the difficulties attendant on an expedition are merely incidentals connected with the publication of an illustrated paper— incidentals that must not be allowed to interfere with the purpose of making the *Queenslander* a weekly paper worthy of the country wherein it circulates. Most weeklies throughout the world are satisfied to give their subscribers stray photographs from here and there—a practice that may be likened to a story from which every other chapter has been omitted. In this case it is the intention of the *Queenslander* to deviate from that custom, replacing it with a connected pictorial survey of the country which the *Queenslander* caravan traverses. Regular subscribers, by keeping their copies of the *Queenslander*, will thus become the possessors of a truly representative photographic survey of Queensland—the first of its kind ever published.

In the *Brisbane Courier* of 24 May 1928, p.12, there was an advertisement for the latest issue of the *Queenslander* and it made special mention of “The Caravanner”:

At this season of the year the eyes of Southern tourists are turned northward to the delightful climate and scenic beauties enjoyed by the northern half of Queensland in the cool season. Some of the entrancing views to be seen there are reproduced in this week's *Queenslander*. A journalist-photographer has just been sent out by the *Queenslander* on a caravan tour of the State from south to north, and the result of his travels over the first short stage of his journey, from Brisbane to Ipswich, appears in this week's issue, in the form of an article and two pages of views seen en route. Other features of the current number are the Ipswich, Dalby, Nanango, Kalbar, and Boonah news, the first Rugby League match between Queensland and New South Wales teams in Sydney, views along the route of the North-South, railway, and aviation training.

I responded to Jennifer Freeman and on 4 September she told me in another email that “The Caravanner” had interviewed British press baron, Lord Northcliffe, when he had visited Fiji. [“Caravan Tales Townsville Personalities, *Queenslander*, 5 July 1934, p.16. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23337037>]

Jennifer said, “I’ve not been able to find that interview, but if I could, that would reveal the journalist’s name.” I investigated and found that the visit was in August 1921. Northcliffe died in 1922. Jennifer said SLQ has a copy of Lord Northcliffe’s *My Journey Round the World*. She would check it for any reference to our caravanning journalist.

99.4.6 Tamworth newspaper archives

Tamworth Historical Society has been given the deeds to the hard-copy files of the *Northern Daily Leader*'s back issues plus files of earlier newspapers going back to 1880 (*Northern Daily Leader*, 30 August 2018, p.3).

EDITOR'S NOTE ON ANHG 100: This is an abbreviated version of what I wrote in issue 98. The *ANHG Newsletter* is approaching its 100th issue. And the question exercising your editor's mind has been: How should we mark the occasion (which will arrive in December this year)? I think one way would be to invite readers to contribute anything up to 300 words or so on the newspaper-history topic of their choice. It may be the most fascinating discovery you've made during years of research or of working for newspapers. It may be to recount a humorous incident from your newspaper experience. Or you may like to make suggestions about what direction the *ANHG Newsletter* should take after issue 100. Over to you. I'll need submissions by 31 October, but the earlier the better. Email me at [rod99anhg@gmail.com/](mailto:rod99anhg@gmail.com) **Rod Kirkpatrick**



5—RECENTLY PUBLISHED

99.5.1 Book

Carter, David, and Osborne, Roger, *Australian Books and Authors in the American Marketplace, 1840s-1940s* (Sydney University Press). A history of publishing, copyright and reception, the first comprehensive study of the American connection.

Tidey, John, *Stories from a Bygone Age* (Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2018). 124pp. ISBN: 978-1-925801-36-1. \$39.95. The period 1966-75 marked a second golden era in the history of the *Melbourne Age*. These were the years when the venerable broadsheet was renewed and transformed by a brilliant editor, Graham Perkin, and the team he assembled. Tidey's book is a celebration of those times. It is certainly not a history of the "Perkin years" nor a biography of the famous editor. It simply recalls some of the people who, like the author, had the good fortune to be there at the time; and some of the events that made those years so memorable.

99.5.2 Articles

Clarke, Patricia, "Australia's First Female War Correspondent: Edith Dickenson at the Boer War" in Turner, B., Barredo, D., Grattan, S.J., (Eds.), *Reporting from the Wars 1850 – 2015: The origins and evolution of the war correspondent*, Vernon Press, Wilmington De, 2018.

Griffen-Foley, Bridget, "Keeping company: encountering the Fairfax Media archive", *insidestory.org.au*, 27 August 2018. While Fairfax's future seems likely to be in the hands of Nine, much of its past has recently been made accessible at the State Library of New South Wales. At a symposium at the Library on 10 August, the author, Professor of Media at Macquarie University, gave the keynote address. This article is an edited version of the address.

Willis, Ian, "Despite the doom and gloom in Australian media, the outlook for regional papers remains strong", *theconversation.com*, 7 August 2018. See 99.3.2 above.

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