



**Ginger Meggs**, Australia's longest-running and most popular comic strip, was created in the early 1920s by Jimmy Bancks. The strip follows the escapades of a red-haired prepubescent mischief-maker who lives in an inner suburban working-class household. While employed at the *Bulletin*, Bancks submitted cartoons to the Sydney *Sunday Sun*, where he began his "Us Fellers" strip in 1921 in the "Sunbeams" section of the *Sunday Sun*. Ginger first appeared in "Us Fellers" on 13 November 1921, drawn by Bancks. When Bancks died on 1 July 1952 from a heart attack, Ron Vivian took over the strip, followed by Lloyd Piper, James Kemsley and since 2007, Jason Chatfield. See ANHG 102.4.1 and 2 below.

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**Deadline for the next *Newsletter*: 31 July 2019.**

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

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



## Index to issues 1-100

The Australian Newspaper History Group has accepted a quotation for the indexing of issues 76 to 100 of the *ANHG Newsletter*, with the index to be incorporated in a master index covering Nos. 1 to 100. The quote is about \$650 more than the funds we hold. Because the index is so important to facilitating access to the wealth of material in the *Newsletter*, we have accepted the quote and are appealing for at least 26 people to contribute \$25 each to the compiling of the index. Your contribution will, of course, entitle you to an electronic copy of the index. It will also earn you the gratitude of many historians over the coming years. [Banking details foot of Page 20.]

Please note: I will be overseas from 10 June to 18 July. Victor Isaacs, at [abvi@iinet.net.au](mailto:abvi@iinet.net.au), will act as editor during my absence. – **Rod Kirkpatrick, Editor.**

### 102.1.1 Geoffrey Rush awarded damages; newspaper appeals

Geoffrey Rush has been awarded \$850,000 in aggravated damages and could pocket millions more for losing movie roles while fighting a defamation case, after a Federal Court judge found a claim against the Oscar winner by an actress of inappropriate behaviour was not “credible” or “reliable” (*Australian*, 12 April 2019). In a colourful judgment, Justice Michael Wigney attacked the *Daily Telegraph*’s “sensationalist” account of harassment claims by actress Eryn Jean Norvill, who he also dismissed as “prone to exaggeration and embellishment”. Both actors emerged from court on 11 April saying there were no winners in the case. The case was sparked by front-page articles the Sydney paper published in late 2017, reporting that Rush was the subject of a complaint, of “inappropriate behaviour”, by the young actress during the Sydney Theatre Company’s production of *King Lear*.

Rush, 67, denied the allegation, and said the Telegraph’s articles portrayed him as a “sexual predator” and a “pervert”. Justice Wigney found that all of the defamatory imputations claimed by Rush’s lawyers were contained in the articles. He also found the newspaper had failed to establish the allegations were true, saying he believed Rush’s account, backed up by his friend director Neil Armfield and two other actors, including Robyn Nevin, and did not accept the alleged victim’s version, which was supported by actor Mark Winter.

Norvill gave evidence during the trial last year that Rush “deliberately” touched her right breast during a *King Lear* preview, caressed her back against her wishes, sent her suggestive text messages and simulated groping her breasts. Outside the court on 11 April, Norvill said: “I stand by everything I said. I told the truth and what happened. I was there ... I would’ve been content to receive a simple apology and a promise to do better, without any of this. I never wanted these issues to be dealt with by a court.” Norvill, 34, also referred to the “need to make genuine cultural change in our professions and industries ... It has to be possible for a young woman working in theatre who feels unsafe in her workplace to get that situation fixed.”

She said she was “grateful to (actress) Yael Stone, who had the courage to speak out and lend her voice towards making positive and lasting cultural change a reality“. But Justice Wigney said he was not satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that the alleged breast touching had occurred. He found Winter’s evidence about the skit “far from convincing”. The judge described the articles as “misleading” and “a recklessly irresponsible piece of sensationalist journalism of the worst kind”. Norvill was the newspaper’s key witness during the trial, and Justice Wigney concluded her evidence was uncorroborated and “at times, prone to exaggeration and embellishment”. He said, “I was not ultimately persuaded that Ms Norvill was an entirely credible witness.”

**6 May:** The *Daily Telegraph* has appealed the decision in the Geoffrey Rush case on 16 grounds, including that Justice Wigney’s conduct “gave rise to an apprehension of bias”.

**10 May:** During a post-trial hearing, Justice Wigney announced he would hear the *Daily Telegraph*’s recusal application, and consider arguments about the final sum for damages related to Rush’s economic losses, on 20 May. He would also consider Rush’s lawyers’ application for permanent injunctions over articles that may defame him by referring to the *King Lear* allegations. Justice Wigney lifted the suppression order on the identity of the unnamed witness who was barred from giving evidence at the defamation trial. She has been identified as Yael Stone, star of *Orange is the New Black*. The details of her proposed testimony remain suppressed.

### 102.1.2 The Pell case and suppression orders

**26 February 2019:** The verdict in the trial of George Pell, Cardinal, on charges of sexual abuse of two choirboys in 1996 shortly after he became the Archbishop of Melbourne was allowed to be made public in Australia on 26 February. The printed editions of newspapers issued in the six Australian states and two territories on 27 February carried the news that had been withheld for two and a half months. The *Australian*’s front-page headline was simply: CARDINAL TO CONVICT (see below). The strapline above it said: “George Pell guilty: Catholic Church in crisis”. Apart from dominating Page 1, the newspaper’s coverage of the verdict and its implications filled Pages 4 to 7.

The *Australian* reported (27 February): More than 140 international news reports about Cardinal George Pell’s guilty verdict were published within 24 hours of his conviction last December, despite strict suppression orders. While Australian media outlets did not name Pell or the charges for which he had been convicted on December 11, international publications, including the *Washington Post* and the *Daily Beast*, reported the verdict in full, with media monitoring agency Stream recording 144 “global news articles” in 24 hours. That information then flowed to social media.

Media lawyer Justin Quill of M+K Lawyers, whose clients include the *Australian*, said the Pell case was a “perfect storm” of suppression orders being ignored online by international media and private individuals. “The problem is, with this unusual case that attracts such international notoriety, the international media organisations published,” Quill said. “That meant individuals in Australia, on Facebook and Twitter and other social media, were talking about it and the only people who were not talking about it was the mainstream media in Australia. This case is the perfect storm to demonstrate the law hasn’t kept up with developments in social media.”

Peter Bartlett, who represents the *Age* and several international media outlets such as the BBC and CNN, which did not report on the conviction for Australian audiences until 26 February, said suppression orders had become common in Victoria: “Suppression orders are simply out of control. That said it’s understandable why the Pell suppression order was made, because clearly reporting of the conviction in the first trial would prejudice the second trial if it went ahead.”

**26 March 2019:** Dozens of journalists, editors and media companies from across Australia were summonsed to face the Supreme Court of Victoria over coverage of the George Pell case. Victoria’s



Director of Public Prosecutions, Kerri Judd, QC, called for jail terms or hefty fines for 36 separate respondents in documents lodged with the court.

### 102.1.3 Meet Siobhan McKenna, of News Corp

John McDuling and Jennifer Duke have written a feature on Siobhan McKenna, a high flyer at News Corp Australia (*Age*, 11 March 2019, p.20). Some details have been foraged from that article. She is group head of broadcasting at News Corp. “It is well known that her influence out-ranks that of Michael Miller, the News Corp Australia executive chairman. Her fingerprints are all over the major strategic decisions that have shaped News’s current direction. Occasionally, she is even said to bypass [News Corp CEO Robert] Thomson in important matters. ‘All roads lead to Siobhan,’ says one former News Corp executive. ‘Whatever she says happens, happens,’ says another.” She is one of the most important and talked about figures in corporate Australia.

### 102.1.4 Buttrose new chair of ABC

Ita Buttrose, 77, former newspaper and magazine editor, has been appointed to chair the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (*Australian*, 1 March 2019). The appointment was made by the Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, with the support of Cabinet. Morrison rejected the recommendation of an independent panel charged with finding a new chairman. Buttrose is best known as the first editor of *Cleo* and later as editor of the *Australian Women’s Weekly*. She was a panellist on the Channel 10 morning program, *Studio 10*, from 2013-2018.

### 102.1.5 Age is on the move

The *Age* is on the move again – this time leaving its home in Media House at 655 Collins Street to take up residence in the Nine premises at 717 Bourke Street. Nine merged with Fairfax Media last year. The move will take place in June, according to a report in the *Age* (13 April 2019). The *Australian Financial Review’s* Melbourne bureau will move with the *Age*, too.

Nicole Lindsay reports: “Journalists and advertising staff once filled all 16,600 sq m of [Media House]. But years of redundancies have reduced occupancy to just two floors. Macquarie Media—3AW—will remain after June, holed up in its radio studios on the top floor, sharing space with community newspapers.”

### 102.1.6 Deaths

**Carlyon, Leslie Allen:** D. 5 March in Melbourne, aged 76; born in Elmore, northern Victoria, in 1942; became a cadet journalist in 1960 on Melbourne’s *Sun News-Pictorial*; reporter on the *Age*; John Tidey said Carlyon “soon developed into one of those rare people who could do anything on the newspaper: a gifted writer, very interested in production, a capable news executive”; became a leader writer shortly after Graham Perkin became editor in 1966, then finance editor, news editor, assistant editor; he won a Walkley Award in 1971 for magazine feature writing; at age 33 became editor of the *Age* after the death in October 1975 of Perkin; pneumonia and exhaustion ended Carlyon’s editorship a year later; lectured in journalism at RMIT in early 1980s; editor-in-chief of the *Herald and Weekly Times Ltd*, 1985-87; author of *Gallipoli* (2001) and *The Great War* (2006); columnist for the *Bulletin* and *Business Review Weekly*; about a decade ago, he said: “The main troubles with journalism are sloppy writing and sloppy editing, advocacy masquerading as reporting, gossip masquerading as reporting, stories that abound in loose ends and clichés, stories that are half-right, stories that insult the reader’s intelligence. In other words, most of the problems of journalism are our fault. They’re matters of craft, not ethics. Why ... do we talk about everything but the words? The words are the only thing that readers judge us by.” Awarded Companion of the Order of Australia in 2014 for his “eminent service to literature through the promotion of the national identity” (Garry Linnell, in *Australian*, 6 March 2019; John Tidey *Stories from a Bygone Age*, p.29).

**Carroll, Victor J.:** D. 2 April 2019 in Sydney, aged 94; born in Mackay, Queensland, the son of a publican and newsagent; attended boarding school in Charters Towers; joined Army on leaving school and served as a gunner in New Guinea and Borneo in World War II; after war, studied commerce at University of Queensland; worked for stockbroker; recruited by Brisbane’s *Courier-Mail* in 1952 as a financial journalist; joined *Sun-Herald*, Sydney, in 1960 as financial editor;

appointed editor of *Australian Financial Review*, 1964-70; became managing editor of both the *Financial Review* and the *National Times* 1970-75; chief executive of Fairfax's magazine subsidiary, Sungravure, 1975-80; editor then editor-in-chief, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1980-84; Andrew Clark said: "Through his editing of the *Australian Financial Review* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*, launching of the *National Times*, brilliant technical skills, vast knowledge of Australian politics, economics and business, grasp of world history, ability to pick and nurture talent, curiosity, capacity to ask the right questions and ramrod integrity, Carroll was a force like no other in Australian newspapers." (Brad Norington, *Australian*, 3 April 2019; and Andrew Clark, *Australian Financial Review*, 3 April 2019).

**Cole-Adams, Peter:** D. 3 April 2019 in Melbourne, aged 81; grew up in Stanthorpe, Queensland, after being evacuated as an infant with his family from Borneo where his father was a British administrator; completed a cadetship at the *Courier-Mail*, Brisbane, and worked in London for AAP before joining the *Age* shortly before Graham Perkin became editor; went on to hold senior posts as a foreign bureau chief in Europe and the US, and was a columnist, feature writer and associate editor; Cameron Forbes said Cole-Adams "possessed style, wit and substance as a correspondent but also as an executive [and] was a thinker, which not all executives are"; after 28 years with the *Age*, moved to Canberra to become political editor of the *Canberra Times* under the editorship of former *Age* colleague Michelle Grattan; at career's end, he and artist wife Brigid drove around Australia for seven months writing and illustrating their adventures for the *Age*; their travels were also recorded in a handsome book *Journey into Australia* (1989). [Sources: John Tidey; and *Age*, 5 April 2019, p.50.]

**Coleman, William Peter (Peter):** D. 31 March 2019 in Sydney, aged 90; born in Melbourne; attended North Sydney Boys High; studied arts at Sydney University; became a widely published journalist for more than 60 years; editor, the *Bulletin*, 1964-67, and of *Quadrant* for 20 years; published 16 books on political, biographical and cultural subjects; was a Liberal MP 1968-78 in the NSW Legislative Assembly and was Leader of the Opposition in the final year; appointed Administrator of Norfolk Island in 1979; elected for Wentworth in Federal Parliament, 1981-87; in June 1987, before the federal election, resigned from parliament and resumed writing full-time; contributed to the Australian edition of the *Spectator*, the ABC and the *Australian*; awarded the Centenary Medal in 2001 and in 2008, was admitted to the degree of Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*) at the University of Sydney; was later made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 April 2019).

**Hurst, Herschel Joseph:** D. 13 February 2019 in Melbourne, aged 91; left school at 14; worked for a year as judges' messenger in Sydney's District Court; joined *Sydney Daily Telegraph* in July 1942, aged 15; *Telegraph* owner Frank Packer had decreed that no copy boy would be promoted till the war was over; Hurst started writing to newspapers all over Australia and in 1944 joined the *Evening Advocate*, Innisfail (a daily since 1940) as a cadet; a year later he became a sub-editor on the *Townsville Daily Bulletin*; joined Herald & Weekly Times Ltd in 1949 as a general reporter on the Melbourne *Herald*; served as Canberra bureau chief for Melbourne *Sun News-Pictorial*, 1961-68; joined Australian News and Information Bureau in 1970 and served as public affairs officer and spokesperson in Australia's diplomatic missions in New York and Washington for almost 10 years; distinguished himself as a public affairs office-cum-diplomat for another decade (*Canberra Times*, 13 April 2019).

**Jones, Kevin John (Bill):** D. 14 April 2019 in Sydney; journalist for five decades; started career on daily *Burnie Advocate*; joined Brisbane *Telegraph* and *Sydney Morning Herald* before finding his home at the *Australian* a few years after its launch in 1964; was sports editor of the paper, 1977-1989 (*Australian*, 16 April 2019).

**Williams, Evan:** D. ca 12 May 2019 in Sydney, aged 84; began career as cadet journalist at *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1952; appointed inaugural editor of the *Sunday Australian* in 1971 (published for just over a year before being merged with *Sunday Telegraph* after Rupert Murdoch bought the *Telegraphs*); a decade later he returned to the *Australian* as a film critic and stayed for 33 years; long career in public service first as Gough Whitlam's press secretary and speechwriter where he worked with Graham Freudenberg, then as NSW Premier Neville Wran's director of cultural activities; when the arts got its own department, Williams headed it under successive governments (*Australian*, 13 May 2019).



**Wylie, Peter:** D. 12 May 2019 in Adelaide, aged 76; in a newspaper career of more than 50 years, became managing director and chairman of Advertiser Newspapers, Adelaide; also was editor of the *Sunday Mail*, Adelaide, the *Adelaide News* and *Sydney Daily Mirror*; started at *Glenelg Guardian* in 1960 before working at Messenger Newspapers and joining the *News* as a copy editor in 1967; became editor-in-chief of *Daily* and *Sunday Telegraphs* in 1986, and general manager of News Ltd's Sydney newspaper division, 1987-91; then managing director of Advertiser Newspapers, 1991-2002 (*Australian*, 13 May 2019).

### 102.1.7 Correction on Australia Day award

Correction: In ANHG 101.1.6 it was reported that **Graeme Ross McPherson**, of Arcadia, Victoria, was awarded an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for service to print and digital media and the community. In fact, he was awarded an AM: he was made a Member of the General Division of the Order of Australia.

Also, **Ian Colin Willis**, of Camden, NSW, a long-time ANHG subscriber and occasional contributor, was awarded a Medal (OAM) of the Order of Australia in the General Division for service to community history.

### 102.1.8 The Murdochs and their influence

On 3 April, the *New York Times* published an article headed, "How Rupert Murdoch's empire of influence remade the world". The 20,000-word article dealt with the influence of the Murdoch family (Rupert, James and Lachlan) and the developing divisions within it. See link below to the article.

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/03/magazine/rupert-murdoch-fox-news-trump.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share>

See below for a few extracts from this *New York Times* article. And see further below for Andrew Bolt's comments.

#### 'Trump's Aussie mates'

Even as James was pursuing his bid to take full control of Sky in Britain, the company's Australian division — Lachlan's domain — was closing a much smaller but still significant deal for the family to take full control of a different Sky subsidiary: Sky News Australia, which it jointly owned with two Australian media companies. It was the country's only 24-hour cable news channel and an unexploited opportunity for influence on another continent.

The Murdochs' newspaper holdings accounted for some 60 percent of the Australian [metro daily] print market, and included the country's sole national general-interest paper, the *Australian*. As the face of this continental newspaper empire, Lachlan wielded an enormous amount of political power in the country. Over the previous decade, Murdoch papers helped push out two different prime ministers, Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard. When Gillard's treasurer, Wayne Swan, was worried that the Murdoch attacks were hurting the national economy, he sought out Lachlan to make an appeal, Swan told us. Lachlan built alliances, too, drawing close to Tony Abbott, a member of Parliament whose right-wing politics and confrontational style had earned him frequent comparisons to Newt Gingrich. When Abbott served as prime minister, from 2013 to 2015, he would discuss legislation with the Murdochs' editors — and occasionally the Murdochs themselves — before introducing it, the former editor of *The Australian*, Chris Mitchell, wrote in his memoir.

Now Murdoch's Australian empire was expanding into cable news. The country's dominant broadcaster was the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, a publicly financed institution modelled after the BBC. Its reporting was similarly straight and sober. Sky News Australia — which also airs in New Zealand — was, notionally, a competitor, but its audience was small, even by Australian standards. Still, the network offered Lachlan his own opportunity for redemption: After his split with his father, he presided over the implosion of the Australian TV network Ten. His failed efforts to save it included giving a reality-TV dance show to his wife and signing off on a weekly show for a controversial right-wing firebrand, Andrew Bolt. A columnist at the Murdoch-owned Herald Sun, Bolt had impressed Lachlan years earlier at a company retreat in Pebble Beach, Calif., when he aggressively questioned Al Gore after Gore presented his slide show on climate change. When Bolt was awarded his show on Ten, he was facing

charges for violating the country's Racial Discrimination Act by writing that light-skinned Aborigines were claiming indigenous status for personal gain. (Bolt was found guilty, and the publisher was forced to print a lengthy statement acknowledging the offence.)

Andrew Bolt shared his experience of being asked to answer questions from the *New York Times* for what became the above-mentioned article on the Murdochs. Here's an extract from what Bolt wrote in the *Herald Sun*, Melbourne, on 8 April: "Two months ago, the *Times's* Jim Rutenberg asked to talk to me 'about the Murdoch empire at this time of transition' and about its Sky News where I host *The Bolt Report*. I said no, I'd be wasting my time, given he was certain to take a 'hostile look at the Murdochs, one tailored to suit the prejudices of a *New York Times* audience'. Rutenberg protested his series 'will not be hostile', but that wasn't true. It ran last week, claiming to describe 'the Murdoch family's role in destabilising democracy' on three continents. But it's not worth spit, to judge by its account of my role."

Bolt proceeds to shoot holes in the *New York Times's* description of the forces that helped move Malcolm Turnbull from the prime ministership. Bolt says he had opposed Turnbull from the day he became prime minister. "That day I wrote he had no judgment and would 'be the leader of a party he cannot unite'. He'd fail because his global warming beliefs were 'potentially another party-splitter'."

See also: Jennifer Duke, "All eyes on Murdoch family's next move", *Sydney Morning Herald*, Saturday 13 April 2019, page 29; and Matthew Knott, "Murdoch feud: 'You will not have a son!'", *Age*, 5 April 2019, p.13.

### 102.1.9 'Old' look of *Canberra Times's* new look

**Victor Isaacs** writes: From Tuesday 9 April the *Canberra Times* introduced a revised layout, the most noticeable feature of which is a larger type size throughout the paper. The masthead slogan changed from "Independent. Always." to "To Serve the National City", a partial revival of an earlier slogan.

There may be three reasons for the change to larger type size, all of which may be valid simultaneously:

1. Larger type size means less content is required.
2. Larger type size will bring the *CT* in line with the other Nine country dailies, rather than the metropolitan *Age* and *SMH*—part of the preparation for the sale of these papers, as also is the change of masthead slogan.
3. Larger type size is an admission that the newspaper is now mainly read by older people.

The *Canberra Times* now looks different from the *Age* and *SMH*. Many articles are still sourced from the *SMH* and *Age*, but possibly fewer than previously. Business coverage has decreased. The front page is usually completely devoted to local stories.

After a few weeks of the new arrangements, I judge the *Canberra Times* to be indeed an improved newspaper, with more serious news coverage. [See also, ANHG 102.3.1 below, "Nine sells community media division".]

### 102.1.10 Readership climbs for *Herald Sun*

The *Sunday Herald Sun*, Melbourne, reports (7 April 2019, p.2) that it had 11,000 more readers in January this year than last year. Fiona Byrne's column, "Gossip Queen", had 11,000 more readers, too. The *Sunday Age* had 21,000 fewer readers in January this year than last year. The figures come from emma (Enhanced Media Metrics Australia).

### 102.1.11 The invisible women

Jenna Price, who used to be a journalist at the *Sydney Morning Herald* but is now a lecturer at the University of Technology Sydney, has been involved in a study that shows that two-thirds of news sources are males and that male reporters are more likely to rely even more heavily on male sources. Price's colleague in conducting the study, in each of the four weeks in October 2018, was Anne Maree Payne, also of UTS. They looked at the top five stories in each of 15 news sites over

lunchtime. From that data set of 300 stories, they examined the gender of the sources and the gender of the bylines. See: Jenna Price, “The invisible women in media”, *Age*, 5 April 2019, p.23.

### **102.1.12 Print down-down and digital up-up**

Figures revealed by News Corp to the US Securities & Exchange Commission have revealed how far its metro titles have fallen since the advent of the GFC. At the same time the figures show digital readership is skyrocketing (print21.com.au, March-April 2019). The country’s biggest selling newsprint paper remains the *Sunday Telegraph* in Sydney with print sales of 334,209. However, the *Sunday Tele*’s sales are now well below the 734,000 average back in 2003, losing 60 per cent of its print run. It prints nearly 40 per cent fewer than the 516,000 copies a day it was selling only five years ago.

Sales of the *Sunday Herald Sun* sales are also way off the heights of 2006, when they topped 623,000. Today they are just behind the *Sunday Tele*, coming in at 325,592. The figures reveal that the print run of the *Herald Sun* is down by 8.5 per cent in the year to 386,867. Total print figure of the *Courier Mail* is 125,000 compared to the peak print figure of 204,500 in 2008, and Adelaide’s *Advertiser* print sales of 106,000 are way off its 2003 print figure of 222,600. Digital uptake, however, is rocketing ahead, many News titles showing digital growth of 40 to 50 per cent in the year, led by the *Australian* where digital growth jumped by 53 per cent.

### **102.1.13 Henry the VIII double dips**

Oddity: two portraits of King Henry VIII appeared in the *Weekend Australian* of 27-28 April 2019, one on page 11 (“How death of grandmother put fear of plague into Henry VIII”) and the other on page 36 in the business section (“Leaving kings to rule courts disaster”)

### **102.1.14 Redundancies at the West**

The loss of decades of journalistic experience and knowledge from the latest round of redundancies at the *West Australian* will “denude” its newsroom, diminishing its ability to cover state issues and hold power to account, according to a veteran editor (ABC News online, 18 April 2019). Managing editor and owner of Post Newspapers, Bret Christian, was joined by government ministers and media academics in expressing concern at the loss of around 30 journalists from WA’s major newspaper. Among those to accept voluntary redundancies are high-profile state political editor Gary Adshead, named Western Australia’s journalist of the year at the 2018 WA Media Awards, and health editor Cathy O’Leary, who was recognised at the awards for her outstanding contribution to journalism over more than 30 years.

In March, the paper’s editor Anthony De Ceglie — who took the job in January — called for voluntary redundancies to deal with “excess capability” ahead of the integration of newsrooms at the *West*, the *Sunday Times* and website *Perth Now*. The *West* and the *Sunday Times* are also moving to a seven-day-a-week newsroom, with staff working to both mastheads. It is the third major round of redundancies at the *West Australian* since 2016 when at least 35 senior editorial staff left following the acquisition of the *Sunday Times* by the paper’s parent company, Seven West Media.

Another round of redundancies came in January last year in the face of what chief executive John Driscoll called “the challenges our industry is facing”. The ABC has been told the long list of reporters, sub-editors and photographers now heading out the door is leaving for a mix of reasons. Some were keen to take good payouts before their enterprise bargaining agreement is renegotiated, and others were not comfortable with the paper’s more tabloid direction since De Ceglie took over. De Ceglie is a former deputy editor of News Corp’s *Daily Telegraph*, Sydney.

### **102.1.15 The Sydney Morning Telegraph?**

A printing error led to the inclusion in the early (country) editions of the Sydney *Daily Telegraph* of pages from its rival, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, on 25 April. The *Herald*’s editorial page appeared adjacent to the *Telegraph*’s gossip page, “Sydney Confidential”. The *Herald*’s obituary page also featured. When questions were asked, it emerged that a printing error at News Corp’s Chullora plant had resulted in content from the two newspapers being mixed. The newspapers



have been produced at the same location since a deal was struck last year ([theguardian.com/media](http://theguardian.com/media), 25 April 2019).

### **102.1.16 On the bus only some of the time**

Nine Entertainment Co. decided against sending journalists from the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age* to report on Scott Morrison and Bill Shorten from the election hustings during most of the five-week campaign (*Australian*, 9 May 2019). Nine Entertainment's major newspapers, did not rejoin the two leaders on the trail until Sunday, 12 May, after sitting out the middle three weeks of the campaign. Journalists from the two newspapers, owned by Fairfax Media before the \$4 billion merger with television broadcaster Nine in December, were following the Prime Minister and the Opposition Leader in the first week. The papers were believed to be relying on Nine's TV journalists and agencies, including Australian Associated Press, to ask questions of the leaders on key issues. A Nine Entertainment newspaper photographer has been on the trail at various times of the campaign.

The bill for sending at least two crew on the five-week campaign trail has been estimated as being as high as \$50,000, including hotels, airfares, meals, taxi fares and other expenses. Nine's national business newspaper, the *Australian Financial Review*, has been on the campaign buses. AAP had a journalist and photographer with both leaders throughout the entire campaign, plus a videographer with each for the first and last week. And a reporter was on the "wombat trail" with Nationals leader Michael McCormack for about 10 days, AAP editor Mike Osborne said.

James Chessell, the group executive editor for the *SMH* and *Age*, defended the decision not to send reporters on the leaders' buses for the full campaign, saying the company had spent "a record amount on this election". No specific figures were made available. "Rather than stationing our reporters permanently on the buses to digest pre-prepared talking points, we sent them around the country to break stories by talking to voters and candidates," he said. "It's meant we've broken more stories and produced more balanced coverage."

Chessell said Nine's newspapers had had "journalists travelling with the leaders at times that work best for our readers, such as the first week and again from this Sunday [12 May]". He said senior journalists David Crowe and Deborah Snow had also joined the campaign buses for "stints during the past three weeks". "Our approach means our crew has been able to do a huge amount of great reporting right up and down the east coast, in regional and rural seats and every day in Sydney and Melbourne," he said. "We have also had multiple interviews with both leaders."

### **101.1.17 News Corp earnings jump**

Subscriptions to Foxtel's Kayo streaming service doubled in the March quarter as paid digital users rose across News Corp's media properties and helped drive a 36 per cent jump in March quarter pre-tax earnings (*Weekend Australian*, 11-12 May 2019). In total, News Corp booked a 17 per cent increase in revenue to \$US2.46 billion (\$3.52bn) for the three months ended 31 March, helped by the consolidation of Foxtel, which is two-thirds owned by News following its merger with Fox Sports. The fiscal third-quarter earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation of \$US247 million for the quarter were up 36 per cent from \$US181m a year earlier. Paid digital subscribers at the *Wall Street Journal* rose by almost 20 per cent to \$1.78m, and by 21 per cent at Australian mastheads including the *Australian*, *Daily Telegraph* and *Herald Sun*. Digital subscribers accounted for more than 36 per cent of the publishing business's total subscriber base.



### 102.2.1 Digital giants and responsibility

**Campbell Reid** writes (*Australian*, 25 March 2019): Journalism, as the first cut of history, tells in real time the good, bad and ugly stories of human society as it rushes through every day of its life. The live reporting of events the world has never seen before is the ultimate challenge to confront any newsroom. There is no time for considered reflection; in times of crisis the world deserves to know what is going on — who is doing what, and why. The fundamental questions of journalism need to be answered. Right now. With the Christchurch massacre (51 people died in shootings at two mosques on 15 March 2019), newsrooms faced that ultimate news event — something the world had never seen before — a killer live-streaming his own mass murder and releasing an accompanying manifesto of hate to explain his actions.

In the subsequent seconds, minutes and hours, responsible newsrooms and editors made both good and flawed decisions. But at the heart of it, every one of those newsrooms took responsibility for what they were showing and how much the public should see before the boundaries of the need to know and offensive, unpublishable material were crossed. They then wrestled with their role as town crier, about how much information was enough to tell the story and how much was too much to bear.

The debate about who made the right call and who didn't is not evidence of our failings or of irresponsibility or who is to blame; it is evidence of an open society confronting a despicable act and having a conversation about what we are going to do to learn from it and make our world safer. Showing the first moments of the video of the killer, reading from his manifesto of hate, is not misbehaviour or misjudgement; it is a moment in history in all its shock and confrontation being revealed to the world.

It has triggered a long overdue and serious demand for the digital platforms — who allow their dark corners to foster and share hatreds and then stream the killers' video and permit it to be shared over and over — to join the rest of society and take responsibility for their actions. This is a moment in time — one brought into the open by the very fact that mainstream journalism showed the initial moments of this killer's appalling video and shared parts of his hate manifesto. In doing so, in all its confronting and challenging decision-making, professional journalism played the role that serves society best. It is a role that mainstream media has fulfilled throughout its history from the World Wars to Vietnam to 9/11 and since.

As appalling as it is, the frozen still image from this killer's head camera is the image of a moment that changed the world. It is not something to hide from; like other moment-in-time images and photographs from human history, it is something not to bury from view but to keep in the open, so we never forget. At the same time, there is a world of difference between an edited slice of an appalling act and the uncontrolled live-streaming of an entire crime — in this case the mass murder of innocents — as it unfolds.

No mainstream media organisation did that. The open airing of confrontation and extreme views from all corners of society allows reasonable people to decide for themselves what they agree with, what they disagree with, what they regard as acceptable and what is reprehensible. It serves no purpose to have an after-the-event debate about who in mainstream media is right or wrong in what they said or what they published because all conversations held in open society inform that society about itself, what it values, what it believes in and what it doesn't. The danger is not open and discordant debate. The danger is dark cupboards and hidden conspiracies that are allowed to fester before they finally burst into the open, and this is where the spotlight should be shining.

Mainstream publishers played their role in telling the story of an appalling event and letting the world know who the deranged killer was and what he was prepared to do. They made choices, as part of the community they serve, as to what to publish and what not to. This same kind of responsibility has to now be accepted by the leaders of the digital platforms who have created the biggest information-sharing networks the world has ever seen. These businesses play a pervasive role in billions of people's lives — they have to accept that they are not separate from modern society; they have created machines that can help shape that society for good or for evil, and now is the moment in time to accept that responsibility.

*Campbell Reid is News Corp Australia's group executive, corporate affairs, policy and government relations, and is a former editor of the Australian and the Daily Telegraph.*

### **102.2.2 Apple and publication subscriptions**

Apple has announced an upgrade to Apple News with a subscription service called News+ (*Australian*, 27 March 2019). This was available immediately in the US and Canada and will become available in Australia and Britain from later this year. Mastheads such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* have not joined News+ following reports that Apple wants 50 per cent commission from proceeds. The *Los Angeles Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and *Toronto Star* in Canada were the only major papers announced as having joined.

In Australia, publications are taking a wait-and-see approach. Nicholas Gray, managing director of the *Australian*, NSW, and Prestige Titles at News Corp Australia, said, "We will wait to hear more about Apple's plans in Australia before making a decision about participation." News Corporation chief executive Robert Thomson said the *Wall Street Journal* in the service "is a profound example of a technology company treating journalism and other premium content in a manner that benefits News Corp and the societies in which we operate".

The Apple News subscription announcement was made within the context of announcements such as an Apple credit card (that offers users cash rewards and no fees) and other services.

See also: David Swan and Supratim Adhikari, "Apple in the newsroom", *Australian*, 27 March 2019, p.13.

### **102.2.3 Protections for journalism in new tech laws**

Attorney-General Christian Porter has declared there will be protections for journalism, advocacy, research and artistic works under the Morrison government's crackdown on tech giants, which passed Federal Parliament in two days amid a growing backlash from the tech and media industries (*Australian*, 5 April 2019). The passage of the Sharing of Abhorrent Violent Material Bill, designed to change the behaviour of social media companies and prevent a repeat of the type of livestreaming seen in the Christchurch terror attack, united small and large publishers which condemned the legislation as "risky". Media, tech and legal experts warned of unintended consequences after the legislation was drafted in weeks and sailed through both chambers of parliament.

Atlassian boss Mike Cannon-Brookes joined the revolt and described the "flawed" bill's passage as a sad day for Australia's technology industry. "No one is complaining that this content should be allowed on the internet. But it is very different to say this is the right bill to do it. It's not," Cannon-Brookes said. Under the legislation, social media and other company executives could be jailed for up to three years or a company fined 10 per cent of its annual global turnover if it failed to quickly remove the content within a reasonable time. Platforms around the world would also have to notify the Australian Federal Police if they knew their service was streaming abhorrent violent conduct that occurred or was occurring in Australia, or face fines of up to \$168,000 for an individual or \$840,000 for a corporation.

"The bill does include defences to the offence in certain circumstances," Porter said. They include "for law-enforcement purposes where the material relates to a news or current affairs report that is in the public interest, for court and tribunal proceedings where the accessibility of the material is for lawful advocacy purposes and where the accessibility of the material relates to research or artistic works created in good faith".

The Law Council of Australia said important news could now be censored across social media platforms, contrary to the democratic principle of a free press.

#### **102.2.4 News Corp launches podcasting unit**

News Corp Australia has launched a podcasting unit, NewsCast. The portfolio of podcasts will draw on talent from News Corp's businesses and cover a range of topics, including news, sport, travel, food, lifestyle, finance and true crime (*Telum Media Alert*, 20 March 2019).

#### **102.2.5 Facebook, etc.: 'High-stakes error in judgment'**

The *New Yorker* magazine has published a long article about the founder and CEO of Twitter, Jack Dorsey, that contained the following eye-catching sentence (writes **Alan Kohler**, *Australian*, 3 May 2019): "Since the 2016 election, it has grown increasingly clear that allowing young, mostly male technologists to build largely unregulated, proprietary, international networks, might have been a large-scale, high-stakes error in judgment." The writer, Anna Weiner, didn't really develop that thought, and she was mainly on about Twitter and the fact that it's more or less out of control now, but she was also obviously referring to Facebook, YouTube and Instagram as well. There are a few other wannabe social media platforms but they're the ones that matter.

Dorsey created Twitter in 2006 as an undergraduate student at New York University. The idea was simply to use an SMS service as a way of sharing short messages with a small group of people, but a year later it took off and, by 2008, millions of tweets were being sent. Facebook was started by a Harvard student named Mark Zuckerberg in 2003 and it opened to the public in 2006. By July 2010 it had 500 million users. The founders of Instagram (now owned by Facebook), Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, were not students but software engineers and entrepreneurs but in 2010 when they started their photo-sharing platform they were both in their mid-20s, so near enough to students. YouTube, now owned by Google, was started by three young employees of PayPal, Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim, who raised some money from Sequoia Capital in 2005 because they had had trouble sharing a video of a dinner party at Chen's place. The first YouTube video was Jawed Karim at the San Diego Zoo on April 23, 2005.

Now each of these things is a global monster. Facebook has 2.3 billion users and Twitter 330 million. There are 400 hours of video uploaded to YouTube every minute; Taylor Swift's Me! video got 65.2 million YouTube views within 24 hours last week [end of April], breaking the record and demonstrating YouTube's power. Instagram is receiving close to a 100 million posts a day and there are well over 40 billion photos on the site. Is the fact that they were started by young men relevant, as Anna Weiner suggests? Well, I was one of them once, and I can confirm that young men have a talent for blind ambition, which can be both admirable and a bit dangerous.

The problem is the colossal scale that has happened so quickly, for several reasons. Publishing used to be an activity in which a publisher's staff checked the material before sending it out. That still goes on, expensively, and a lot less profitably than before, but it's now being swamped by the new "platform" publishers — Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram — providing their technology for everyone to use, for free, with no friction.

The lack of friction creates the scale, and thus the sheer impossibility of checking everything before it goes out. Each of them has a mechanism for dealing with content that is flagged or otherwise complained about but checking material before it's seen or read is simply out of the question, and becoming less so as time goes on. [This is an extract only.]

#### **102.2.6 New policy on social-media posts**

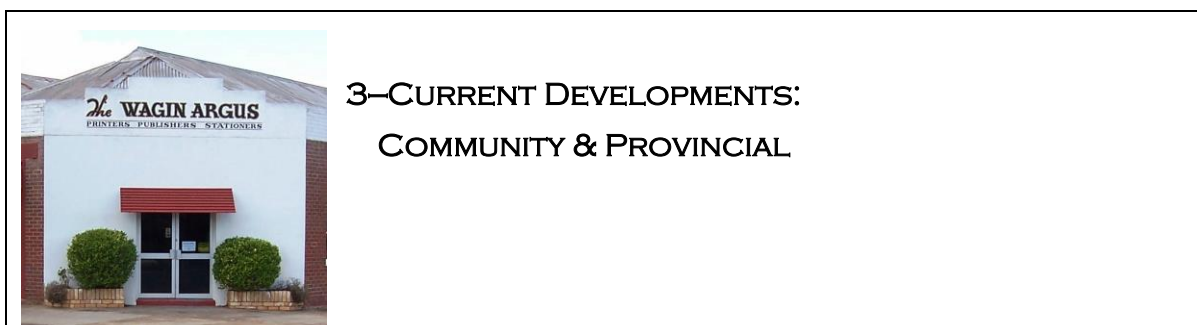
The freewheeling days of social media postings by reporters at the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Melbourne Age* appear to be over, reports Elias Visontay (*Australian*, 15 April 2019). A new social media policy introduced by Nine Entertainment after its takeover of Fairfax last year could land several of its mastheads' high-profile commentators in hot water given their past record on the social media platform. The changes, which came just in time for the federal election, seek to put an end to journalists and contributors personally advocating for a political cause or expressing a bias online, and were prompted by "recent incidents involving staff use of Twitter and Instagram which reflected poorly on the staff involved and on our mastheads", the new policy says. The binding policy is not just for employees but all editorial contributors including producers and

photographers, and states they must “not editorialise, express personal biases, personally campaign or advocate for (or against) policies or do anything to undermine our reputation and stated objective of being ‘Independent. Always’.”

Staff at the Nine newspapers, including the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age*, are advised to take care with what they retweet, not to use social media to make customer service complaints, not to live-tweet events if it interferes with their work, and not to share breaking news or tips from other organisations without attribution or confirmation. The new policy also advises staff not to use social media to directly attack rival journalists or publications and not attack trolls, even if abused.

The policy comes after former columnist Clementine Ford resigned in response to being suspended over a tweet in September that called the Prime Minister a[n] “[expletive] disgrace” — a comment that appears to be addressed by the policy instruction to not campaign against a politician. Of current contributors who stand to be affected, Peter Fitzsimons’ vocal opposition to the demolition and rebuilding of Sydney’s Allianz Stadium could be classified as “personally campaigning or advocating against” the state government’s policy, as seen in a 7 March tweet urging his followers to sign a petition to Premier Gladys Berejiklian to “STOP THE BULLDOZERS”.

A spokesman from the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age* said the new policy was consistent with social media policies at other major newsrooms around the world, including those of the BBC and *New York Times*.



### 102.3.1 Nine sells its community media division

Nine Entertainment has sold its regional newspapers and printing business—centred on the former Rural Press Ltd newspapers—to former Domain boss Antony Catalano and Thorney Investment Group for a total of \$125 million, five months after wrapping up its \$4 billion merger with Fairfax Media (*Australian*, 30 April 2019). The Australian Community Media and Printing titles, comprising more than 160 papers, including the *Canberra Times*, *Newcastle Herald*, *Illawarra Mercury* (Wollongong), *Examiner* (Launceston) and *Border Mail* (Albury), were acquired by Nine as part of the Fairfax deal. Nine chief executive Hugh Marks said the sale of the titles aligned with its “strategy to exit non-core businesses and to focus on Nine’s portfolio of high-growth, digital assets”. He added: “We will retain a commercial relationship with ACM and look forward to continuing to work with the business in areas where there are mutual benefits to both Nine and ACM,” Marks said in a statement. Nine said the parties had agreed to “preserve the commercial relationships” that have existed during its ownership of ACM, including the printing of its metropolitan newspapers, the *Age*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Australian Financial Review* and, “for a short transitional period, sharing of content between ACM publications and the metropolitan publications”.

Catalano spent 26 years with Fairfax and was chief executive of Domain for four years, leading the property classifieds business through its 2017 spinoff from Fairfax into a separately listed business. He quit in January last year and failed in a last-ditch attempt in Federal Court to prevent the merger between Fairfax and Nine by buying a blocking stake in the old newspaper publisher. Following the completion of the Fairfax merger on 7 December, Nine flagged the sale of ACM, plus its events business, which produces the annual City2Surf running race in Sydney, and New Zealand division Stuff.

**6 May 2019:** Antony Catalano is reported to be prepared to consider consolidation among regional publishers but remains committed to trying to grow revenues and readership of his newspapers rather than cutting more deeply into costs (*Australian*, 6 May 2019). Brian McCarthy, who helped aggregate the titles in ACM when he ran Rural Press for 13 years, said there was a “simplistic” but effective strategy to grow the business now that it was again a stand-alone, rather than lost within a big conglomerate. That involved growing revenue, attracting talent to the business and restoring relationships in the communities that the paper operated in. He also suggested that offering equity in the newspaper to local businesses or identities could also grow revenue and readership of the papers. “He needs to get a team around him that is focused on growth, not just on cutting costs,” McCarthy said of Catalano. Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation have shrunk from \$193m at the time Rural Press merged with Fairfax in 2007 to \$43m at the time of the latest sale.

### 102.3.2 Illawarra: NewsLocal launches new title

NewsLocal has launched its first local title in the Illawarra region. The *Illawarra Star* is covering news from Helensburgh to the Shoalhaven region, focusing on local news topics such as politics, council, court and crime, transport, health and lifestyle (*Telum Media Alert*, 5 April 2019).

### 102.3.3 Hard copy hard to find

News Corp seems to be running down the daily papers it acquired from APN a couple of years ago (at least the Mon-Fri hard copies). Evidence: The recent cover price increase makes them the most expensive regional dailies in Australia on Monday-Friday. Subscription packages offered are: Digital only, or Digital plus Saturday delivery. The option offered for Monday to Friday hard copy delivery is extremely hard to find on the websites.



## 4-NEWSPAPER HISTORY

### 102.4.1 Ginger Meggs (1): How he began life

Following is an edited, extract from **Barry Gomm**, “The Adventures of Ginger Meggs, an Aussie icon”, *Burwood Bulletin*, Melbourne, December 2018-February 2019, pp.6-7: Many older Australians will recall the weekend newspaper supplements which included Ginger Meggs’s latest adventures. Today that little Aussie appears in daily comic strips in more than 100 newspapers throughout the world, including many within Australia. He can be found also on GoComics.com, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, as well as having his own phone app.

As a lad of 12 to 13 years of age—going on 97—Ginger Meggs is Australia’s oldest comic character and one of the oldest in the world. His creator was Jimmy Bancks. Four others have since taken over the Ginger Meggs strip. The current artist is Jason Chatfield, an Australian who now lives in the US where he draws political cartoons as well as the Meggs strip. Ginger first appeared in 1921 as Ginger Smith in a comic strip called “Us Fellers”, which was about a gang of boys who got into all sorts of trouble; a lone heroine, Gladsome Gladys, was included. The theme was for the little girl to use her charm to get the boys out of trouble if their cricket ball broke a window, their billy-cart knocked someone over or any other tragedy befell them. Gladys was named after the lady who taught Bancks to draw.

Bancks soon ran out of ideas for that theme and so brought Ginger forward in a lead role, changing his surname from Smith to Meggs and modelling him on Charles Somerville, a schooldays friend. He also gave him red hair because that was one of only two colours, other than black, used in printing newspapers. Gladys was renamed Minnie Peters and given the role of Ginger’s girlfriend.



Other characters drawn from people in Bancks's life were added as time went on, and so was born a uniquely Australian comic that captured Australia's heart. In 1939 the strip was renamed "Ginger Meggs".

Newspapers ran children's competition pages in conjunction with the weekly Ginger Meggs supplement. In Melbourne's *Sun News-Pictorial* there was a children's club called The Sunbeam Army. This popular feature offered graded certificates for competition entries and original works of art, prose and poetry with small cash prizes for selected competitions. Ginger Meggs's popularity has not waned over the years. In fact (says Barry Gomm), I am now regularly asked to give talks at Probus clubs and the like for his many fond fans.

#### 102.4.2 Ginger Meggs (2): His creator

Following is what appeared in the *Advertiser*, Adelaide, on 17 November 1926, p.10, when the creator of Ginger Meggs arrived in town: Thousands of people throughout Australia know Ginger Meggs, but few know anything about Mr J. C. Bancks, the shock-headed youngster's creator, who arrived in Adelaide from Melbourne yesterday. "There isn't anything to know," he would protest with the shyness of a very young man, for "Ginger's father", as he calls himself, is young for his years, and those are not yet thirty. Even the pince-nez, which was the penalty of drawing by candle light, lamp light, or any other illuminant he could get at night, cannot hide the twinkle in his eyes when he really smiles. "I had to draw at night," he said, "simply because it had to be done in my spare time. I had too many responsibilities to devote myself to art and Bohemia."



GINGER MEGGS

Probably if asked about wool, this singularly reticent, tall young man, who firmly refuses to admit that he has achieved any-thing out of the ordinary, and declares that he is "just normal," would blossom out as a conversationalist. He knows nearly all there is to know about that subject, for he worked in a wool broker's office for six years, and he is a qualified wool classer as well. Also, he admits he knows a little bit about fighting. "Ginger Meggs is fond of fighting," he said, "and I find that my visits to the Stadium keep him from making impossible jabs or wild swipes."

Mr Bancks is a fine cricketer and has played with Mailey and Macartney. Perhaps that is why, when Ginger Meggs has to throw a ball in his pages in the *Saturday Express*, he can do it to the satisfaction of even the small boy cricketing enthusiasts of the park lands. "He wears a cowboy outfit sometimes," said Mr Bancks with a smile. "but please don't think I am trying to cut out Tom Mix because of that or wanting to pose as the Complete Athlete, any more than Ginger would pose as Little Lord Fauntleroy."

"Of course, Ginger Meggs is real," he said, almost indignantly, when he was asked if his famous character had merely "grown" like Topsy. "He is, or rather he was when we started, a little boy who lived next door to us in North Sydney, where I was born and brought up. I saw him grow up from a baby to the kindergarten stage and so on, and he spent every available moment in my room trying to draw, spilling my ink, messing up my paints, and doing all the things a healthy youngster will do given the opportunity. He did many of the things Ginger Meggs has done in print, but the last letter I had showed that the young rascal had far outdistanced him and had thought out several special brands of devilment of his own. He was not a precocious kid. I should have hated him if he had been. I attribute the popularity of my little character to the fact that fundamentally he is real. If I once tried to make him deliberately funny in print, he would just be a precocious youngster, and nobody would really care for him."

When Mr Bancks first began to draw Ginger Meggs it was intended that he should live for only a few weeks, but he proved so successful that the artist has had to make his life a picture serial, which is running in every State in the Commonwealth now, and even in Rabaul. "It has been fine to get letters from nurses in the hospitals to say that Ginger has brought a smile to the face of some sick kiddie," he said. "I get lots of letters from mothers, too, suggesting things that Ginger

might do in the future, based, no doubt, on what their own youngsters have done in the past. Best of all, however, are the letters that come for Ginger himself, straggling and blotted and childish, but the best appreciation of all, for children always love other children, and are more, interested in their doings than those of any grown-up. So long as these letters come, I shall know Ginger is a real boy. You can only reflect human nature as you move about among people to see it. If an artist did not really have a soft spot in his heart for kiddies he could not be bothered to watch and listen to them, and then his creation would only be a drawing of a little automation. I did a lot of theatrical caricaturing for the *Bulletin* at one time, and I pass most stage stars in fear and trembling now for fear they recognise me. Every day now I do a caricature of 'Mr Melbourne', and it is a strenuous job, too. Once Ginger Meggs is finished for the week I breathe freely for 24 hours, and then I wonder what on earth he is going to do next week, and sometimes I turn cold at the thought that the little beggar will let me down, or go on strike, but someone is sure to say something that will set me off on a new tack."

In his spare time Mr Bancks is fond of motoring, and one of Ginger's presents to him was a fine Vauxhall car. It looks as if that is only one of many presents to come, for in his creator's own expressive phrase, "Ginger Meggs has brought home the bacon." So far, the real Ginger has no rival in Mr Bancks's heart, for the artist is unmarried. Everywhere he has been he has got in touch with hundreds of his little friend's admirers, and he owns that he has derived much of his inspiration from their naive childish remarks, and expressions of opinion. A typical Australian himself, he has made the character essentially Australian also. He refused to say what Ginger Meggs was going to do next for the *Saturday Express*, but admitted that he was "thinking of going in for rabbits". "If he does," he said, "there will be something doing. You ask any parent whose youngsters have kept them."

### 102.4.3 Mobile darkroom is being restored

**Jen Kelly** writes ("In Black & White", *Herald Sun*, 12 March 2019, p.14): It nearly finished up life as a hot dog van, but now a treasured piece of Victoria's history is a step closer to restoration after an eagle-eyed reader triggered a series of happy events. This "mobile darkroom" was central to the *Herald's* operations in the 1950s. It allowed photographers to print photos in transit from the Melbourne and Caulfield cups and other events, saving precious minutes before the afternoon's deadline. After our story following the death last month of former picture editor Lester Howard, who helped design the mobile darkroom, car restorer John Keane, from Older Car Repairs in Blackburn, recalled seeing the van. John's tip led us to vehicle restorer Troy Kinsmore who bought the 1950 Dodge several years ago for under \$1000 from a man who intended to turn it into a hot dog van, but never got around to it. Troy, from Slammed Creations in Lilydale, only realised what he had stumbled upon when he began rubbing paint off and discovered the original writing promoting the *Sun News-Pictorial* on one side and the *Herald* on the other.



He has been trying ever since to find original photos in order to restore it, while taking it to various car shows—even picking up a trophy for "best unrestored truck" at one in Healesville. "As someone said to us once at a show, it's very ironic because it was a vehicle made to take photos—but no one ever took a photo of it," Troy says. We contacted veteran *Herald* & Weekly Times photographer Bruce Howard who directed us to this photo (reproduced from *Herald Sun*, 12 March 2019) of the mobile darkroom in the May 1952 edition of the company's internal newsletter, *House News*, in our archives. Now Troy hopes to restore the truck with the help of this photo and Bruce's detailed memory of the van's interior and exterior.

**Jen Kelly** was back on the mobile darkroom story in her column on 15 March 2019, p.23: The *Herald's* mobile darkroom for our newspaper photographers in the 1950s had a second career as a mobile forklift workshop. Former staffer Keith Haines, from West Footscray, says the 1950 Dodge ... was fitted out as a mobile workshop to service the *Herald* & Weekly Times' fleet of forklifts in the 1970s and 1980s. "I used the Dodge van to travel to the paper warehouses the *Herald* then

owned at Flinders St, and various sites in South Melbourne and Port Melbourne, and also to the old printing works at Hawthorn,” says the former forklift mechanic. “The Dodge could be a cranky old beast at times, with its outdated six-volt electrical system and pretty dodgy braking system, but it certainly had a bit of character and drew quite a few comments from interested passers-by.”

#### **102.4.4 Sydney tries to invade country newspaper territory in 1946**

*Picton Post*, 8 August 1946, p.6: Latest development in the struggle for supremacy among Sydney newspapers is a high-pressure attempt to invade the NSW country districts. Frantic efforts are being made by Sunday newspapers and the morning dailies to secure circulation and business in the country towns and rural areas. Country affairs and county people who have been treated, with almost complete contempt by Sydney’s “great dailies”, for a decade or more are now being flattered with extraordinary attention (says the *Countryman*). Free supplements and pages of this and that are being poured out for the benefit of “our country readers” with remarkable generosity.

Chief aim by Sydney newspapers in this business war is to hit at each other, but in the process, they will take all they can get at the expense of the local papers. It is to be hoped for their own sake that the Sydney newspapers are not expecting to score at the expense of the local newspapers. If they are, they will be sadly disappointed, for no attempt by a metropolitan printed daily to supplant a local newspaper giving the local news will ever succeed. Country newspapers have shown what they think of the new offensive from Sydney by freely accepting advertisements singing the praises of a certain Sydney newspaper. They know they can do that with perfect safety as far as their own interests are concerned’. There is nothing to stop Sydney’s “great dailies” attempting to gain an octopus grip of the newspaper business over the whole of country NSW.

They are entitled to go wherever they like, but many country people will see in this latest development a further instance of the greed of certain big, city interests. If they could, they would trample all country newspapers out of existence, especially the many excellent provincial dailies which are doing such a wonderful job for their respective areas, and which, are a fine example of decentralisation. There are unsurmountable difficulties in the way, of such newspaper slaughter, fortunately, but country people who may be tempted to discount the service given by their local paper when compared in certain respects with metropolitan dailies should bear in mind that they themselves largely decide the scope and character of their local papers.

#### **102.4.5 Mr Front Page: appeal to finance archive for SLV**

State Library Victoria has launched a public appeal to raise \$75,000 to make the extensive archive of award-winning newspaper photographer Bruce Postle available to the public (SLV media release, 26 March 2019). The Bruce Postle Archive will offer an important and compelling insight into the images that have captured the social, political and sporting history of Australia. For more than 50 years working as a photojournalist for *Queensland Country Life*, the *Courier-Mail* and the *Melbourne Age*, Bruce Postle gained rare access to significant people, places and events. Known for his ability to capture the perfect frame at any cost, Postle was highly sought after because his pictures often elevated a story to the front page.

His personal archive contains nearly 100,000 items including prints, transparencies and ephemera. The collection will join the Library’s photographic archive of more than one million images, and is the largest of its kind to be acquired by the Library. Highlights of the archive include the 1970 Vietnam War moratorium rallies, the aftermath of the 1970 West Gate Bridge collapse and the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires. Happier moments include the Rolling Stones’ first tour of Australia in 1965 and the iconic image of Malcolm Fraser in his Windsor Hotel bed on the morning after his 1980 re-election.

Bruce Postle said: “I’ve been passionate about photography ever since I took my first photo of the family cat when I was nine. I’ve lost and destroyed 36 cameras over the course of my career all in the name of getting ‘that shot’. I have always loved telling stories through pictures and the public’s support for this appeal will help bring those stories to life for future generations to come.”

State Library Victoria CEO Kate Torney said the archive serves as an irreplaceable record of the most important moments in Australian history from the past 50 years. “Nearly every Australian would have seen a Bruce Postle photograph. He scaled bridges and braved floods, fires and mobs

to put viewers in the moment and capture the spirit of his subjects – be it a sporting star, performer, factory worker or politician.”

Postle was born in 1940, the son of a press photographer, and began his career at *Queensland Country Life*, then the *Courier-Mail* in Brisbane before moving to the *Age* in Melbourne in 1969, where he shot the front-page image on his first day. In a time before digital photography and hard drives, Postle shot sparingly on film. Despite these limitations he was known to detour from a job when he saw a great photo opportunity, with some of his best-known images spontaneously captured on the way to other jobs. He received a Quill Lifetime Achievement Award from the Melbourne Press Club in 2007 and was inducted into The Australian Media Hall of Fame in 2014. The Bruce Postle appeal will run until 30 June 2019.

See also: “Appeal to scoop archive of ‘Mr Front Page’”, *Age*, 26 March 2019, p.3.

#### **102.4.6 *Weekly Times Annual*, 1911-1934**

**Peter Gill** has extracted the following from the “Introduction” to *Index to the Weekly Times Annual 1911-1934 with a Bibliography of Charles Leslie Barrett* by Ian F. McLaren (1986):

During a search in 1980-1 through various publications of The Herald and Weekly Times Limited for contributions to *C.J. Dennis in The Herald and Weekly Times* (Dalriada Press, 1981), [items 3162-7] I re-discovered the *Weekly Times Annual*. This was one of the special publications of The Herald and Weekly Times Limited, well printed on art paper, with articles by leading Australian authors and illustrated by equally talented Australian artists, illustrators and photographers. The *Herald* library has a complete set of the twenty-four annual issues from 1911 to 1934, Victoria’s centenary year; there is an incomplete run in the State Library of Victoria.

So, as Dennis contributions were sought, from his first in 1913, another list began of contributions by other writers and illustrators. As this is a list that could be of use to others, it was decided to reproduce the details. Contents of the *Weekly Times Annual* from 1911-1934 are listed under three main headings:

1. Short stories, verse and features are listed in author alphabetical order, showing the illustrator, if any, whether it was a short story [SS], verse [V] or feature [F], and the annual in which it appeared with relative page number.
2. Name index to signed illustrations lists artists and photographers in alphabetical order, showing the type of illustration and its location. It includes the illustrations listed in the first section for short stories, verse and features in text [IT], with those authors’ names shown in square brackets; as a result, some anonymous illustrations appear in this section instead of section 3. As the standard of illustration for advertisements was excellent, a few examples have been included, e.g. Northfield.
3. Chronological index to anonymous illustrations lists given title of illustrations in chronological order. It was apparently editorial policy up to the 1925 *Annual* to acknowledge the artist, but from 1926 many acknowledgements were waived; more illustrations were taken from State tourist bodies, probably because they were free. Where illustrations were published without a title, an attempt has been made to give them a short description.

In addition to the *Weekly Times Annual*, consideration is given to Charles Leslie Barrett, who was a journalist and naturalist on the *Herald* and its companion publications for 33 years. As many of Barrett’s works, including the *Weekly Times* nature book and the *Sun* Travel and Nature books were published by the *Herald*, it was thought appropriate to include here his bibliography. This section also includes *Pals* which was edited by Barrett over the period in which it was produced at the *Herald*.

**Archives:** Although the *Herald* can trace its beginnings back to the birth of the Port Phillip District, a definitive history of the paper has yet to be written. There are snatches of history in the centenary issues of the *Herald* and the *Weekly Times*, but the company has no formal archives from which the story could be written, except in the daily, weekly and special issues they have produced over 150 years.

**Brief history of the *Herald*:** The *Herald* began as the *Port Phillip Herald* which was first published in Melbourne on 3 January 1840. After a varied career, the Melbourne Newspaper Co. Ltd. Was acquired in 1871 by Samuel Vincent Winter (1843-1904) and John Halfey (1825-89). On Halfey's death in 1889, his half share was purchased by William L. Baillieu, Theodore Fink, A.H. Massina, Donald Munro and G.A. Walstab. The company was sold in 1891 to the City Newspaper Co. which acquired the *Weekly Times* when the *Daily Telegraph* ceased publication in May 1892. The purchaser failed to meet purchase payments and Massina and Fink forced the company into liquidation, resumed ownership and Winter returned from retirement to become Managing Editor of the *Herald*. The Herald & Standard Newspaper Co. Ltd. was formed in 1892 to consolidate these new arrangements.

**Australian weeklies:** Many Australian daily papers launched a weekly companion to their daily newspaper in the middle of the nineteenth century. The first to do so in Australia was David Syme, who launched the *Leader* in 1856 as a companion weekly to the Melbourne *Age*. The Melbourne *Argus* introduced the *Australasian* on 1 October 1864; this became the *Australasian Post* in 1946. The *Sydney Morning Herald* published the *Sydney Mail* from 1860 to 1938; the *South Australian Advertiser* started the *Weekly Chronicle* in July 1858, and the *Brisbane Courier* published the *Queenslander* in February 1866. The Launceston *Examiner* began the *Weekly Examiner* in 1872 and the *Mercury*, Hobart, the *Tasmanian Mail* in 1877. The acquisition of the *Weekly Times* by the *Herald* was more complicated.

**A brief history of the *Weekly Times*:** The *Herald*, Melbourne, was a morning paper until it was converted to evening distribution on 4 January 1869. As a result, a large number of compositors, finding themselves unemployed, formed themselves into a limited company to publish the Melbourne *Daily Telegraph* which commenced publication in 1869. The new company was managed by Charles F. Somerton who had been in charge of the printing department of the *Herald*. The policy of the *Daily Telegraph* was stated in the motto: "The Liberal deviseth Liberal things." Somerton and the *Daily Telegraph* saw the advantages of publishing a weekly companion journal, and it was launched on 11 September 1869 as the *Weekly Times: A journal of society, politics, literature, science, agriculture and sport*. The paper was of folio size, commencing with 16 pages which was expanded to 32 or 40 pages, and sold for threepence. The over-long title was reduced in the issue of 25 September 1875 to the *Weekly Times and Town and Country Journal*. The *Daily Telegraph* was sold in 1882 to a Melbourne group, who "doubled the size of the sheet, and brought it out with the object of waging war against agnosticism, atheism and a variety of other 'isms', as well as supplying the current news of the day". It remained a supporter of the Liberals. However, it advertised in 1888 that "the *Farmer's Gazette and Story Teller* are issued as Supplements to the *Weekly Times*, thus making it the Family Paper of the Colony".

After the *Daily Telegraph* ceased publication in 1892, the *Weekly Times* and the modern presses at 192 Collins Street, Melbourne, were acquired by the Melbourne Herald & Standard Newspaper Co. Ltd. Circulation of the *Weekly Times*, which was 16,000 in 1888, rose to 30,000 in the 1930s, 50,000 in the 1940s, and 100,000 in the 1950s. The present editor is only the eighth holder of that position in the paper's 117 years of existence.



## 5-RECENTLY PUBLISHED

### 102.5.1 Books

**Abramson, Jill**, *Merchants of Truth: Inside the News Revolution*, Penguin, \$35. 544pp. The author, a former editor of the *New York Times*, has written a "gripping and definitive in-the-room account of the revolution that has swept the news industry over the last decade and reshaped our world".

**Jones, Howard C.**, *Startling Stories from Albury*, available from [hcampbelljones@gmail.com](mailto:hcampbelljones@gmail.com), 48 pages, price not stated. Jones was a journalist on the *Border Mail*, Albury.



## 102.5.2 Articles

- Bongiorno, Frank**, “Brickbats and bouquets”, *Inside Story*, 23 April 2019. Twitter has changed the landscape of political reporting, and there’s no going back. The author is head of the School of History at the Australian National University.
- Cooke, Richard**, “Democracy’s Greatest Threat: Denialism, nihilism and the Murdoch propaganda machine,” *Monthly*, May 2019, pp.22-31, A passionate argument against the News Corp newspapers during the 2019 Federal election campaign.
- Duke, Jennifer**, “Nine’s regional papers sale puts focus on costs,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 April, p.12. Foresees further cost cutting ahead of and after the proposed sale of Nine’s regional newspapers.
- Ergas, Henry**, “Public deserves right to pass judgment on courts”, *Australian*, 8 March 2019, p.12. It’s scandalous that Australian judges still retain the power to shut down debate.
- Haigh, Gideon**, “The politics and power of print media”, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 March 2019, p.18.
- Knott, Matthew**, “Murdoch Family: Feud at the heart of a media empire”, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 April, p.12. Summarises a *New York Times* investigation that claims Rupert Murdoch’s fall in January 2018 was very serious, that Lachlan Murdoch very strongly opposed the sale of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Fox; and that Lachlan and James are barely on speaking terms because of their different philosophies.
- Neill, Rosemary**, “Rush verdict a victory for theatre’s ‘cabal of dinosaurs’”, *Weekend Australian*, 13-14 April 2019, p.17. Supporters fear Eryn Jean Norvill’s experience will make others scared to reveal alleged abuse.
- Pryor, Sally**, “Photo collection shows old Canberra in a new light”, *Canberra Times*, 9 March 2019, p.14. More than 3500 press photographs from the Fairfax archives showing Canberra from the 1920s to the 1990s have been saved from obscurity by the Canberra Museum and Gallery. The images were among those transferred by Fairfax to a company in Arkansas in 2013, but which have since languished.
- Scott, Paul**, “What a local newspaper means to a regional city like Newcastle”, *theconversation.com*, 3 May 2019. [This article wrongly says the *Newcastle Herald* began as the *Newcastle Chronicle* in 1858; the *Herald* actually began as the *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners Advocate* in April 1876. It incorporated the *Newcastle Chronicle* four months later.]
- Shanahan, Dennis**, “Critical thinking key to conveying message”, *Australian*, Media section, 29 April 2019, p.25. Journalism evolves but freedom of speech still matters. The article is an edited version of a speech the author, the political editor of the *Australian*, gave when receiving an honorary doctorate from the University of Wollongong.
- Tiffen, Rodney**, “WikiLeaks deconstructed”, *Inside Story*, 18 April 2019. The upsides and downsides of the organisation and its controversial founder, Julian Assange.
- Willis, Ian**, “A notable archive of newspapers and stories”, *History*, Royal Australian Historical Society, March 2019, pp.11-13. Lauds the usefulness of the National Library of Australia’s Trove archive of digitised Australian newspapers, with an emphasis on some NSW titles.

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