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PROJECTED RISE IN BOND RATE TO 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ PER CENT. ON EVE OF LOAN COUNCIL

By THE EDITOR OF "THE FINANCIAL REVIEW"

The Federal Government would neither confirm nor deny in Canberra last night that it would float a £10 million loan at 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. next week.

State and unofficial sources stated that the loan would be made. This news overshadowed the meeting of the Premiers during the day. They discussed tax grants, butter and prices. The Loan Council will meet in Canberra to-day.

Raising the bond rate by 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.—it has remained at 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. since 1947—the Federal Treasury would in fact be roughly following the dictates of the bond market. At the close of business in Sydney yesterday yields in redemption on 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. bonds went up to 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. In recent weeks they have reached 4 per cent. The high bond yield yesterday was 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 11 per cent. on the 10 per cent. 1959 issue.

After discussions with the wool and life insurance associations last week, the Federal Government is said to be about to test the appetite of markets, particularly institutional investors, for bonds at higher interest rates. It has in

being the Federal Government intends to direct investment funds into bonds. On the other hand, the huge sums to be sought in the current year may require exceptional methods.

Viewpoints Differ

The Premiers' Conference revealed acute differences of viewpoint between the Federal and State Governments on the finance of State commitments for both ordinary and capital works expenditure in the current year.

Not only was the Federal Government's offering of £120 million for tax reimbursement (£20 million more than in 1950-51) well below

The discussions were held against a background of extravagant amounts scheduled to be submitted to the Loan Council to-day for capital works programmes in the current year. And doubtless the delegates at the conference were aware of the coming rise in the bond rate.

Outside the conference it emerged that the programmes of the Commonwealth and States for public works expenditure for 1950-51 is £530 million, divided as to £375 million for the States and £155 million for the Federal Government. Only £234 million of the Federal total will be financed from loans, much

play of the budget surplus idea in recent weeks.

Higher interest rates are being tried, not so much as a disinflationary measure, as one might have hoped, but as a means of attracting funds into public works. By hook or by crook the Government intends to get money for public works. With Mr. Menzies's reluctance to "astronomical" defence expenditure for the current year and his failure to agree to further Federal subsidies to keep down the cost of living, it will be interesting to see which way the move to higher interest rates will repercut on inflation.

Will the extravagant expenditure on public works made more possible by higher bond rates outweigh the tightening of credit as the rise in bond rate is reflected throughout the interest rate structure?

The Premiers' Conference also provided a sidelight on forcing funds into public

"The Financial Review"

THIS is the first issue of "The Financial Review." It is designed primarily to serve the commercial and business communities of Australia. While it must, therefore, be a publication of specialised interest, its aim will be to interest and inform all whose activities and well-being are associated with Australia's economic and financial progress.

We want it to become a forum for the expression of opinion about the subjects with which it deals. Too often those in power take decisions without a full appreciation of the viewpoint of those whom those decisions will most vitally affect. The columns of "The Financial Review" will be open to the widest variety of opinion.

It will, of course, have its own views to express. Over a lifetime of 121 years "The Sydney Morning Herald" has established a reputation for independence and integrity. The same standards will govern the policy of this new publication.

We are determined that in its presentation of facts it shall be objective, authoritative and reliable, and that in the expression of its policy it shall be well-informed and lack neither courage nor independence.

Like all newspapers, "The Financial Review" must always be ready to adjust itself to the needs and interests of those it seeks to serve. For that reason, we shall at all times welcome suggestions for its improvement and the broadening of its usefulness and appeal.

JOHN FAIRFAX & SONS PTY. LIMITED.

The *Australian Financial Review* celebrated its 70th anniversary on 16 August 2021. Above is a reproduction of the top half of its first front page, 16 August 1951. The paper, which began as a weekly, declared that it was "A *Sydney Morning Herald* publication". In the editorial, at the right-hand side of its front page, the *AFR* referred to the *SMH*'s "lifetime of 121 years". At the time the *Herald*, which began publication on 18 April 1831, was 120 years old. The *AFR* became a bi-weekly from 24 October 1961 and a daily, 6 September 1963. It added a weekend edition on 6 September 1997. See ANHG 114.1.4 below.

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Published in memory of Victor Mark Isaacs (1949-2019), founding editor.

Back copies of the *Newsletter* and copies of some ANHG publications can be viewed online at: <http://www.amhd.info/anhg/index.php>

Deadline for next Newsletter: 8 December 2021.

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

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



114.1.1 Climate change in Murdoch papers

News Corp Australia will end its longstanding editorial hostility towards carbon reduction policies and advocate for the world’s leading economies to hit net zero emissions by 2050 (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 September 2021, p.13). The owner of some of the nation’s most-read newspapers and of 24-hour news channel Sky News will from mid-October begin a company-wide campaign promoting the benefits of a carbon-neutral economy as world leaders prepare for a critical climate summit in Glasgow later this year. Rupert Murdoch’s global media empire has faced growing international condemnation and pressure from advertisers over its editorial stance on climate change which has long cast doubt over the science behind global warming and has since 2007 attacked various federal government efforts to reduce emissions.

From 17 October, report Zoe Samios and Rob Harris, News Corp will run a two-week campaign that will advocate for a carbon net zero target to be reached by 2050. The campaign is expected to focus heavily on jobs in a decarbonised economy, particularly in blue-collar industries such as mining, resources and agriculture. The *Australian* is not expected to take part in the campaign.

See Margaret Simons, “News Corp move reveals power shift”, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 September 2021, p.21.

114.1.2 Press Council cartoon ruling and the *Australian*

Extract from editorial in the *Australian*, 20 August 2021:

In accordance with our obligations as a member of the Australian Press Council, [today] we publish a ruling critical of a cartoon published on August 14 last year that lampooned the pre-election actions of US President Joe Biden. We publish the APC ruling in good faith and out of respect for the institution. But we profoundly disagree with the APC decision that the cartoon breached its standards of practice.

We will always argue, as the APC itself contends, that cartoons are commonly expressions of opinion examining serious issues and that use exaggeration and absurdity to make their point. For this reason, cartoonists deserve special licence to produce thought-provoking works to which some people inevitably will take offence. In this instance, our cartoonist was operating professionally and in the finest traditions of political comment.

By rejecting this fact, the APC ruling undermines the role of the cartoonist and risks institutionalising the taking of offence on behalf of others, a situation the Independent Press Standards Organisation in Britain has specifically avoided. Unlike the APC, IPSO regulations do not allow the organisation to take forward complaints about issues other than accuracy from people with no connection to the alleged breach of the code. ... the APC ruled that we breached general principle No.6 that publications must take reasonable steps to “avoid causing or contributing materially to substantial offence, distress or prejudice, or a substantial risk to health or safety, unless doing so is sufficiently in the public interest”.

But by ruling the way it has in the Biden matter, the APC has allowed itself to be used as arbiter in a cultural debate involving issues of race, gender and privilege that are not its place to decide. The APC decision is explicit in this regard when it says: “While many readers might see the cartoon as a criticism of Mr Biden and of ‘identity politics’, the council does not accept the publication’s

view that readers would see it is anti-racist or anti-misogynist. Rather, in appearing to demean (Kamala) Harris, and other women, by referring to her as a ‘little brown girl’, it could be seen to contribute to prejudice and to undermining measures to overcome the obstacles facing women, particularly those of colour.”

By ruling in this way, the APC has both missed the joke and overstepped the bounds of protections afforded in racial discrimination laws and trampled on the explicit rights, also provided in law, to protect media debate and freedom of speech. We understand that there will be wide differences of opinion on many issues including those that touch on critical race theory and identity politics, but the APC has no business simply shutting down debate. Nor is it welcome to misrepresent our motives. As we argued before the APC hearing, the subject of the cartoon was not Ms Harris but Mr Biden, the white male candidate who relies on Ms Harris to help heal a nation divided by racism. The cartoon was intended to highlight and mock what were perceived as patronising, condescending and racist remarks by presidential candidate Mr Biden in reference to his vice-presidential candidate Ms Harris.

Also see: (1) Helen Trinca, “Mind your ‘p’s, ‘q’s and ‘n’s in language minefield”, *Weekend Australian*, 21-22 August 2021, p.14. Words have power, but what can cause offence to others isn’t always black and white. Refers to the cartoon at the centre of the above Press Council adjudication. (2) Chris Kenny, “Dire Press Council ruling a woke-up call for free speech”, *Weekend Australian*, 21-22 August 2021, p.14. The media watchdog has joined the tech titans in undermining basic freedoms of expression.

114.1.3 Press Council ruling on gender-affirming healthcare articles

The Australian Press Council has ruled that the *Australian* was unfair and caused substantial distress when it published 45 articles over 10 months, from 9 August 2019 to 29 June 2020, about gender-affirming healthcare and transgender children and teenagers. Dr Michelle Telfer, head of the department of adolescent medicine at the Royal Children’s Hospital and director of the hospital’s gender service, was the complainant (*Age*, 4 September 2021, p.21).

114.1.4 Australian Financial Review at 70

The *Australian Financial Review* was 70 years old on 16 August 2021 (see cover image). On 9 May 2021, the newspaper kicked off its Platinum 70 Year coverage on the eve of Treasurer Josh Frydenberg’s third federal budget. The *Financial Review* began as Australia’s first national newspaper on 16 August 1951. It began as a 28-page weekly tabloid, selling for one shilling (10c). Less than two months later, the Menzies government’s treasurer, Sir Arthur Fadden, handed down his notorious “horror budget” dominated by big tax increases on personal income and company profits. The sales tax on goods was also lifted. The first editor of the *Financial Review* complained that “no more disastrous series of financial proposals can ever have been presented to Parliament”.

The paper’s website says: “In the 1970s, while the *Financial Review*’s editorial pages were leading the fight to open up Australia’s economy, editor Vic Carroll turned his mind to the near monopoly that AMP and National Mutual had on life assurance. They had 80 per cent of the market, selling whole of life policies that were both savings policies and life insurance. Carroll asked Anne Lampe to investigate what these policies actually delivered to customers. She eventually wrote three articles that separated the cost of life insurance and savings returns to conclude it was far better to buy straight life insurance and invest elsewhere for better returns.”

114.1.5 News Corp cuts jobs

News Corp Australia has swung an axe in its commercial division after engaging consultants McKinsey & Company to assist with a restructure. News Corp sources told the *Sydney Morning Herald* (26 July 2021, p.24) they estimated between 30 and 50 commercial roles were cut around June-July as the changes were implemented.

114.1.6 Circulation and readership: figures, percentages, slants

It has always been interesting to see how newspapers report circulation and readership increases and decreases. This is where the rubber hits the road when it comes to being fair (or unfair) to opponents. Lately, the *Australian* tends to focus on percentages, and the *Sydney Morning Herald*

and *Age* focus on actual figures. ThinkNewsBrands has published its first Total News readership figures. This meant that, on 23 August, newspapers were able to report on the first set of data issued under the new media metric, Roy Morgan.

Here's how the *Australian* began its report:

The *Australian* is the fastest growing daily newspaper in the country with the national broadsheet increasing its print readership by more than 50 per cent over the past year, while Nine's stable of metro mastheads has suffered a dramatic drop in audience.

And here's how the *Sydney Morning Herald* began its report:

The Sydney Morning Herald remains the country's largest masthead with an average 8.4 million monthly readers.

And samples of what followed:

***Australian*:** The *Australian* has also outpaced its main rivals on cross-platform growth (print and digital) over the first half of 2021, recording a 9.9 per cent surge in readership, almost tripling the growth of the *Australian Financial Review* (3.9 per cent) over the same period, and well ahead of the cross-platform performance of the *Age* (up 0.1 per cent) and the *SMH* (minus 0.4 per cent).

The data, released on [23 August] by market research company Roy Morgan, reveals the *Australian's* print edition now enjoys a daily audience of 479,000 readers, second only to News Corp's Victorian masthead, the *Herald Sun*, which boasts 580,000.

***Sydney Morning Herald*:** Data from the industry's newly authorised metric, Roy Morgan, shows the *Herald's* audience is 73 per cent larger than its direct competitor. The *Sydney Morning Herald* remains the country's largest masthead with an average 8.4 million monthly readers.

A table arising from the Roy Morgan figures of 23 August shows:

News brands (print & digital)	Audience—previous four weeks
<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i>	8.4 million
<i>Age, Melbourne</i>	6.0 million
<i>Australian</i>	5.2 million
<i>Daily Telegraph, Sydney</i>	4.9 million
<i>Herald Sun, Melbourne</i>	4.7 million
<i>West Australian and Sunday Times</i>	4.1 million
<i>Australian Financial Review</i>	3.4 million
<i>Courier-Mail, Brisbane</i>	3.0 million
<i>Advertiser, Adelaide</i>	1.7 million
<i>Saturday Paper</i>	0.8 million

114.1.7 AAP launches specialist news desks

Australian Associated Press has launched specialist news desks for agriculture, refugees and the environment. These have been added to an arts desk. AAP has also announced the appointment of three non-executive directors to its board: Gail Hambly, former group general counsel and company secretary at Fairfax Media Ltd; Shirley Chowdhary, inaugural CEO of the GO Foundation; and Ranya Alkadamani, a media strategist (*Telum Media Alert*, 23 August 2021).

114.1.8 Nine increases net profit

Nine Entertainment Co., owner of the former Fairfax metropolitan newspapers, made a net profit of \$261 million in 2020-2021, 83 per cent more than the previous year. Total revenue was \$2.3

billion. Nine's publishing division reported strong results with digital subscription and licensing revenue across its mastheads including the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age* topping \$100 million for the first time. The division, which also includes the *Australian Financial Review*, nine.com.au, and Pedestrian Group, also generated more revenue from digital sources than print for the first time. Nine also owns the Nine television network and other media interests (*Telum Media Alert*, 25 August 2021).



114.1.9 PEOPLE

Euan Black has been promoted from finance editor to deputy editor at *TheNewDaily*, which he joined in 2019 as a reporter (*Telum Media Alert*, 30 July 2021).

Denise Cahill has been appointed editor of the *NT News*, Darwin. She replaced Matt Williams (see ANHG 113.1.8). Cahill joined the *NT News* in 2020 as the head of news after having worked at Perth's Community Newspaper Group (*Telum Media Alert*, 30 July 2021).

Anna Caldwell, formerly state political editor for Sydney's *Daily Telegraph*, has been appointed deputy editor of the paper (*Telum Media Alert*, 6 September 2021).

John Durie, senior business commentator at the *Australian*, and **Courtney Walsh**, top tennis and AFL writer for the *Australian*, were among a round of redundancies at News Corp Australia at the end of August. Mumbrella (25 August 2021) understands that 10 senior editorial staff were included in the redundancies. **Durie** had been a business reporter for more than 40 years, starting in the Canberra press gallery in 1980. He was Chanticleer columnist for the *Australian Financial Review* for 13 years. He was the News business journalist of the year in 2013. Sports editor Wally Mason paid tribute to **Walsh** in the "A Week at a Time" column (*Weekend Australian*, 28-29 August 2021). Mason said: "He leaves a big hole in the place, partly because of his knowledge and understanding of the sports he covers—his genuine feel for the things that matter about sport—but mostly because he's one of the most popular and likeable blokes in Australian sports journalism." Walsh had been with the *Australian* for 15 years and with News Corp even longer. He had worked on the *Herald Sun*, Melbourne, and *mX*.

Adele Ferguson, investigative journalist for the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age*, will become chair of The Walkley Foundation after the October meeting. She will replace Marina Go, chair since 2019 (*Telum Media Alert*, 3 September 2021).

Mark Furler, a former *Sunshine Coast Daily* editor, is now the national digital editor at News Corp Australia. He helps oversee the company's digital regional and community titles. He was formerly the Group digital editor for News Regional Media (*Telum Media Alert*, 22 September 2021).

Alan Jones's column has been dropped by Sydney's *Daily Telegraph* after weeks of anti-vaccination and anti-lockdown commentary (*Age*, 30 July 2021). Jones's column used to appear also in Brisbane's *Courier-Mail* and the *Gold Coast Bulletin*.

Gemma Jones, formerly deputy editor of Sydney's *Daily Telegraph*, has been appointed editor of the *Advertiser*, Adelaide (*Telum Media Alert*, 6 September 2021).

David King, formerly editor of the Melbourne *Age's* Saturday edition, has been appointed national editor of the *Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald*. In this role he oversees the coverage of federal politics, business, the world and the environment for both papers (*Telum Media Alert*, 6 September 2021).

Jack Latimore, a Birpal man with ties to Thungutti and Gumbaynggirr nations, has been appointed Indigenous affairs journalist at the Melbourne *Age*. He was previously managing editor of NITV Digital. His role at the *Age* is being supported by the Judith Neilson Institute for Journalism and Ideas (*Age*, 15 July 2021, p.3).

Kathy Lipari, a former national head of the News Corp Australia news network and former editor-in-chief of NewsLocal, left News Corp on 27 August after 20 years. She is having a career

break. Lipari is also a former editor of the *Manly Daily* and head of news at the *Daily Telegraph* (*Telum Media Alert*, 27 August 2021).

Sean Parnell is the new editor of Nine Publishing's Queensland masthead, brisbanetimes.com.au/ After 10 years at the *Courier-Mail*, where he became the state political editor, Parnell worked for the *Australian* for 15 years where he filled roles such as Queensland bureau chief, FOI editor and health editor (*Age*, 27 August 2021).

Kerry Stokes has resigned as executive chairman of the top company in his publicly listed empire, Seven Group Holdings, but his private company is the largest shareholder in Seven Group. He continues as chairman of Seven West Media (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 August 2021).

Farrah Tomazin, senior writer and investigative journalist for the *Age*, will relocate to Washington DC at the end of 2021 to become US correspondent for the *Age* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. It is a three-year posting. She will replace Matthew Knott, who will become national correspondent for the *Age* and the *Sydney Morning Herald* (*Telum Media Alert*, 25 August 2021).

James Wagstaff began duties as editor of the *Weekly Times*, Victoria, on 2 August. He was formerly the focus editor and senior journalist at the paper, which he joined in 2004. He had since served in various roles, including business editor, chief of staff and deputy editor (*Telum Media Alert*, 30 July 2021).

Courtney Walsh, see item about John Durie above.

Cara Waters will begin in the new role of city editor of the Melbourne *Age* in October. She will be responsible for the coverage of all Melbourne affairs, from planning and people to politics. She will manage the paper's city reporting team. Waters has worked at the paper since 2015 and was previously the technology and startups editor for the *Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald* (*Telum Media Alert*, 10 September 2021).

114.1.10 Former reporter loses defamation case

Former sports reporter Josh Massoud has lost a defamation case against five media outlets which had reported that Channel 7 had stood him down after he had threatened to slit a junior colleague's throat (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 July 2021). Massoud sued Sydney radio station 2GB and Nine Digital, Fox Sports Australia, the *Daily Telegraph*, and radio station KIIS 1065 for defamation in the NSW District Court. He told the court the stories attributed an incorrect phrase to him, offered no context, and made him sound like a "lunatic". On 29 July, Judge Judith Gibson found in favour of all five media defendants, upholding their defences of truth and contextual truth. She said Massoud sued more than 16 publications, including six which referred to him as a "disgraced journalist now driving an ice cream truck". Judge Gibson said, "The plaintiff has failed on all claims."

114.1.11 Covid and Clive Palmer

Four Federal MPs—Adam Bandt, Helen Haines, Rebekha Sharkle and Zali Steggall—were signatories to a letter to the editor published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (13 August 2021, p.23), criticising Nine newspapers for publishing front-page ads from Clive Palmer's United Australia Party. They said the ads contributed "to the spread of Clive Palmer's harmful misinformation on the pandemic and is in breach of good corporate citizenship". The *Herald* noted that it did not accept anti-vaccination advertising that promotes "false or misleading information about vaccination and could undermine public health messages".

114.1.12 Canberra Times on the move

In its 96th year and more than three decades after it left its original home, the *Canberra Times* is returning to the heart of the national capital (*Canberra Times*, 4 September 2021). At the end of the ACT Covid lockdown, the masthead's newsroom, sales and circulation staff will relocate from their current building in Fyshwick to new offices in Civic. The move to the city is a homecoming for the *Canberra Times*, which began publishing from Mort Street, Braddon, in 1926. Printing of the newspaper moved to Fyshwick in 1964, before the editorial and advertising teams relocated in 1987 to a purpose-built headquarters prominently positioned on the corner of Pirie and Newcastle streets.

Decommissioning of the Fyshwick printing press in 2020 created the opportunity for a return to Canberra's commercial and administrative centre. The *Canberra Times'* new office is in one of the CBD's premier office buildings at 121 Marcus Clarke Street. The location on the western side of the CBD is close to the ANU as well as major commercial firms and public service departments. It also brings the newsroom close to the law courts and the ACT Assembly, where existing bureaus will be maintained.

* The cover price of the *Sunday Canberra Times* rose from \$2.20 to \$2.50 on 11 July.

114.1.13 Deaths

Fenn, Paul: D. 19 August 2021 in Sydney, aged 75; join *Daily Mirror* as copy boy in 1963; compiled obituary for US President John F. Kennedy in November 1963 when news of assassination came through on teleprinters in *Mirror* newsroom; promoted to cadet within days; worked for *Mirror* for four years; served in media corps during two years' National Service; joined *Daily Telegraph* and wrote general news and features but returned to *Mirror* a few years later; there, met and mentored Mike Munro, a future TV current affairs high flyer; they left the *Mirror* on the same day in 1978 to join TV, Munro to work in front of the camera and Fenn behind it; Fenn joined TEN first before Nine poached him; Nine became dominant in TV news, with Fenn climbing the ranks to deputy news director and chief of staff, then Sydney news director, and later national news director (*Weekend Australian*, 28-29 August 2021, p.18).

Hunter, Russell: D. 16 July 2021 in Brisbane, aged 73; born in Dundee, Scotland; provincial daily newspaper editor in England; co-owner of Brisbane street newspaper, *Time Off*, before becoming chief sub-editor, *Australian*, 1992-96; editor of *Fiji Times*, 1997; CEO of newspaper companies in Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Samoa; his devotion to democratic principles and media freedom led to his abduction and eventual deportation from Fiji by the military dictatorship that seized government at gunpoint in 2006 (*Your Time*, August 2021).

Sommerlad, David John Ross: D. 7 August 2021 in Sydney, aged 92; journalist, editor and country press administrator; younger son of Ernest Christian Sommerlad, long-term NSW Country Press executive director and newspaper owner; spent the early years of his journalistic career with daily newspapers in Newcastle (Australia), Sydney and Bradford (Yorkshire), returning to work as a reporter on the *Inverell Times* in 1952; became managing editor at Inverell in 1953 and soon also of the *Glen Innes Examiner*; later managing director and editor-in-chief of the *Armidale Express* (the Inverell, Glen Innes and Armidale papers were owned by the Sommerlad family and became Nornews Limited); in 1982, moved to Sydney as executive editor of Rural Press Limited, which had obtained a majority interest in Nornews; had special responsibility for introducing new technology (offset printing and computerised phototypesetting) within Rural Press's five publishing divisions in three states; served as president, NSW Country Press Association, 1983-86, and executive director of it, 1988-2003; served as president, Country Press Australia, 1987, and executive director, 1988-1998; assisted by Lloyd Jenkins, created a training program for cadet journalists on community newspapers; was a long-serving member of the Australian Press Council; made a Member of the Order of Australia in 1995 for service to the print media, particularly through the country press organisations of Australia and New South Wales, and to the community (Rod Kirkpatrick, research notes; and tributes written in August 2021 by John Dunnet, Lloyd Jenkins, Barry Wilson and Arthur Bradley).

Whiting, Anthony Charles (Tony): D. 2 September 2021 in Albury, aged 69; born in Murray River town of Robinvale; joined *Bulletin* magazine; joined Fairfax newspapers in 1980s to launch the *Good Weekend* magazine; became publisher of *Australian Financial Review* in 1986; joined Rural Press before returning to Fairfax as marketing director in 1994; became CEO of *Border Mail*, owned by Mott family, 1996-2007; engineered the 1999 move of the *Border Mail's* offices and printery across the NSW-Victorian border to Wodonga (*Australian Financial Review*, 8 September 2021; Rod Kirkpatrick, *Country Conscience*, p.403).

114.1.14 Rich list and the media

Time was when media owners featured highly among the richest people in Australia. When the *Weekend Australian* (18-19 September 2021) published its latest "The List: Australia's Richest 250", media owners featured thus: 13, Kerry Stokes (\$6.95bn); 24, Lachlan Murdoch (\$3.62bn).

Former media owner James Packer (\$4.01bn) was No. 21. Sharing the top of the list were tech startup gurus Mike Cannon-Brookes and Scott Farquhar (\$29.9bn)



114.2.1 Plans to give data to daily online service put on hold

Industry super fund AustralianSuper has delayed plans to sign up members to online news website, *TheNewDaily*, on an opt-out basis, as it awaits advice from the information commissioner (*Age*, 12 July 2021, p.23). The Australian Prudential Regulation Authority and the Australian Information Commissioner are investigating how data are shared between *TheNewDaily* and shareholder AustralianSuper.

114.2.2 Female-led finance column for BuzzFeed

BuzzFeed will launch a female-led finance column in October. The column, aimed mainly at young women, will provide tips on how to manage personal finances. The weekly column will be published on BuzzFeed Australia's website and will be led by Natalia Krslovic in collaboration with financial experts. A Tik Tok series will complement the column. The announcement follows a personal finance survey, conducted by BuzzFeed Australia, that found the majority of the site's Gen-Z and Millennial audience wanted to know how to budget, but didn't know where to start (*Telum Media Alert*, 28 July 2021).

114.2.3 SMH and Age to expand audio and digital teams

The *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age* plan to expand their audio and digital presentation teams. Nine new roles will be created across the mastheads in audio production, social media distribution and digital storytelling (*Telum Media Alert*, 25 August 2021).

114.2.4 Online news startup for Murray Bridge, SA

Murray Bridge News is an independent locally owned website and email newsletter based on South Australia's Murraylands (the main centre of which is Murray Bridge, pop. 20,000). Since its establishment in April 2020, *Murray Bridge News* has grown to a circulation list of 2000, including more than 500 paying subscribers. Peri Strathearn is the journalist (he calls himself the "managing editor"). He researches and writes all the stories, takes photos and makes videos, publishes online, posts on social media and via email, and responds to customer inquiries (*Telum Media Alert*, 11 August 2021).

114.2.5 Facebook ruling a legal minefield

Millions of Australians with Facebook or other social media pages could be taken to court or forced to pay damages to third parties if defamatory comments are posted on their sites even without their knowledge or consent (*Australian*, 9 September 2021). The High Court on 8 September upheld a ruling making anyone with a Facebook or other social media page liable for adverse material in the comments sections of those pages – even if they didn't know it was there. The decision, which has sparked calls for urgent defamation law reform, could have far-reaching consequences for institutions, companies, sporting organisations and individuals with pages on social media.

The High Court decision arose out of a case involving some of the nation's largest media companies and a former Don Dale Youth Detention Centre inmate, Dylan Voller. Voller is seeking damages for allegedly defamatory remarks left on media companies' Facebook pages below posts linking to stories written about him in 2016 and 2017. The media companies, which include Nine Entertainment, News Corp Australia, say they were not aware of the remarks until Voller

launched legal action, and that Facebook did not give them the ability to switch off the comments at that time.

A NSW court ruled earlier this year that the companies could be held liable for the material because they “participated” in its publication, even if unknowingly. The High Court on 8 September dismissed an appeal against that decision, clearing the way for Voller’s action to proceed. However, the decision could have a wider application because defamation law is not confined to media companies.

114.2.6 Facebook spurns small publishers

Popular lifestyle websites, Broadsheet Media, The Urban List and Concrete Playground, claim they could be forced to consolidate after Facebook shut down requests for funding to support their journalism (*Age*, 2 August 2021, p.25). The trio came together to negotiate payment by Facebook for the use of their content but the social media company rejected their requests. It is speculated that Facebook did not consider the independent media companies news outlets. The group said Facebook advised the three to focus on securing support from a public interest journalism fund, underwritten by the tech giant. The fund is to be launched with The Walkley Foundation.

Broadsheet founder Nick Shelton argues the three outlets do fall within the definition of news because it writes about business, culture and essential elements of Australian society.

114.2.7 Nine launches news podcast

Nine has launched a new daily podcast, *9News Lunch Podcast*. Episodes feature 10-minute news bulletins, summarizing the latest local, national and international news stories. Presenters are Nine Radio journalists, Amie Meehan and Natalie Peters. Episodes are released daily from 12.30pm and are available to listen to on 9news.com.au, Spotify, Google Podcasts and Nine Radio websites (*Telum Media Alert*, 8 September 2021).

114.2.8 Guardian Australia launches podcast and newsletter

Podcast: Guardian Australia has launched *Australia Reads*, a podcast that allows audiences to experience Australian feature writing. Presented by Jane Lee, podcast episodes draw on the Guardian Australia’s stable of journalism, covering narrative, investigative, politics, culture, environment and indigenous affairs stories. Three times a week—on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays—an editor selects and introduces a recent piece of journalism found particularly captivating. The article is read aloud by a pool of professional voice actors, with each episode lasting around 15 minutes (*Telum Media Alert*, 10 September 2021).

Newsletter: Guardian Australia has launched a fortnightly email newsletter, called *Rural Network*, dedicated to regional affairs. It is aimed at expanding Guardian Australia’s reach and re-imagining regional and rural news coverage. Gabrielle Chan is the editor, assisted by rural reporter Natasha May (*Telum Media Alert*, 17 September 2021).

114.2.9 Nick Bryant introduces *Journo* podcast

Journo is a new podcast presented by correspondent and author Nick Bryant that explores the issues, opportunities and challenges facing journalists and shaping the media industry. The podcast was created by the Judith Neilson Institute and is produced by Deadset Studios. Bryant, the BBC’s Australia correspondent, 2006-2013, has returned to Sydney at a time of media disruption and polarised politics. In *Journo*, Bryant explores how journalism around the world is changing, where it is heading, and why more people are questioning the media’s commitment to truth (Judith Neilson Institute website).

114.2.10 ACM has 100,000 digital subscribers

Australian Community Media (ACM) celebrated a key digital milestone at the close of August with its major mastheads reaching the 100,000-mark in digital subscribers (*Canberra Times*, 27 August 2021). “For an independent Australian media company in a very competitive landscape, this is such an important achievement in a relatively short period of time,” ACM executive chairman Antony Catalano said. ACM network’s leading subscriptions news sites include the *Canberra Times*, *Newcastle Herald*, *Albury’s Border Mail*, *Ballarat’s Courier*, and *Warrnambool’s Standard*.

Once part of the former Fairfax Media group that was absorbed into Nine Entertainment in 2018, ACM is now privately owned by Catalano and Alex Waislitz's ASX-listed Thorney Investment Group.

114.2.11 Digital publishers alliance being formed

Some of Australia's best known digital publications are using funding from tech giants Google and Facebook to form their first industry body (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 September 2021). Crikey publisher Private Media, Mamamia, The Squiz and Junkee Media are among 20 publishers that are coming together to form what will be known as the Digital Publishers' Alliance. The body will be led by Junkee's co-founder Tim Duggan and will aim to boost visibility with advertisers and give the publications a stronger voice on key industry issues.



3—CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS: COMMUNITY & PROVINCIAL

114.3.1 New Norfolk, Tas.: New paper thrives

Tasmanian startup newspaper *New Norfolk and Derwent Valley News* has celebrated its first birthday and increased its publication frequency from monthly to fortnightly. At an event in July, Tasmanian Legislative Council president Craig Farrell said the paper had been a success from the start. "A lot of people thought newspapers were dead but we have seen that you can have a top-class local product," Farrell said. His comments were echoed by Liberal Senator Eric Abetz who said the paper's first anniversary was an inspirational effort. Editor and publisher Damian Bester thanked all those who were supporting the paper as readers, advertisers and contributors. The paper is selling approximately 1200 copies each issue. "Thanks to very supportive advertisers and readers, the paper has never been as small as the 24-page product initially proposed," Bester said. "In the year when we envisaged producing 12 issues with a total of 288 pages, we instead published 14 editions with an amazing 412 pages."

114.3.2 Sky news channel for regions

Regional television viewers are seeing significant changes to their programming, including a new 24/7 news channel (*Australian*, 26 July 2021). The new Sky News Regional channel – on channel 53 or 56 depending on the location – has been available to free-to-air viewers across regional markets from 1 August. It is accessible through parts of NSW, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. The regional Sky News channel includes deals struck between Sky and Southern Cross Austereo and Sky and the WIN Network, and has a new three-hour live weekday breakfast program,

114.3.3 Boonah, Qld: 'Strong-arm' tactic alleged

The editor of a family-owned newspaper in Boonah, Queensland, says the state's local government misconduct investigator tried to "strong-arm" his publication in an "over the top" reaction to a seemingly innocuous article about a council dispute (*Australian*, 16 August 2021). In August, Queensland's Office of the Independent Assessor dropped an investigation into a councillor's public comments after the bi-weekly *Fassifern Guardian and Tribune* took the assessor to court when its editor and journalist were ordered to hand over their notes and front a coercive hearing. The saga began in July over a line in a story in the newspaper, in which a local councillor hit back at claims from the region's mayor over disunity in the council. Published on 3 July, the front-page story quoted Scenic Rim Regional Council councillor Derek Swanborough who wanted to shift his division into the neighbouring Gold Coast City Council.

“(Swanborough) said he had spoken with the state’s Independent Assessor, Kathleen Florian, as well as senior policy makers within the Department of Local Government who assured him that he was well within rights to advocate shifting the administrative boundaries of his electorate,” the ninth line of the story said. Four days after publication, the OIA’s media adviser phoned journalist Joe Hinchliffe and denied Florian had given such an assurance and asked for a correction. After assurances from Swanborough, the editor Drew Creighton decided against the correction, believing it was a matter of interpretation. This prompted the OIA to issue a press release to “correct the record”, denying Florian gave the assurance.

Two weeks later the OIA’s principal investigator phoned to say the matter was now an official misconduct investigation. Threatened with hefty fines, the editor and journalist were called to a hearing in Brisbane and were ordered not to discuss the matter with anyone. They were told to hand over their notes relating to the story and the subsequent conversations with the media adviser. The journalists were told they had no right to legal representation when meeting with the investigator unless they were “concerned about self-incrimination”.

Regardless, the newspaper called in its lawyers who claimed it was an unlawful and “improper exercise of power” that interfered with the “implied freedom of political communication”. In an application for a judicial review, they also said it was inappropriate that Florian would be the complainant, investigator and decision-maker in the matter. The proceeding was due to be ruled on by a judge in court, but the OIA dropped the entire investigation a few days earlier. The OIA will pay the newspaper \$1037 to cover the cost of its judicial review application.” See also ANHG 114.4.11 below.

114.3.4 Gunnedah, NSW: *Times* fills print gap left by *Independent*

Ian and Wanda Dunnet, proprietors of the *Courier*, Narrabri, and the *Wee Waa News*, started the weekly *Gunnedah Times* on 12 November 2020. Australian Community Media ceased printing the *Namoi Valley Independent* in August 2020. *Times* manager Wanda Dunnet said: “The Gunnedah community wanted its own printed product. People missed having their own paper.” The *Gunnedah Times* is a paid weekly, costs \$2, and usually has 28 pages. It is printed at Spotpress in the Sydney suburb of Marrickville as there is no other suitable small print site in NSW. “We were having our papers printed at the Tamworth press site,” Wanda Dunnet said. “However, ACM, which owns the business, stopped printing externals (non-ACM papers) in June. An expensive and logistical nightmare ensued, but we are grateful to have an option.”

114.3.5 Maroochydore and Mackay: Print editions return—weekly

On 27 August, the *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, and the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, Maroochydore, resumed printing after 14 months of digital-only news. The two papers are now appearing each Friday in print, with a Friday-to-Sunday date imprint (e.g. 27-29 August). Nadja Fleet is the *Sunshine Coast Daily* editor and Rae Wilson is the *Daily Mercury* editor.

114.3.6 ACM papers in print: listed with publication frequency

At the end of August the Australian Newspaper History Group drew up the lists below from research on each of the newspaper titles within the ACM Ad Centre “Brands” site. The main purpose was to discover those regional newspapers, owned by Australian Community Media or part of its advertising sales network, that are in print and their frequency of publication. Of the 108 regional titles listed, 93 are in print and 15 are digital only. Of the print titles, 13 were published daily, two tri-weekly, 14 bi-weekly, and 64 weekly. Of the suburban titles, those published for the Liverpool and Campbelltown-Camden areas were suspended from printing during the Sydney Covid lockdown that was operating at the time. ANHG has drawn up these lists because ACM has twice this year refused to supply such lists.

Twelve of the 14 bi-weekly titles have since become weeklies, as you will read below.

Dailies (Monday to Saturday unless otherwise stated):

ACT: *Canberra Times* (Mon.-Sun.). **NSW:** *Border Mail*, Albury; *Central Western Daily*, Orange; *Illawarra Mercury*, Wollongong; *Newcastle Herald*; *Northern Daily Leader*, Tamworth; *Western*

Advocate, Bathurst. **Victoria:** *Advertiser*, Bendigo; *Courier*, Ballarat; *News*, Shepparton (Mon.-Sat., owned by McPherson Media Group); *Standard*, Warrnambool. **Tasmania:** *Advocate*, Burnie; *Examiner*, Launceston (Mon.-Sun.).

Tri-weeklies:

NSW: *Area News*, Griffith (Mon./Wed./Fri.). **Victoria:** *Wimmera Mail-Times*, Horsham, (Mon./Wed./Fri.).

Bi-weeklies:

NSW: *Bega District News* (Tues./Fri.); *Courier*, Narrabri (Tues./Thurs.); *Cowra Guardian* (Tues./Fri.); *Forbes Advocate* (Tues./Fri.); *Grenfell Record* (Wed./Fri.); *Irrigator*, Leeton (Tues./Fri.); *Lithgow Mercury* (Tues./Fri.); *Macleay Argus*, Kempsey (Tues./Fri.); *Manning River Times*, Taree (Wed./Fri.); *Mudgee Guardian* (Tues./Fri.); *Parkes Champion-Post* (Tues./Fri.); *South Coast Register*, Nowra (Wed./Fri.); *Young Witness* (Tues./Fri.). **Victoria:** *Latrobe Valley Express* (Mon./Thurs.).

[In the week of 19-25 September, 12 of the 14 bi-weeklies became weeklies. The two that remained bi-weekly were the family-owned Narrabri *Courier* and the Leeton *Irrigator*. The publication days for the 12 that became weeklies are: **NSW:** *Bega District News* (Fri.); *Cowra Guardian* (Thurs.); *Forbes Advocate* (Thurs.); *Grenfell Record* (Thurs.); *Lithgow Mercury* (Fri.); *Macleay Argus*, Kempsey (Fri.); *Manning River Times*, Taree (Fri.); *Mudgee Guardian* (Thurs.); *Parkes Champion-Post* (Thurs.); *South Coast Register*, Nowra (Wed.); *Young Witness* (Fri.). **Victoria:** *Latrobe Valley Express* (Mon..)]

Weeklies:

NSW: *Armidale Express* (Fri.); *Bay Post*, Batemans Bay (Wed.); *Blayney Chronicle* (Thurs.); *Boorowa News* (Thurs.); *Byron Shire Echo* (Wed.); *Camden Haven Courier*, Laurieton (Thurs.); *Canowindra News* (Wed.); *Cessnock Advertiser* (Wed.); *Dubbo Mailbox Shopper* (Wed.); *Dungog Chronicle* (Wed.); *Eurobodalla Shire Independent* (Thurs.); *Glen Innes Examiner* (Thurs.); *Gloucester Advocate* (Wed.); *Goulburn Post* (Wed.); *Great Lakes Advocate*, Forster (Thurs.); *Inverell Times* (Thurs.); *Hunter Valley News* (Wed.); *Magnet*, Eden (Thurs.); *Maitland Mercury* (Fri.); *Merimbula News Weekly* (Wed.); *Mid Coast Observer*, Macksville (Wed.); *Midstate Observer*, Orange (Thurs.); *Milton Ulladulla Times* (Wed.); *Moree Champion* (Thurs.); *Narooma News* (Wed.); *Oberon Review* (Thurs.); *Port Macquarie News* (Fri.); *Port Stephens Examiner* (Thurs.); *Singleton Argus* (Thurs.); *Shoalhaven & Nowra News* (Fri.); *Southern Highlands News*, Bowral (Wed.); *Tamworth Times* (Wed.); *Tenterfield Star* (Thurs.); *Wee Waa News* (Tues.); *Western Times*, Bathurst (Thurs.).

Queensland and NT: *Beaudesert Times* (Wed.); *Goondiwindi Argus* (Wed.); *Jimboomba Times* (Wed.); *Redland City Bulletin* (Wed.); *Katherine Times*, NT (Wed.). **South Australia:** *Border Chronicle* (Wed.); *Coastal Leader* (Wed.); *Port Lincoln Times* (Thurs.); *Flinders News* (Wed.); *Islander*, Kangaroo Island (Thurs.); *Murray Valley Standard*, Murray Bridge (Thurs.); *Naracoorte Herald* (Thurs.); *Port Pirie Recorder* (Thurs.); *Victor Harbor Times* (Thurs.); *Transcontinental*, Port Augusta (Wed.); *Whyalla News* (Thurs.).

Victoria: *Ararat Advertiser* (Fri.); *Moyne Gazette*, Port Fairy (Thurs.); *Stawell Times-News* (Fri.); *Western Port News* (Wed.); *Southern Peninsula News* (Tues.); *Mornington News* (Tues.); *Chelsea-Mordialloc-Mentone News* (Wed.); *Frankston Times* (Tues.).

Western Australia: *August & Margaret River Mail* (Wed.); *Bunbury Mail* (Wed.); *Busselton 7 Dunsborough Mail* (Wed.); *Mandurah Mail* (Thurs.); *Great Southern Weekender*, Albany (Thurs.).

Digital only (all are from NSW except Queensland's *North West Star*, a former daily): **NSW:** *Braidwood Times*; *Crookwell Gazette*; *Queanbeyan Age*; *Yass Tribune*; *Namoi Valley Independent*, Gunnedah; *Muswellbrook Chronicle*; *Scone Advocate*; *Cootamundra Herald*; *Eastern Riverina Chronicle*, Henty; *Harden-Murrumburrah Express*; *Southern Cross*, Junee; *Narromine News*; *Nyngan Observer*; *Wellington Times*. **Queensland:** *North West Star*, Mount Isa.

Suburbans, Sydney: *Blue Mountains Gazette* (Wed.); *Fairfield City Champion* (Wed.); *Hawkesbury Courier* (Thurs.); *Hawkesbury Gazette* (Wed.); *Liverpool City Champion* (normally

Wed., but suspended during Covid lockdown); *St George and Southerland Shire Leader* (Wed.); *Camden-Narellan Advertiser* and *Campbelltown Macarthur Advertiser* (normally Wed., but suspended during Covid lockdown); *Auburn Review* (Tues.); *Bankstown-Canterbury Torch* (Wed.).

Suburbans Perth: *Examiner Newspapers*, Armadale, Gosnells, Serpentine/Jarrahdale (Thurs.); *Examiner*, Canning (Wed.); *Echo News*, Kalamunda ((Sat.); *Fremantle Herald + Cockburn City Herald + Melville City Herald North + Melville City Herald South* (Sat.); *Post Newspapers* (Sat.); *Perth Voice* (Sat.).

114.3.7 ACM sets sights on national advertisers

ACM has launched a major marketing campaign to lure national advertisers, its first concerted bid for a bigger slice of the national ad market since moving to private ownership under executive chairman Antony Catalano (*Newcastle Herald*, 16 August 2021, p.18). The “ACM ConnectNow” campaign encourages national advertising agencies and their clients to use the ACM network of 142 mastheads across the country to reach print and digital audiences of 6.4 million a month.

114.3.8 News Corp deliveries cease in some regional towns

News Corp ceased delivering its capital-city newspaper titles to certain parts of regional Queensland after 26 September (ABC online news, 4 September 2021). Towns further west than Charters Towers in the north, Emerald in central Queensland, and in some parts of the state’s south-west have been affected. Distribution has ceased in such regional centres as Mount Isa. Charleville in the state’s south-west is unaffected, after News Corp organised a cheaper, alternative freight arrangement. At the 11th hour, Longreach, which was to have been affected, made arrangements that meant deliveries would continue. Mount Isa has also been making these efforts. Residents in impacted towns no longer have access to a physical daily newspaper covering state, national, and international affairs.

114.3.9 Launceston: New editor appointed

Corey Martin, a Launceston local, has been named the new editor of the city’s daily, the *Examiner* (*Examiner*, 14 September 2021). Martin, 30, started with his home-town masthead as a cadet reporter fresh out of Launceston College in 2009, when Fiona Reynolds was the editor. Among the leadership roles he has filled at the paper have been chief of staff, acting night news editor, acting sports editor, deputy editor and, most recently, acting editor.

114.3.10 Casino: print edition ceases

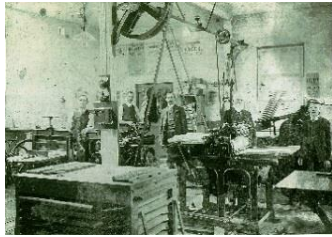
Susanna Freymark, editor, *Richmond River Independent*, Casino, writes in the printed issue, No. 63 of the free weekly, 29 September 2021 (the final printed issue for the foreseeable future):

My dream was to edit an independent newspaper free from the shackles of a corporation. To write news stories that I thought mattered rather than stories that would “sell”. It was a big dream. I had no idea when this paper started out 63 issues ago (see ANHG 109.3.10) how crucial the experience of sub-editors Michael Burlace and Kevin McDonald would be... Halfway through the year, we found our rhythm and putting the paper together became easier, although still time consuming.

Now though, my dream has faltered. Covid has hit the region hard. Our paper relies solely on business advertising. If business is having a tough time, so are we. Ad staff Alison Martin and Simon Wilkinson tried everything to bring in more money. Each slow week took the paper closer to the edge. I was mourning its end before it came. When the [community] association’s committee announced a four-issue pause, I couldn’t bear the thought of a vacuum of local news. I know there are other news outlets and ABC news in particular does a great job. But it was the stories in the quiet forgotten corners and the stories of human fragility and strength that I feared would be missed. The reporter in me couldn’t bear it. More so because of these uncertain Covid times.

I decided to leave, fearing that the “pandemic pause” of the paper could go on for a long time. I set up an online news service to carry on doing what I love. Telling your stories. All being well, it goes live at 5pm today (29 September). Check out IndyNR.com – you can type it in capitals or lower case

or a mix. I hope you like it. The NR is for Northern Rivers. My focus will continue to be on Kyogle and Richmond Valley LGAs and around their edges – where I've worked for seven years. It's a new adventure. A different dream.



4-NEWSPAPER HISTORY

114.4.1 'Plant of chequered growth': Newspapers over 104 years

Sydney Morning Herald, Tuesday 31 December 1907, p.10: Journalism in Australia has been a plant of chequered growth. No one would have dreamed when the first copy of the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* issued damp from the primitive press on which it was printed in Macquarie-place in 1803, fifteen years after the first settlers landed, that it was destined to be the precursor of the Australian newspaper system of to-day. The *Gazette* was first issued as a vehicle for government notices, and the student of early history in Sydney finds today in its brown pages some strange and curious facts to light up his researches. It was the precursor of the *Government Gazette* of the present, and poor as its beginnings were in the hands of George Howe, its first printer, it struggled on for [nearly] 40 years.

If we attempted to present a connected record of newspaper development in Australia, we should have to cross Bass's Straits to Tasmania, or Van Diemen's Land, as it was then known, for the next example. It was called the *Derwent Star*, issued in Hobart in 1810. The little island seems to have possessed some journalistic enterprise in those dark days, for the next two papers in this part of the world—the *Van Diemen's Land Gazette* and the *Hobart Town Gazette* also appeared there before another move was made on the mainland. But when it came it was auspicious. On October 14, 1824, the *Australian* first set the people of old Sydney talking and wondering at the freedom of its views and its bold expression of the aspirations of the younger Australia of those official-ridden days. The *Australian* was in good hands. William Charles Wentworth, popularly regarded as the author of the New South Wales Constitution of a quarter of a century later, joined with Dr. Wardell in conducting and writing it. Both these young men were fresh from an English university, both were full of enthusiasm for popular liberty, and Wentworth had a young Australian's belief in his country's future and both the determination and the ability to help to carve it out.

The new paper struck a new note, which has never since ceased to vibrate in and through the Australian continent. The Governor of the day, Brisbane, had prepared the way—probably under the persuasions of Wentworth and his friends—to allow liberty of comment to the press. This was a departure from the iron-bound discipline of the earlier military rule, and it is needless to say that it was instantly but fairly used. The conditions produced favoured the beginning of another journal, which did good service to the cause of Australian self-government, and which also won a high place for itself and its owner in the esteem of the public. This was the *Monitor*, 1826, edited by Edward Smith Hall. But in the meantime, Darling had replaced Brisbane, and resented the freedom of comment on the part of the press especially in connection with some especially atrocious official outrages committed under his authority. Hall went to prison, the proprietors of both papers were heavily fined, an Act was passed to impose pains and penalties on the press and finally both the *Australian* and the *Monitor* were crushed out of existence. It has to be recorded to our shame that some of the legislation of those days is still in force in New South Wales and that it inspires and influences the traditional practices of the Courts of the mother State.

Passing rapidly from this Cimmerian period of our history—during which, however it is just to place on record again that Chief Justice Forbes stood manfully in the way of Governor Darling's attempt to break up the infant newspaper enterprise of Australia—we note as the next important landmark, the first publication of the *Sydney Herald*, now the *Sydney Morning Herald*, on April

18, 1831. The social and political conditions of that time were, of course, still very different from what they are now, and the *Herald* of 76 years ago under the proprietorship of Messrs Ward, Stephens, Frederick Michael Stokes, and William McGarvie, presented a proportionate contrast in every way with that great newspaper of the present. It then appeared once a week, and twice in 1833, thrice in 1837, and began its career as a daily in 1840, when the Hon. John Fairfax, MLC, and the Hon. Charles Kemp, MLC, held it in joint ownership until 1852, when the farmer, who founded the present firm, assumed possession, admitting his son, Mr. Charles James Fairfax, into partnership. In 1857 Mr. James; R. Fairfax, now Sir James Fairfax, joined the proprietary. which has continued the publication of the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Sydney Mail* since under the title of John Fairfax and Sons.

The history of the *Sydney Morning Herald* is the history of Australia since the middle of the nineteenth, century, the period during which by far the greater part of our colonial nation and political development took place, During all the early struggles for free institutions and self-government, for the cessation of transportation, for the acquisition of popular privileges, it was always fought on the liberal side on sound and logical principles. Other attempts at journalism, extreme in their views and radical in their utterances, came and passed away. The *Herald* stood staunch and firm and had the satisfaction of seeing its policy steadily forced into law and general acceptance. It has left its mark on the making of Australia as no other influence could or can, and it has never departed from the high tone which from the first it adopted as the result of its conductors' absolute faith in the Australian future and destiny. It is true that the individual journalist's work is usually done in the dark, but it remains. In the early days of the struggle for their first Constitution it exercised a judicious influence on the evolution of modern conditions, just as at a later date it fought a strenuous battle for that inevitable federation which has now united the different colonies together into one solid Commonwealth. The *Herald* takes admitted rank among the world's great newspapers. Its excellent news and cable services, its literary standard, its general average of interest as a trusted organ of public information and opinion, its phenomenal business connection, all these things with others go to make for it the unique position it occupies, not in the Australian system alone.

On the mechanical side ... the *Sydney, Morning, Herald* office is equipped from roof to basement with the best and most modern machinery and appliances in all departments. Australia is so much in touch with the old world and the United States in every branch of mechanical improvement and so quick to assimilate what is effective that the *Herald* leaves nothing in this respect to be desired. [Some] of the essential conditions of newspaper production in Sydney, the Australian capital (sic), are markedly different from those which make the same task very much easier say, in London. Here we have vast distances to cover, and we must cover them every day, and every hour. We have to collect our news from the four corners of that State, and from the seven (sic) States of Australasia. We must regularly and punctually, distribute each day's record of this collected news, with comment on the same, without delay over the same area. In the State of New South Wales alone, the railway termini are from 400 to 600 miles away from the metropolis. Beyond those points vast distances have often to be covered by pack-horse posts and the mail coaches. Yet the news must come in and the newspaper must go out, and with an admirably organised system of distribution, both ends are secured.

Among the papers. which followed the *Herald* were the *Colonist*, owned by Mr Lang; the *Atlas* in 1841, to which Martin, Forster, and Lord Sherbrooke contributed pungent articles of a political character; *Bent's News*, the once popular "Heads of the People"; *Bell's Life in Sydney*, afterwards absorbed by the *Sydney Mail*, issued from the *Herald* office In 1860; and the *Shipping Gazette*, from the same office, and similarly absorbed. The *Empire* ran from [1850-1858], Mr. Henry Parkes editing, and in the hands of Messrs. Hanson and Bennett till 1874, when it merged into the *Evening News*, founded by Samuel Bennett in 1867 [who established] the *Town and Country* journal [in] 1870. The *Echo* began its career in 1875, the *Daily Telegraph* in 1879, and the *Star* [forerunner of the *Sun*] in 1887. [The entire article has not been reproduced.]

114.4.2 Townsville Bulletin at 140

On Monday, 6 September, the *Townsville Bulletin* published a 12-page feature marking its 140th anniversary, which occurred on Sunday, 5 September. The paper began as a bi-weekly, became a tri-weekly the following year and a daily from 1 January 1883. Craig Warhurst, editor in 2021,

said when he became the editor of the *Gympie Times*, he received one management report a week. It contained data from newspaper sales two weeks earlier. “My one report a week is gone, replaced with three reports each morning and a suite of dashboards that tell us how we are going each second of every day (with digital news). We have new subscriber numbers, page-view numbers, time-on-site numbers, engagement scores and even a scorecard for the amount of non-subscribers trying to read each individual story.”

114.4.3 Making the editor laugh, in 1978 and later

John Sylvester, email to *Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald* readers, 17 July 2021: On my first day in journalism, I made the editor laugh when I asked, “Where is my office?” I have had 28 editors since and have made many of them laugh, usually when asking for a pay rise. One threatened to punch me, one (a middle-aged male) kissed me on the lips when I presented him with a scoop, one couldn’t spell my name, one looked perplexed when I gave him cash as an attempted bribe to get on Page 1, and another was bemused that during a one-on-one performance review I gave him seven out of ten – he lost points for not running enough crime stories. Apparently, he wanted to rate me, not the other way around.

Back on that first day I took a quick look around and saw there was only one office. The editor’s. He looked me up and down. I was wearing skin-tight flairs, a fetching body-shirt and a sports jacket made largely of polyester. Protruding from the front pocket of the pants was a gold pen, a 21st birthday present. “Leave the pen at home, son. It will get stolen here,” was his first piece of advice. I thought, “You cynical old coot.” Three days later it was stolen.

My first two lessons in journalism were thus:

- 1) Listen to your editor; and
- 2) Don’t trust everyone in the newsroom.

I was a graduate cadet on one-year probation. I began slowly, failed to get any traction, and feared I would be a victim of the December cull. Some of the older reporters had fallen out of love with the trade and their negativity tended to drain the energy from you. Then I was sent for a stint at Police Rounds (a shared office in the Russell Street police building). There was no toilet, no air-conditioning and it stunk of cold pizza and warm beer. I loved it.

The ABC guy would get drunk and sleep for the last two hours of his shift. On cold afternoons he occasionally brought in his baby goats from his hobby farm. One of the *Age* guys drove a sports car and occasionally carried a small pistol. I worked with a small team of guys, all under 30 and all committed to the paper and each other. They thought I was a self-important smart-arse who needed to be taken down a peg. I disagreed. Eventually I was accepted into the team, and we became life-long friends. We bashed out stories on battered typewriters and filed over the phone to copytakers who could type a million words a second.

If we drank too much and needed to drive to my house (shared with another “Hound from the Round”), there was a sneaky detour down disused railway tracks that avoided breathalysers. No one understood why the shock absorbers on the rounds’ car needed replacing so often (or the backseat cleaned of sand after impromptu 2am police rounds’ beach parties).

One reporter was suspended after he and a group of detectives in the “rounds truck” attempted to run the newspaper chairman’s chauffeur-driven Rolls Royce off the road. An office whip-around meant he made more money in his enforced week off than he lost in wages. (Times have obviously changed.)

In one office the indoor cricket became so competitive most of the windows were broken. Eventually we replaced them out of our own pocket. Two weeks later the 1986 Russell Street Bombing blew them out again.

I started in 1978 and I keep hearing how everything in journalism has changed. I’ll give you the tip. Nothing has changed (except the lost skill of railway track driving). Now we are told to use different platforms – print, online and podcasts.

(Here is the self-promotion bit. We've just launched the fourth series of the *Naked City* podcast. Is it any good you ask? Put it this way, the tuxedo has been dry-cleaned for the anticipated Walkley call-up.)

The *Naked City* podcast gives me a chance to catch up with the people who make the news. It is a reminder that while issues are worthy, it is the people who are interesting.

114.4.4 Century of the *Open Road*

The *Open Road*, the monthly publication of the NRMA—the National Road and Motorists' Association (NSW)—published its centenary edition in July/August 2021. Here are some edited extracts:

[Page 17] On 15 July 1921, a small printing press began rolling out the first edition of the NRMA's member magazine. Fewer than 1000 issues were printed, which was the size of the NRMA's membership at the time. Known originally as *Good Roads*, this publication began as the brainchild of the NRMA's first president (and former Australian Prime Minister) J.C. Watson. The print run is now 1.3 million. The magazine was renamed *Open Road* in 1927.

Open Road is one of the oldest and most-read magazines in Australia. Launched a year after the foundation of the NRMA to inform members about the plight of NSW roads, its first iterations were a small black and white magazine. The photos were uninspiring and the features were largely about the need for roads, yet it was a hit from the start.

[Page 20] In 1955, preparing the magazine for postage involved hard, manual labour. An article in the March 1955 issue explained what went on behind the scenes in the wrapping room:

When your local postman puts the latest issue of the *Open Road* in your letterbox towards the beginning of each month, the chain is completed of one of the greatest activities of its kind in Australia—the wrapping and posting of a quarter of a million copies of this journal. To be precise, the *Open Road* ranks as the largest item of newspaper bulk postage in the Commonwealth, both as to weight and number of copies. The story begins in the Records Department of NRMA House, Sydney. Upon your enrolment as a member, your name and address are typed on a special stencil, which is fed monthly (along with the stencils for all other NRMA members) into an automatic addressing machine which addresses the wrappers for the *Open Road*. The mountain of papers comes to the wrapping hall on the Monday. By the Friday at 4pm the 250,000 copies—weighing about 18 tons—are all in the post. [One ton equals 907.18 kg.]

114.4.5 Flashback 100 (4): Entire paper available on net

- This is the fourth in a series of flashbacks to items in the *ANHG Newsletter 100* issues ago (20 years ago). This extract is from *ANHG* No. 14, September 2001.

In what the *Australian* claims as a world first, its entire edition is available on the Internet (*Australian*, 9 August 2001, p.1). Ground-breaking technology allows readers to download the paper as it rolls off the press each day. Mark Day writes (*Australian*, Media liftout, 9 August 2001, p.9): “Suddenly, the Holy Grail. This is what we've dreamed of for decades – an electronic form of distribution of newspapers. Not reworked, rejigged website information centres under a familiar masthead, but the real thing, page by page, stories and pictures laid out on screen in exactly the same form as the printed version.” (See also 14.61.18)

114.4.6 More SA newspapers on Trove

Thanks to the fundraising efforts of South Australian community groups, there are now another 27,222 South Australian newspaper pages available in Trove. Hot off the scanners, the State Library of South Australian partnership with Trove has recently made available the following South Australian newspapers: *Coromandel*, Blackwood, 1945-1970; *Coromandel Times*, Blackwood, 1970-1976; *Blackwood Magazine*, Blackwood, 1914.

Trove thanks Kay Leverett of Blackwood, formerly a senior subject specialist at the University of Adelaide's Barr Smith Library, for funding these editions. Leverett also sponsored the *Blackwood Magazine* which is now available in Trove's Magazines section: The Port Lincoln History Group

funded the following: *Port Lincoln, Tumby and West Coast Recorder*, Port Lincoln, 1904-1909; *West Coast Recorder*, Port Lincoln, 1909-1942; *Prospector*, Fitzroy, 1978-1984.

Trove's Beth Robertson said: "Before we could add the *Coromandel* and the *Prospector*, we required copyright clearances for their post-1954 issues. To track copyright ownership for the *Coromandel* we looked on Ancestry.com and found a family tree owner who helped us determine that the *Coromandel* is an orphan work due to the family circumstances of the owner/editor Donald Norman Flower who died in 1997. An orphan work is where the copyright owner either cannot be identified or cannot be located to ask permission to use the work. The Prospect Local History Group were able to contact a co-founder of the *Prospector* who responded: "I am delighted that you are taking this step to preserve and make more accessible that paper's wit, whimsy and community commentary. The formal publishing body (Prospect Information Association Inc) no longer exists but I imagine all who were involved with the paper would be thrilled to hear of the initiative and lend their ready agreement."

114.4.7 Newsboys in Melbourne

Sarah Matthews, of State Library Victoria, wrote the following article on Melbourne newsboys for the Ask A Librarian blog, Collection Spotlights, Our Stories, Victorian History, on the SLV website, 30 August 2021.

From as far back as the 1850s, newsboys were a common sight on the streets of Melbourne. Most were poor and many were illiterate. Some boys had no homes to go to at all. The boys would purchase newspapers by the dozen, and then sell them individually to passers-by for a profit. Once they ran out of papers to sell, some boys would work on into the night, selling matches to drunks in the city's public houses. When not selling papers, the boys had a reputation for roaming the alleyways: "whiffing cigarettes, chewing tobacco, swearing and fighting", or gambling their earnings in the game, "pitch and toss" (*Herald*, 13 October 1887).

It was, by all accounts, a wretched existence, but Melbourne's newsboys were not without their friends and allies. In the early 1880s, two men were working hard to make a difference. Social reformer William Forster established the Try Society for wayward boys in Toorak, while on the other side of town, journeyman hatter William Groom started his "Excelsior" classes. Both groups had a focus on self-improvement. By 1884 they had merged, and "Try Excelsior" classes were forming all over Melbourne.

In 1885, William Forster introduced a Try Excelsior class exclusively for *Herald* newsboys. Classes were originally held in Little Collins Street, close to Treasury Gardens. For a small entrance fee,

the boys would receive access to reading material, games and gym equipment. By 1887, the *Herald* newsboys' class had grown to 200 members, and demand was showing no signs of abating. The land boom in Melbourne had increased the gap between the rich and poor, and times were tough for street children in Melbourne.

Things worsened with the passing of The Neglected Children's Act in 1887, which approved the detainment of vagrant and/or neglected children. Children deemed to be living an 'immoral or depraved life' were sent to reformatory schools or placed into the care of the Department for Neglected



A paper boy outside the Criterion Hotel in Greater Collins Street, Melbourne, 1854. Lithograph by S.T.Gill; [H12610](#), SLV Collection.

Children. In 1891, a special committee was convened by the Education Department to consider what was to be done about the city's neglected children. It was estimated that upwards of 10,000 children were not attending school at all (*Illustrated Australian News*, 8 November 1890). The report recommended that newsboys should be licensed and wear a badge that displayed where they went to school. No boys under 17 years of age should be allowed to trade after 8pm [on weekdays] or 9pm on Saturdays. Girls under 18 years of age were forbidden to apply for a licence at all. By the turn of the century, many saw newsboys as a public nuisance. Lawmakers began charging them under an obscure council by-law, which prescribed that:

No person shall make any violent outcry, noise or disturbance in or on any of the streets, carriageways, footways, or public places within the City of Melbourne, to the annoyance of any person or persons frequenting the same ... (*Herald*, 29 June 1903).

Constable A.E. Strickland spearheaded the charge, accosting newsboys on the streets and charging them with making a "violent outcry" (*Truth*, 28 June 1903). Many of the newsboys ended up in court, where they were fined and given a week to pay. If they defaulted on their payment, the boys were sent to prison for seven days.

Boys could also be charged for using fictitious headlines to lure passersby to purchase their newspapers. In February 1914, newsboy John Quilty was fined one pound for calling out: "*Herald*, final edition, full account of the Fern Tree Gully railway accident." The headline was a fiction: there was no accident.

The powers that be were not amused. "No one desires to see people fleeced by boys who invent crimes and railway disasters, which have never happened," the *Herald* grumbled. "What happened to the boy at court yesterday should be a lesson to others" (*Herald*, 20 February 1914).

Thanks to the efforts of child welfarists such as "newsboys' Godmother", Edith Onians, things began to improve in the 1920s. The introduction of the Street Trading Act meant that no boy under the age of 12 was allowed to sell newspapers in Melbourne, and those between the ages of 12 and 14 could only do so with a licence. As the twentieth century rolled on, views towards the city's newsboys softened, until eventually they were viewed with benevolence. There was even a "Newsboy of the Year" award.

114.4.8 Boonah has been a newspaper town for 120 years

Boonah, a town in the Scenic Rim district of Queensland, has marked 120 years of newspaper publication. The *Fassifern Advocate*, established on 13 July 1901, was the town's first paper. It began as a weekly and appeared bi-weekly from shortly before the town's second newspaper, the *Fassifern Guardian* began publication in May 1904. The *Guardian* swallowed the *Advocate* on 1 December 1912 and the first issue that indicated the incorporation of the *Advocate*, appeared five days later. Last year the *Fassifern Guardian* expanded its title to become the *Fassifern Guardian & Tribune* and expanded its coverage of news to include Ipswich. This followed the closure of the print edition of the Ipswich daily, the *Queensland Times*.

The *Fassifern Guardian & Tribune* published a two-page feature on 17 July 2021, headed "Celebrating our 120th Anniversary". As noted above, the *Guardian* actually began in 1904 and so it is 117 years old. It cannot piggy-back on the former title, the *Fassifern Advocate*, and claim an extra three years of age.



5—RECENTLY PUBLISHED

114.5.1 Book

Burrowes, Tim, *Media Unmade: Australian Media's Most Disruptive Decade*. Hardie Grant, 2021, \$34.99. Reviewed by Stephen Brook, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 August 2021.

Dodd, Andrew, and Ricketson, Matthew, *Upheaval: Disrupted Lives in Journalism*. UNSW Press, 2021. \$39.99. Reviewed by Stephen Brook. See above (Burrowes).

Fairfax, Warwick, *Crucible Leadership: Embrace Your Trials to Lead a Life of Significance*. Available in Australia, 19 October. The author is the “young” Warwick whose attempted privatisation of the Fairfax newspaper company when he was 26 led to the Fairfax family losing control of the company.

114.5.2 Articles

Ackland, Richard, “A long, expensive tour of libel land”, *Saturday Paper*, 3-9 July 2021, p.7. The author suggests the future of investigative reporting in Australia hangs in the balance as the Ben Roberts-Smith libel action against Nine newspapers progresses.

Bennett, Ebony, “Why freedom of the press matters”, *Canberra Times*, 26 June 2021, p.37. Unless Australians fight to protect the media, the media won’t be here much longer to protect our democracy.

Day, Mark, “Take the fear out of Covid”, *Australian*, 27 September 2021, p.20. Discusses the changing news values and treatment during the Covid-19 pandemic. He says individual editors and the media collectively should now be projecting a story of confidence, not fear.

Drevikovsky, Janek, “Roberts-Smith faces court”, *Saturday Paper*, 19-25 June 2021, p.3. Taking the stand in his defamation case against Nine newspapers, former SAS soldier Ben Roberts-Smith says allegations he assaulted a girlfriend and committed war crimes have “ruined” his life. This is one of a number of serious examinations of the Roberts-Smith defamation action against the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Age* and *Canberra Times* that appeared in various newspapers in June and July. See Ackland article above and Lindell and McKenzie/Masters article below.

Lindell, Jasper, “On Canberra’s pulse for 95 years”, *Canberra Times*, 4 September 2021, p.11. An article to mark the completion of 95 years of publication by the *Canberra Times*. See Ackland and Drevikovsky article articles above and McKenzie/Masters article below.

McKenzie, Nick, and Masters, Chris, “Powerful interests who don’t want anti-war crimes prosecuted”, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 August 2021, pp.12-13.

Toohey, Brian, “The rise and rise of Australian authoritarianism”, *Saturday Paper*, 17-23 July 2021, pp.10-11. As Australia’s security laws become more authoritarian—on the basis of supposed threats from terrorism and China—their lack of oversight threatens our democratic foundations.

Samios, Zoe, “Risk of tweets blur (sic) boundaries”, *Age*, 12 July 2021, p.23. Social media is an important way to distribute information to the public. But what happens if a journalist’s tweet results in legal action?

Simons, Margaret, “The experiment begins”, *Saturday Paper*, 24-30 July 2021, pp.10-11. A former journalist and son of a line of management consultants, Mark Scott arrives at the University of Sydney as an unlikely vice-chancellor. Can his curious talents turn around a struggling sector?

Swan, David, “It was mortifying”, *Weekend Australian Magazine*, 24-25 July 2021, pp.18-21. When venture capital investor Elaine Stead came under sustained attack from a gossip columnist, there was only one way out: she had to take on her chief tormentor. See ANHG 111.1.14, “Businesswoman wins suit against columnist”.

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