



Horace Burgess Harvey as a 15-year-old apprentice (on \$1.49 a week) at Prompt Printery, Bundaberg, in 1941. Owner Jack Eather is in the background.

AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPER HISTORY GROUP

## NEWSLETTER

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### 1 – CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS: NATIONAL & METROPOLITAN

#### 54.1.1 CHAIRING THE FAIRFAX MEDIA BOARD

War has erupted inside the boardroom of Fairfax Media after major shareholder and director John B. Fairfax publicly declared a bid to dump the company's chairman, Ron Walker, reported Rebecca Urban and Clive Mathieson (*Australian*, 18 September 2009, pp.19-20). Fairfax issued a statement on 17 September claiming Walker was "well aware of significant shareholder dissatisfaction with his tenure", and he would use his substantial shareholding to vote against the chairman's re-election at the company's annual meeting. The statement, issued through Fairfax's Marinya Media (which owns 9.7 per cent of Fairfax Media), came within hours of Walker's telling the *Australian*

*Financial Review* that he would stand for re-election, ahead of stepping down in August 2010. “Marinya, for one, cannot see how Mr Walker’s stated intention to delay his retirement assists the company or its shareholders,” Fairfax said.

- **18 Sept:** Walker signalled he might voluntarily leave the Fairfax board as early as the first quarter of 2010 (*Weekend Australian*, 19-20 September, pp.25, 34). Fairfax’s five independent directors pledged their support for Walker, but institutional directors were lining up to support John B. Fairfax’s call for Walker to be dumped. On 20 September, Walker turned 70.
- **21 Sept:** the *Australian* (Media section, p.32) reported that Roger Corbett, a former chief executive of Woolworths and a very new deputy chairman at Fairfax Media (see *Weekend Australian*, 22-23 August 2009, p.27), was firming as favourite to become the next chairman.
- **24 Sept:** the *Australian* reported (pp.19-20) that major shareholders were refusing to accept Roger Corbett’s ascent to the chairman’s role at Fairfax media as a *fait accompli*, arguing that the company would be best served by an external candidate.
- **29 Sept:** the *Australian* reported (p.23) reported Walker would not stand for re-election as chairman in November. Five directors blamed the company’s sinking share price on dissenting directors, John B. Fairfax and son Nicholas.

See Gerard Noonan, “Fairfax too important to be ill-run”, and Geoff Elliott, “Fairfax lists like a rudderless ship without a rudder,” *Australian*, Media section, 28 September 2009, p.27.

#### 54.1.2 NEW DATA ON AD REVENUE

Australia’s media proprietors were reported (*Australian*, Media section, 27 July 2009, p.33) to be preparing to do battle with a start-up consultancy that plans to reveal the exact value of the advertising revenues booked by Australia’s top media buyers with each media company every month. The company, called Standard Media Index, is the brainchild of Jane Schulze, who was the editor of the Media section of the *Australian* until early July. She and her business partner, Sue Fennessy, who has worked in marketing and sponsorship businesses in Australia and Asia, have signed Australia’s largest 23 media-buying companies to supply them with every media booking they make each month. That data will be aggregated to give a real-time picture of where money is being spent in Australia’s \$12 billion-a-year advertising market. The move has reportedly led to fears among media companies, especially those publicly listed, that negative trends revealed in the data could destabilise their share price.

Jane Schulze was “Person of the Week”, *Mediaweek*, 14 September 2009, p.6.

#### 54.1.3 MAKING A BUNDLE ON SALES

Publishers have begun experimenting with suitable products to match with their mastheads in the wake of the audit rule change allowing bundled sales to be included in average net paid sales figures (reports Sally Jackson, *Australian*, Media section, 20 July 2009, p.35). News Limited launched two bundling trials in July, partnering with Coles Express supermarkets in Sydney and with Boost Juice Bars in Melbourne. Bundled sales, which previously could not be included in a newspaper’s average net paid sales figure unless a newspaper was the “primary purchase” in the transaction are being counted by the Audit Bureau of Circulations from 1 July 2009.

#### 54.1.4 CHANGES AT THE AUSTRALIAN PRESS COUNCIL

The Australian Press Council is undergoing change, as it declares in a front-page article in the July issue of its *Australian Press Council News*. The *News* itself will appear only three times a year instead of quarterly. In addition, there will be no *State of the News Print Media* report or an Annual Address during the year. The ANHG notes “seismic movement” at the council over recent months. Several months ago the major contributing

publishers jointly declared they wanted to slash the council's budget by some 33 per cent in keeping with the financial stringencies they were applying across their operations in the face of the Global Financial Crisis.

The smaller contributing members and the public members were surprised. Implicit in the proposal from the big publishers was a reduction in emphasis of the council's advocacy role (freedom of speech issues, court suppression orders, libel and slander legislation, privacy legislation, etc). Some saw other motives at work in the proposed budgetary cut (e.g. the main interest of the big publishers was now in the Right to Know campaign and other vehicles in which the publishers had a stake) but the publishers denied this continue to do so. Inez Ryan, the council's valuable policy research officer, facing a cut in her allocated time to three days a week, has opted to resign, much to the disappointment of the public members, in particular. (The council has advertised for a part-time replacement).

A budget reduction was agreed to, but smaller than 33 per cent, and the major groups proposed that the council should be cut from 22 members to 13. The public members responded with a proposal for 15 members which would tip the balance in favour of public members. At a meeting in the final week of July the issue was finally resolved. As the constitutional change required a two-third majority there was a risk of stalemate. However, the vote for the 15-member council did prevail. There is general agreement that the council had grown too large and some reforms were necessary. However, the public members and many of the contributing bodies acknowledge that both strands of the council's operations – complaints resolution and advocacy – should continue. The advocacy role has grown in importance over the years; governments, the judiciary, police and other bodies are now routinely asking the council for input, submissions or advice. Council members regularly give up their time for case study sessions at universities and the chairman (Prof. Ken McKinnon) and deputy chairman (Prof. H.P. Lee) have significant weight in the areas of law reform, privacy, FOI and other matters of immediate concern for the press and its role. It will be interesting to see how the council weathers the months and years ahead. The new, slim-line model means fewer but more intense meetings (one day instead of two) and how the advocacy work will be carried out remains to be seen.

McKinnon will not seek a new term as chairman when he completes nine years in office at the end of October. He says the financial cuts made by the council are "shortsighted". The funding had been reduced too far, he said. "It's very important for the newspaper industry that the Press Council is strong enough and well enough funded to be a genuine self-regulator." (*Australian*, Media section, 3 August 2009, p.37)

#### **54.1.5 THE MEDIA AND PETER HOLLINGWORTH AS G-G**

Lecturing on the role of the media in Australian politics at the University of Melbourne on 4 August, former Prime Minister John Howard said the media's pursuit of Dr Hollingworth was a "character assassination". Howard recommended Dr Hollingworth's appointment as the Queen's representative in Australia in June 2001. In May 2003 he resigned amid intense criticism of his handling of child abuse allegations during his time as the Archbishop of Brisbane and accusations that he showed little or no compassion for sex abuse victims (ABC News Online). "On the negative side, I have to say that I thought by and large that the Australian media treated Peter Hollingworth disgracefully," Howard said. "You can criticise his judgment. You can criticise the prime minister who was responsible for the recommendation, but I thought the relentless pursuit and character assassination of a very, very decent man, I thought that was appalling, and it went largely right across the media."

#### **54.1.6 CAN YOU TRUST THE MEDIA?**

It's a toss up as to whether you can trust today's newspaper, the 6pm news, and breaking news, according to the IQ2 debate on 4 August on the topic "The media cannot be trusted

with the truth". Looking to turn around a huge pre-debate poll of 64 per cent for the proposition and 18 against, by the end of the night the negative case secured a narrow 46 per cent victory, against the affirmative's 45 per cent. Jonathan Holmes, presenter of ABC's *Media Watch*, opened debate with a string of recent headlines from his show that proved the media was prone to some sizeable errors. "Journalists and editors are human. They can be careless, they can be reckless ... They're under deadline pressure more so than ever ... which is partly why the media can be trusted to tell the truth arguably less than ever," he argued. However, the Fairfax Media director John B. Fairfax retorted that it was the "three Ps" who could not be trusted: politicians, PR professionals, and the public. Take the recent false-eyewitness account of Clare Werbeloff in Kings Cross, he argued, with his own version of "chk, chk, boom". But for all the "salacious headlines and outright falsehoods" that had appeared in papers, he defended journalists as trustworthy people with a passion for the truth. Mark Scott, managing director of the ABC, said that by consuming the media in all its various forms the public was given an emerging picture of the truth. "It is the best way of getting clarity and understanding about what is happening in this complex world." (*SMH Online*, 5 August 2009).

#### **54.1.7 THE POLICE AND THE AUSTRALIAN**

Three inquiries are under way into how details of a secret investigation into an alleged Melbourne-based terrorist group were leaked to the media. The Australian Federal Police announced on 5 August that it had launched its investigation on 31 July, the day after a journalist from the *Australian* informed senior officers he had details of the operation. But when the *Age* asked the AFP on 4 August if it had begun a leak investigation, a spokesman responded that no decision had been made. The Victorian Office of Police Integrity has begun its own inquiry, while a third probe by the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity was also announced on 5 August. Victorian Police Commissioner Simon Overland has expressed grave concerns over a deal struck by the AFP with the newspaper, which allowed a reporter to publish details of the impending raids several hours before they began. Overland said the notice of the raids had left his officers confronting a "real and present risk to [their] lives" (*Age*, 6 August 2009; see also, "Federal and Victorian police at odds over coverage: editor", *Australian*, 6 August 2009, p.5; and "Why arrest terrorists when you can arrest journalists?" *Australian*, 7 August 2009, p.15).

The *Australian* reported that Federal Attorney-General Robert McClelland was examining the need for a protocol for dealing with national security leaks to the media (Media section, 10 August 2009, p.31). The journalist who broke the terror-raid story, Cameron Stewart, presented the story behind the story (*Australian*, Media section, 10 August 2009, p.32).

#### **54.1.8 TRADING POST TO DITCH PRINT EDITION**

From the end of October, the weekly *Trading Post* will close its print edition and appear only online. This will mean the loss of 279 jobs. The publication was first printed in November 1966 and became a must-read for shoppers searching for just about anything. The readership declined 32 per cent to 469,000 in the past 12 months (*Australian*, 1 October 2009, p.4).

#### **54.1.9 RECENT CHRONOLOGY**

##### **54.1.9.1 EVENTS**

**17 August 2009:** The *Australian* is printed in Hobart for the first time.

**5 September 2009:** The *Weekend Australian* is printed in Hobart for the first time.

**7 September 2009:** The Media section of the *Australian* is no longer a stand-alone liftout, appearing instead as the tail end of a liftout which features the Business section at the front.

**14 September 2009:** Fairfax Media Ltd launches [NationalTimes.com.au/](http://NationalTimes.com.au/) as a "breaking opinion" website; it competes with News Ltd's [ThePunch.com.au/](http://ThePunch.com.au/)

**September:** *Vogue Australia* publishes its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary issue in September.

**25 September 2009:** The *Wimmera Mail-Times*, Horsham, celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It resulted from the amalgamation of Natimuk's *West Wimmera Mail* (estab. 1887) and the *Horsham Times* (1873). A reunion will be held on 17 October.

#### 54.1.9.2 DEATHS

**Brenchley, Frederick Ronald:** D. 29 August 2009 in Canberra, aged 67; born in Sydney, attended Cleveland St High School; joined *Daily Telegraph* in 1959 as a copy boy; moved to *Telegraph's* Canberra bureau; studied economics degree part-time; joined *Newsday*, ill-fate Melbourne afternoon daily; joined *Australian Financial Review's* Canberra bureau; became bureau chief of the *National Times* and in 1974 became deputy editor of the *Financial Review* and in 1979, editor; in 1980 he became manager of the Fairfax-owned Sungravure magazine group; returned to journalism when young Warwick Fairfax took over Fairfax in 1987 and spent six years in London for the *AFR* and managing the Fairfax bureau; became Canberra correspondent of the *Bulletin*, 1998-2004, and then turned much of his time to books, including a biography of Professor Allan Fels, who had been chairman of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (*Sydney Morning Herald* and *Age*, 1 September 2009).

**Carter, Leonard William:** D. 2 January 2009 in Hobart, aged 89; news photographer for the Hobart *Mercury* for 41 years; covered 25 Sydney-Hobart yacht races; began career at age 19; was a Rat of Tobruk in World War II (*Mercury*, 12 January 2009).

**Catchpole, Henry:** D. 12 August 2009 in Hobart, aged 78; journalist with the *Advocate* in Burnie for almost 50 years, retiring in June 1995 after six years as editor; active member of the Catholic Church; accomplished snooker player and keen golfer (*Mercury*, Hobart, and *Advocate*, Burnie, 13 August 2009).

**Farrelly, Alan:** D. 27 September 2009 at Cooma, NSW, aged 69; son of a coal miner, he started his journalism career at the *Newcastle Morning Herald* in 1957; became news editor of *Newcastle Sun* in 1972; assistant editor of *Sydney Sun* 1974; after ill-fated partnership with Derryn Hinch in magazine publishing, joined News Limited in 1978 as night editor of the *Australian*; became editor of the *Sunday Telegraph*, editor-in-chief of the *Daily Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph*; editor of the *Australian* in 1984-85 and 1987-88; editor of the *South China Morning Post*, and founding editor of Melbourne's *Sunday Herald* in 1989; retired to Jindabyne in 2007 when suffering from leukemia (*Australian*, 29 September 2009, p.4).

**Hellaby, David:** D. 31 July 2009, aged 58; born in Hutt Valley, NZ; stumbled into journalism after teaching an editor's children to swim; cut his teeth reporting on New Zealand's Mr Asia heroin syndicate while still a cadet and returned to the investigation 10 years later as a senior journalist in Melbourne; worked in Australia during 1970s; returned to NZ in 1981 to work on the *New Zealand Truth* and *Dominion*; returned to Australia in 1990; reported for *Adelaide Advertiser* in collapse of State Bank of South Australia; fined \$5000 for contempt of court after refusing to divulge one of his sources; worked for *Courier-Mail* as business editor; set up freelance IT editorial agency, Meg A Byte Syndication (*Courier-Mail*, 8-9 August 2009, p.96).

**Murray, James:** D. 29 September 2009 in Sydney, aged 82; born in Ireland, he grew up in Melbourne, attending Scots College, and Trinity College at the University of Melbourne; worked as a teacher, but entered Anglican priesthood despite his father's opposition; served the tough working class suburb of Broadmeadows and also served as chaplain at Pentridge Prison; contributed to the *Australian* for many years and most recently carried the title of religious affairs editor (*Australian*, 30 September 2009, p.4).

**Punshon, Greg:** D. 4 August in Cairns, aged 52; born at Latrobe, Tasmania; began newspaper career at the *Examiner*, Launceston, before going on to become editor of the *Port Macquarie News* and the *Armidale Express*; also worked at the *Northern Daily Leader*, Tamworth; joined *Cairns Post* in April 2004 as chief sub-editor, becoming chief-of-staff and later business editor (*Mediaweek* online, 6 Aug 2009).

**Welsh, Noel Keith:** D. 19 July 2009 at Sandy Bay, Hobart, aged 103; born on Christmas Day 1905 at Benalla, Victoria; began journalism career on *Albury Daily News* on 12 February 1923; it closed two years later and he joined *Border Morning Mail*; in

1933, moved to Melbourne to join the *Star*, an afternoon paper produced by the *Argus*; it closed in May 1936; worked for Wagga Wagga *Daily Advertiser* for six years before serving in World War II; short stint in public relations after war and then worked for Hobart *Mercury* for 23 years until his retirement in 1970; became known for his accurate coverage of Hobart City Council affairs and of Australian rules football; served as secretary of the Tasmanian branch of the Australian Journalists' Association, 1958-78; when he stepped down, the Press Club in Hobart instituted The Keith Welsh Award for the best contribution to journalism in Tasmania (*Mercury*, 21 July 2009, re his death; Rod Kirkpatrick, "A tale of two country dailies that struggled against the odds", *PANPA Bulletin*, November 2001, pp.33-35).

#### **54.1.10 WAN PROFIT FALLS 21pc**

West Australian Newspapers Holdings Ltd's annual net profit dropped 21 per cent as advertising revenue fell but the group says trading conditions are improving, helped by new resources projects in Western Australia. WAN reported that net profit fell to \$87.2 million for the 12 months to June 30, compared with \$109.9 million in 2007/08. The publisher and radio station operator forecast in June a net profit between \$93 million and \$98 million for 2008/09, as it announced it was cutting full-time equivalent staff numbers by 8.6 per cent across the group. WAN now says that normalised profit, which removes one-off reorganisation costs, fell 20 per cent to \$97.1 million and revenue fell 11 per cent to \$418.6 million. Wharton said the company halted a long-term circulation slide in the March quarter. The company appointed Brett McCarthy editor of The West Australian in March, after Seven Network Ltd chairman Kerry Stokes also took over as chairman of WAN after securing a 22 per cent stake in the company (WA Today, 7 August 2009).

#### **54.1.11 NEWS CORP LOSES \$4.04bn**

News Corporation reported a net loss of \$US3.4 billion (\$4.04 bn AUD) for 2008/09 after writedowns of \$US8.9 billion. But Rupert Murdoch, chairman and chief executive, sees better times ahead (*Australian*, 7 August 2009, p.19).

#### **54.1.12 PMP AND EVANS SETTLE**

Printing and distribution group PMP and its former chief executive Brian Evans (once the 2IC at Fairfax) have settled a \$1.6 million law suit he launched in March against the company after it had refused to pay him a termination benefit, reports Nick Tabakoff (*Australian*, 4 August 2009, p.19).

#### **54.1.13 THE AUSTRALIAN NOW PRINTED IN HOBART**

On 17 August the *Australian* was printed in Hobart for the first time and the cover price of the paper slashed from \$1.90 to \$1.50 for Tasmanian buyers. (And from 5 September, the *Weekend Australian* has been printed in Hobart, too.) The paper will also reach their newsagents at least four hours earlier than previously. Home delivery will be much simpler to arrange and far more likely to happen. Before, fog often delayed delivery of the *Australian* by aircraft from Melbourne to Hobart and Launceston. News Ltd made the decision to print the national title on its new \$32 million state-of-the-art printing plant at Hobart's Technopark (*Australian*, Media section, 17 August 2009, p.36; see also Peter Coleman, "Tassie tough", *gxpess*, 9/3, August 2009, pp.14-16.).

From this month Fairfax Media is expected to print weekend editions of the *Age*, Melbourne, on its Launceston presses, where the Launceston *Examiner* and Burnie *Advocate* are printed (*Australian*, Media section, 28 September 2009, p.28).

#### **54.1.14 CHINA AND THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB**

The Chinese government tried to pressure Australia's National Press Club into cancelling a nationally televised speech by Uighur leader Rebiya Kadeer on 11 August. The political counsellor at the Chinese embassy in Canberra, Liu Jing, met press club officials a week earlier and asked the club to withdraw the invitation to Kadeer. A director of the club said, "Mr Liu said to us, 'You must withdraw the invitation to Ms Kadeer.' He was

insistent but polite.” He said Liu had pointed out that the Chinese government believed it would be “regrettable” if bilateral relations were harmed by Kadeer’s speech at the club (*Australian*, 11 August 2009, p.1).

#### 54.1.15 PEOPLE

**Andrew Butcher**, publishing director for *Time* and *Fortune* for the Asia Pacific, is “Person of the Week” in *Mediaweek*, 24 August 2009, p.6.

**Greg Callaghan** is the new deputy editor of the *Weekend Australian Magazine*.

**Geoff Elliott**, the *Australian’s* former Washington correspondent, is the new editor of its Media section (*Mediaweek*, 28 September 2009, p.4).

**Adele Ferguson**, award-winning business writer and columnist, will join Fairfax in October, writing for the *Age*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *BusinessDay* online. She has been a business writer and columnist for almost 20 years (*Mediaweek* online, 28 September 2009).

**Toni Hetherington**, editor-in-chief of Leader Newspapers, Victoria, has been promoted to deputy editor of the *Sunday Herald Sun*.

**Amelia Lester, 26**, of Sydney, has been appointed managing editor of the *New Yorker*. The magazine has more than one million subscribers (*Australian*, 20 August 2009, p.8).

**Helen McCabe**, a former Canberra press gallery television journalist and self-confessed political junkie, has been appointed editor-in-chief of the *Australian Women’s Weekly*. McCabe had been deputy editor of the *Sunday Telegraph* for the past three years.

**Sue McVay**, deputy editor of the *Sunday Mail*, becomes managing editor for both the *Courier-Mail* and the *Sunday Mail*.

**Stephen Matchett**, former chief leader writer of the *Australian*, is to work on the Higher Education section as well as remaining on the leader writers’ team.

**Neil Melloy**, executive editor of the *Courier-Mail*, has been appointed editor-in-chief of Quest Newspapers.

**Alan Oakley** talks to *Mediaweek* (3 August 2009, p.9) about his return to News Ltd after a number of years as a Fairfax editor (*Newcastle Herald*, *Sunday Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald*).

**Ed O’Loughlin**, who threw in his job as an Australian foreign correspondent based in Africa to try his hand as a novelist, was named in July as one of the 13 contenders for the Booker Prize.

**Daniel Sankey**, formerly managing editor of **brisbanetimes.com.au**, has been appointed editor of **theage.com.au**. Sankey is a former editor of the *Queensland Times*, Ipswich and of the *Daily News*, Warwick (*Mediaweek*, 31 August 2009, p.7).

**Scott Thompson**, editor-in-chief at Quest Newspapers in Queensland, has become deputy editor of the *Sunday Mail* in Brisbane.

**Paola Totaro**, Europe correspondent for the *Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald*, is profiled in the *Age Extra*, Issue 6, September 2009, pp.1, 4-5.

**John Trevorrow**, managing editor of the Herald and Weekly Times group, has been appointed Leader’s editor-in-chief.

**Helen Trinca**, former magazine editor, is the new senior leader writer of the *Australian*.

**Steve Waterson**, former editor of *Time* South Pacific, is the new editor of the *Weekend Australian Magazine*. He is “Person of the Week” in *Mediaweek*, 7 September 2009, p.7. His intention is to give the magazine a “newsier feel”. He says: “... basically we are Australia’s national news weekly magazine.”

#### 54.1.16 SPECIAL DEAL FOR ADELAIDE ADVERTISER SUBSCRIBERS

Adelaide’s *Advertiser* has adopted a new strategy to make home delivery more appealing. As from 10 August, subscribers receive a different front page than casual purchasers do. Subscribers receive improved navigation details on Page 1 followed up with some other subscriber-only perks, detailed on Page 2. *Advertiser* marketing director told *Mediaweek* (10 August 2009, p.13) the subscription front page is designed to give readers a better sense of what is inside the paper whereas the retail edition is designed to be more eye-

catching “at the street level”. The home-delivery edition departs on the first truck runs while the retail edition is being put on the press.

#### **54.1.17 FAIRFAX LOSES \$380m**

Fairfax media lost \$380 million during 2008/09 after making a profit of \$386.9 million the previous year. CEO Brian McCarthy said the year was the “worst environment” he had ever experienced in the media sector. The company employed about 1000 fewer people than it had a year earlier. This was a reduction of 9 per cent. McCarthy did not see any immediate improvement in earnings (*Australian*, 25 August 2009, p.17).

#### **54.1.18 SMH MOVES A LITTLE AWAY FROM BROADSHEET**

Fairfax Media announced on 26 August: The *Sydney Morning Herald* weekday edition is changing format in response to the evolving habits of our readers. With 2.5 million Sydneysiders commuting to work each day, the *Herald* is adapting to meet their needs. From Monday, 21 September, a new Monday-Friday format for the *Herald* will have the broadsheet news and opinion section fold around a daily business and sport compact liftout. With “BusinessDay” leading in from the front of the compact section, and Sport from the back, readers will be able to access the *Herald’s* business and sport news, commentary and information in a “more convenient new format”. Simultaneous with the format change, the news section will undergo a minor design overhaul to improve readability and navigation. The Saturday *Herald’s* format remains unchanged (see also *Mediaweek*, 21 September 2009, pp.8-9).

#### **54.1.19 PRINT READERSHIP**

TheNewspaperWorks, in conjunction with magazine publishers, has called for expressions of interest from companies interested in participating in a tender process to select a supplier of Australian readership metrics to encompass newspapers and magazines and/or its associated analytical software (*Australian*, Media section, 24 August 2009, p.35, advert.; see also “Print circulation ‘heading to online model’”, *Australian*, Media section, 14 September 2009, p.31).

#### **54.1.20 KIRK RECEIVED \$4.1m TERMINATION PAYMENT**

The indignity of David Kirk’s sudden ousting as Fairfax Media chief executive was softened by a \$4.1 million termination payout. The Fairfax Media annual report, released on 1 September, reveals that the World Cup-winning All Blacks captain collected the one-off payment in December 2008. His total pay for 2008-09, including a base rate of \$762,000 for about five months’ work, was \$4.98m, compared with \$3.41m in the previous year. An explanation for the size of the payout is expected at the Fairfax annual meeting on 10 November. Kirk was recently named executive chairman of the Hoyts cinema group, which was once controlled by the Packer family but is owned by private equity firm Private Equity Partners. The annual report reveals that McCarthy suffered a pay cut in 2008-09 – from \$2.43m to \$2.07m – after his bonus was more than halved (*Australian*, 2 September 2009, p.21.)

#### **54.1.21 NO COMMUTER PAPER FOR PERTH – AT THIS STAGE**

Perth’s Public Transport Authority has scrapped plans to distribute a free afternoon commuter newspaper after receiving only two bids to print and distribute the publication from special dispensing bins at train stations. PTA spokesman David Hynes said that given the response, and the current economic climate, the PTA would not proceed with the proposal which would have given Perth two daily newspapers for the first time since the *Daily News* closed in 1990 (*West Australian*, 20 August 2009).

#### **54.1.22 PACKER SELLS 54 PARK STREET**

James Packer has ended what is believed to be a history of more than 40 years’ ownership by his family of 54 Park Street, Sydney. Consolidated Media Holdings has sold the property for \$50 million to AMP Capital Investors (*Australian*, 26 August 2009, p.3).



#### 54.1.23 CIRCULATION FIGURES FOR APRIL TO JUNE

The Audit Bureau of Circulations has issued figures for the April-June quarter this year. The overall impression is of a fairly steady market, although the *Australian Financial Review* lost 8.4 per cent of its weekday sales compared with the same quarter last year.

	Circulation			Readership	
	April-June 2009	April-June 2008	% variation	12 months to June 2009	% variation
<b>National</b>					
<i>Australian</i>	135,831	136,000+	– 0.1	437,000	– 7.2
<i>Weekend Australian</i>	307,390	301,000+	+ 2.1	876,000	+ 0.5
<i>Aust Financial Review</i>	81,845	89,329	– 8.4	285,000	+ 8.8
<i>Aust Financial Review</i> (Sat)	90,692	92,415	– 1.9	184,000	+ 12.2
<b>New South Wales</b>					
<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	389,254	385,000+	+ 1.1	1,054,000	– 7.5
<i>Daily Telegraph</i> (Sat)	337,000+	327,000+	+ 3.1	893,000	– 4.8
<i>Sunday Telegraph</i>	657,424	663,000+	– 0.8	1,612,000	– 6.4
<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i>	210,000+	212,500+	– 1.2	807,000	– 15.4
<i>Sydney M. Herald</i> (Sat)	359,200+	358,224	+ 0.3	1,081,000	– 8.8
<i>Sun-Herald</i>	461,509	483,220	– 4.5	1,200,000	– 9.5
<b>Victoria</b>					
<i>Herald Sun</i>	526,500+	530,000+	– 0.7	1,373,000	– 7.3
<i>Herald Sun</i> (Sat)	514,500+	510,500+	+ 0.8	1,394,000	– 3.7
<i>Sunday Herald Sun</i>	617,000+	622,000+	– 0.8	1,526,000	– 1.3
<i>Age</i>	206,700	208,000+	– 0.6	704,000	– 6.4
<i>Age</i> (Sat)	291,600	301,500+	– 3.3	964,000	+ 0.5
<i>Sunday Age</i>	225,250	227,500+	– 1.0	724,000	– 0.7
<b>Queensland</b>					
<i>Courier-Mail</i>	219,811	217,575	+ 1.0	594,000	– 8.1
<i>Courier-Mail</i> (Sat)	308,747	309,602	– 0.3	800,000	– 9.9
<i>Sunday Mail</i>	551,845	565,173	– 2.4	1,266,000	– 10.8
<b>South Australia</b>					
<i>Advertiser</i>	187,841	189,668	– 1.0	487,000	– 3.2
<i>Advertiser</i> (Sat)	251,098	256,063	– 1.9	647,000	+ 1.4
<i>Sunday Mail</i>	305,808	313,469	– 2.4	696,000	– 5.8
<b>Western Australia</b>					
<i>West Australian</i>	196,761	195,033	+ 0.9	543,000	– 7.8
<i>West Australian</i> (Sat)	343,460	342,787	+ 0.2	852,000	– 5.8
<i>Sunday Times</i>	320,901	328,000	– 2.2	749,000	– 8.3
<b>Tasmania</b>					
<i>Mercury</i>	46,056	46,758	– 1.5	116,000	+ 7.4
<i>Mercury</i> (Sat)	61,624	61,813	– 0.3	145,000	+ 1.4
<i>Sunday Tasmanian</i>	59,140	59,930	– 1.3	133,000	+ 3.1
<i>Sunday Examiner</i>	40,531	41,434	– 2.2	100,000	– 5.7
<b>Northern Territory</b>					
<i>Northern Territory News</i>	21,826+	21,319	+ 2.4	48,000	+ 14.3
<i>NT News</i> (Sat)	32,611+	31,860	+ 2.4	58,000	+ 1.8
<i>Sunday Territorian</i>	23,372+	22,658	+ 3.2	40,000	– 9.1
<b>ACT</b>					
<i>Canberra Times</i>	34,038	34,068	– 0.9	84,000	– 23.6
<i>Canberra Times</i> (Sat)	57,869	59,939	– 3.5	148,000	– 10.3
<i>Canberra Times</i> (Sun)	34,804	34,316	+ 1.4	92,000	– 6.1

#### **54.1.24 AUSTRALIAN REDESIGNED**

News Limited unveiled a multi-million-dollar relaunch of the *Australian* on 5 September, backed by a marketing campaign under the slogan “Think. Again.” Here’s what the *Weekend Australian* reported on 5-6 September, p.5: “As the *Weekend Australian* rolled off seven presses across the continent last night, a new era was dawning for the nation’s fastest growing newspaper.” (The “fastest-growing” description is apparently based on the latest circulation figures.) Lots of fine-sounding adjectives were sprayed around as the design changes were outlined. The arts, culture and entertainment section, “Review”, was published in magazine format from that day (same size as the “Good Weekend” in *SMH* and *Age*). The first new-style review carried Jane Fraser’s column, formerly “Last Look” and now “Plainly Jane” (p.4). She took readers on a ramble through her journalism career, but mainly in relation to her experience as a columnist in Australia after she had left the *Rand Daily Mail* in Johannesburg.

The weekend paper also introduced a new section, “Focus”, which analyses the week’s events features various commentators led by editor-at-large Paul Kelly. “Inquirer” has become the “agenda-setting engine room of the newspaper.” We are told that it will “detach itself from the ephemeral 24/7 news cycle and crystallise the issues of the month, decade or century”. And in the weekday *Australian*, from 7 September, “A Plus” was introduced, giving the paper a dedicated daily features section, including long-form journalism, two pages of arts and entertainment, plus a revamped TV page with daily reviews, as well as a new dedicated games page. By the way, for those subscribers who have been wondering where the *Wish* magazine went from the *Australian* on the first Friday of the month: the small print in an ad. for *Wish* says that it is “available with the *Australian* at retailers in metropolitan Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Canberra, Adelaide and Perth” (*Australian*, 1 September 2009, p.7; *Mediaweek*, 14 September 2009, pp.8-9).

The *Australian*, Media section, 7 September 2009, p.27, carried an article on the man behind various major News Corporation redesign projects, Alfredo Trivino. He has been a consultant to News Ltd on the rolling overhaul of the *Australian*. The Media section is now at the rear-end of the Business section.

#### **54.1.25 BLOWING UP A STORM IN THE TELE**

The Sydney newspapers of 24 September reported the huge dust storm which hit Sydney on the preceding day. The *Sydney Morning Herald* had two broadsheet pages (including ads) plus a front page article. This paled compared to the *Daily Telegraph* which devoted 15 tabloid pages (including ads) to the story. This included an eight page wraparound. A particularly interesting feature in the *Telegraph* was that some advertisers had devised storm-specific innovative advertisements (also see “Dust dawn whipped up social storm of photos and comment”, *Australian*, Media section, 28 September 2009, p.27).

#### **54.1.26 FOOTBALL POSTERS CONTINUE**

The legacy of WEG will live on through *Herald Sun* cartoonist Mark Knight, who has taken over as the artist for the official AFL Premiership poster. He continues the tradition William Ellis Green began when he marked Footscray’s 1954 Premiership victory with the first poster. Green died last year. All 55 of his posters are on display at the National Sports Museum at the Melbourne Cricket Ground until 1 November. Knight has cartooned for the *Herald Sun* since 1987 (*Herald Sun*, 25 September 2009).

### **2 – CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS: ONLINE**

#### **54.2.1 PAYING FOR ONLINE NEWS**

The loyalty of readers accustomed to paying nothing to get their news online is about to be tested, as Australia’s largest newspaper groups prepare to charge for access to their websites. Fairfax Media is considering two levels of access, one free and the other incurring a charge, as newspapers move to protect declining revenues. News Limited chief executive Rupert Murdoch announced in early August that sites featuring the news

content of his stable of papers would no longer be free. The plan to erect pay-walls around their online sites comes as newspaper companies confront a decline in the advertising revenue that has financed print production. Between them, Fairfax and News Ltd own all but one of Australia's metropolitan dailies, most of the suburban and regional papers, and websites that in total claim more than 10 million browsers a month. Fairfax chief executive Brian McCarthy told the *Sunday Age* (9 August 2009) that charging for online access was essential if publishers were to maintain their newsroom staff. Speaking before the announcement by Murdoch, McCarthy said the industry faced a challenge in "monetising" its online news. "Monetisation will have to happen, because without monetisation of the online sites that the newspaper industries have operated very successfully, we can't afford to keep the big newsroom staffs we have," he said.

Fairfax was looking at a number of pay models, including offering readers two levels of access - free entry for a mass audience, with a charge for "more upmarket, high quality data". McCarthy said a two-level scheme could work for Fairfax's new national online news, commentary and analysis site, **[nationaltimes.com.au](http://nationaltimes.com.au)**, launched on 14 September, initially free. He said **[theage.com.au](http://theage.com.au)** and **[smh.com.au](http://smh.com.au)** could also have free and paid access levels. The number of people reading newspaper online sites is reported to have doubled in the past two years, but the problem for the industry is that while it has been giving away its core product, online advertising has not compensated for revenue decline from newspaper advertising. News Ltd, publisher of the *Herald Sun* and the *Australian*, plans to introduce online charges by June next year. Fairfax has not set a date. The move is a risk for both publishers, which are gambling on readers being prepared to pay for news they have been receiving free - and will remain free on sources such as the ABC. While newspaper websites carry advertising, they do not finance the news content, most of which comes from the papers. (Also see *Australian*, 7 August 2009, pp.19, 22, for what Rupert Murdoch said; and Mark Day's comments, *Australian*, Media section 10 August 2009, p.36. See 54.5.2, Hyland.)

#### **54.2.2 JAMES MURDOCH AND THE EDINBURGH SPEECH**

An out-of-control BBC and addiction to central planning by regulators are damaging democracy and media choice in Britain, James Murdoch said in the annual MacTaggart Lecture in Edinburgh at the end of August. Murdoch is the chief executive of the European and Asian operations of News Corporation (*Australian*, Media section, 31 August 2009, p.31).

Peter Preston in the *Guardian* writes (*Australian*, 2 September 2009, p.13): "Forget 'chilling' hyperbole about 'state-sponsored news' and standard Orwellian allusions: James Murdoch is right. There is a burgeoning problem for news on air and in print and hiding behind the old barricades of fear and loathing won't solve it. Everybody from the chief executive of the Guardian Media Group to the editor of the *independent* [and] the lords of the *Mail* agrees with James about the BBC's website, consuming upwards of £150 million (291 million) in licence-fee cash. How does a newspaper that wants (nay, needs) to move on to the web and pay for the words it puts there cope when the BBC dishes them out for free? Just get Joe Public to stump up £142.50 a time and your worries are relatively few." (see also editorial comment in *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Australian*, 1 September 2009).

#### **54.2.3 WIDER LOOK AT WEB FEES PROPOSED**

APN News & Media CEO Brendan Hopkins says print media companies must look at a two-tiered system of charging for their online content if they are to maximise their revenue. He says that while attention has been focused on how to get readers to pay, exploring partnerships that were on-selling newspaper content was potentially much more profitable (*Australian*, Media section, 14 September 2009, p.34). Hopkins, also chair of TheNewspaperWorks, says the body is to seek talks with search-engine companies about receiving a share of the revenue generated from links to their online news content (*Australian*, 11 September 2009, p.21).

#### 54.2.4 LEADER ONLINE

A database from the National Library of Australia provides access to Leader Group community newspapers for the Greater Melbourne, Victoria region.

Go to: <http://leader.newspaperdirect.com/epaper/viewer.aspx>

#### 54.2.5 WEB JOURNALISM COMING OF AGE FAST

For report on web journalism fast coming of age, see *Australian*, Media section, 28 September 2009, p.28

### **3 – CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS: COMMUNITY & PROVINCIAL**

#### 54.3.1 CUMBERLAND AND THE *COURIERS*

Cumberland Newspapers, which amalgamated with Courier Newspapers in 2007, has combined three titles into one: the *Glebe*, the *Inner West Weekly* and the *Inner West Courier* have taken the *Inner West Courier* title (*Mediaweek*, 20 July 2009, p.11).

#### 54.3.2 CUNNAMULLA: TONKINS SELL

After more than seven decades in the publishing business, a Cunnamulla family has sold its independent newspaper in south-west Queensland (ABC News online, 21 July 2009). The Tonkin family began producing the *Cunnamulla Watchman* in 1936 and every family member since then was involved in the production of the paper, which was renamed the *Western Sun* in the 1980s. Ian Tonkin says he printed more than four million copies in his time as editor and it was a hard decision to sell. "The whole family has been there for 73 years and I've been there since 1962, so this was my 47th year," he said. "I didn't have anyone who wanted to carry on. So the choice was to carry on until retirement or to sell the business out in an effort to keep newspaper publishing in Cunnamulla going." The paper has been sold to a district grazier and journalist, James Clarke, and has been renamed the *Warrego Watchman*.

#### 54.3.3 QUIRINDI: PRINTER RETIRES AFTER 49 YEARS

Graeme Collins retired from the Quirindi Advocate on 15 July. He had worked for the newspaper and printing company for 49 years, one month and 15 days (*Quirindi Advocate*, 15 July 2009). Collins began work at the *Advocate* (QA) as a hand and machine compositor apprentice on 1 June 1960 when the paper was set up on a linotype (hot metal process) and only two pages were printed at a time on a flatbed press called a "Rex". These two pages were locked in a chase and then locked on the flatbed of the press during printing. The chase and type would weigh anything up to 50 kg (100 lb plus). The *Advocate* was printed twice a week then, Tuesday and Friday, with each edition timed to be finished by 3.30 p.m., so that the bundles of "news" were delivered to school bus drivers and delivered to Murrurundi, Willow Tree, Werris Creek and outlying villages.

As with all apprentices, Collins found that the first day on the job was to learn the "case" (it took a week to learn properly). The "case" was where the handset type letters were stored and one needed to know where they were so that the handset headings could be put together as quick as possible, and if a letter was in the wrong compartment then it was trouble for the apprentice. In those days handset headings, ranging in size from 36 point to 72 point, were common, and it kept an apprentice's life busy making up headings and then dissembling them back into the case during the clean-up after each publication. As the years progressed and a new apprentice started these responsibilities were handed over to the "new" boy and eventually Collins was promoted to operating the linotype. It was a mechanical marvel which spat out hot metal "slugs", which eventually formed into columns of type to be "proofed", and taken away for the proof-reader to correct.

He had served seven years as an operator on the linotype when a new challenge was introduced into the print factory: offset printing. He mastered the intricacies of combining ink and water to produce quality commercial work. There had been few changes in the printing industry during his first 10 years, but the introduction of an

offset printing press, a darkroom, reproductive cameras and computers things changed things dramatically. These processes, introduced by the late Ken Goodwin, included acid etch zinc plates which allowed staff the luxury of taking a photograph, make a print and then have a “block” made on a same day ready for printing, and not have to wait a week or more for a photograph to be sent to Newcastle/Sydney and return. The first offset printing press at QA was a Hamada Star and Collins became quite proficient with this press, putting out a number of high quality jobs. The introduction of the Heidelberg KORD in the early 70s was like stepping up from driving a Mini Minor to a Rolls Royce, and this was where Collins excelled, especially in full-colour printing.

As the years progressed Collins continued to embrace, with enthusiasm, new technology which was evolving at a dramatic pace. The age of computers came and new processes were introduced. Digital printing arrived. During his time at the *Advocate* there have been eight editors/managers and 118 staff members come and go. “How things have changed, as the apprentice I had to do the paper route, on pushbike, each publication day, this meant deliveries along the specified route to people who subscribed, visit the local hospital where patients looked forward to my arrival with the ‘local rag’, and deliver to business houses in the main shopping centre. The ‘paper boy’ disappeared years ago,” Collins said.

#### **54.3.4 APN PROFIT FALLS 53pc**

APN News & Media has reported a 53 per cent fall in first-half net profit as advertising demand remained stagnant amid the economic downturn. But chief executive Brendan Hopkins is confident the publisher has seen the bottom of the economic cycle. Hopkins believes this year is shaping up to be more like 2007 than 2008 when the earnings of media companies globally were ravaged. APN, part-owned by Ireland’s Independent News & Media, said net profit for the six months to 30 June fell to \$US33.6 million (\$40.5m) from \$US71.9m (*Weekend Australian*, 22 August 2009).

#### **54.3.5 BENDIGO: NEW MANAGER**

Margot Falconer has been appointed general manager of *The Advertiser* and *The Bendigo Miner* following the transfer of Peter Dehnert to the Hunter Valley. Falconer was born and educated in Bendigo and spent 12 years working with the former Channel 8 in Bendigo before moving to Melbourne. She has also worked in the advertising industry in the United Kingdom. Falconer is the newspaper’s first female general manager in its 156-year history. Dehnert has become the Fairfax Media regional manager for the Hunter Valley, which includes overall management of Fairfax business units in the upper and lower Hunter region (*Bendigo Advertiser*, 5 September 2009).

#### **54.3.6 MOUNT GAMBIER: ALLAN SCOTT**

Allan Scott’s death (see ANHG 50.1.10.2) has sparked a family split over his estimated \$600 million estate, reports Renato Costello (*Sunday Mail*, Adelaide, 30 August 2009). Two children will receive the bulk of the late trucking magnate’s empire. Scott owned the *Border Watch*, which is published four times a week at Mount Gambier. A rift is reportedly developing in his family over the fortune he left behind. Scott, 85, one of South Australia’s richest men, died from heart failure in Mount Gambier Hospital in October 2008. He left an estimated \$600 million in properties, cars and shares amassed over a 55-year career building a transport, property and media empire. Control of his empire passes to daughter Zena Kaye Winsor, 62, and son Raymond Walter Scott, 59.

The *Advertiser* reported (30 September 2009): Scott’s youngest daughter has launched a civil claim in the Supreme Court contesting the split of his estate. Julie Margaret Jackson, 53, referred to in the will as Julie Spong, the surname of her first husband, was to receive \$4 million in \$1000-per-month installments.

The *Sunday Mail* reported (6 September 2009) that the medical care given to Scott in his final months is being investigated by police. The paper reported that Coroner Mark Johns

had ordered the investigation, which was being conducted by a team of detectives in the Coronial Investigation Section. The Scott investigation is reportedly being treated as a Tier 3 case – the most complex of coronial matters – and is being conducted by up to five detectives in the CIS, part of the Major Crime Investigation Branch. The results of the CIS investigation will be examined by Coroner Johns who will decide if an inquest is warranted or, if there is any evidence of criminality, whether further investigations are carried out by major-crime detectives (*Sunday Mail*, Adelaide, 6 September 2009).

#### **54.3.7 TAREE: *TALKING TIMES* CELEBRATES 15 YEARS**

Forty thousand copies of the *Manning River Times* – in voice form – have helped keep 50 Taree and district residents informed and in touch with their local community over the past 15 years. The hardworking team behind the *Talking Times* celebrated the 15th birthday of the organisation with a luncheon and award presentation at Taree's Uniting Church, together with some of their appreciative clients. The *Talking Times* is an audio production for people in the community who are blind or have low vision or print disability. Co-ordinated by Vision Australia and manned by a small band of local volunteers, it is produced every week for 48 weeks of the year. The "talking newspaper" starts with volunteer narrators reading each of the three editions of the Times each week and selecting sufficient news stories, sport, social snippets, letters to the editor and even some of the classifieds, to fill a 90 minute audio tape. The narrators then "read" the stories onto tape, after which a production team takes over, making sufficient copies for the number of clients scattered across the Manning area. The production team then hands over the personally addressed tapes to the post office for distribution to clients' homes. At the end of the week, clients return their tapes to be copied over again with the following week's news. In the 15 years since the *Talking Times* began on 23 August 1994, a total of 730 master tapes have been recorded and in the vicinity of 40,000 copy tapes produced and sent to about 50 local recipients (*Manning River Times*, 4 September 2009).

### **4 – NEWSPAPER HISTORY**

#### **54.4.1 DIGITAL UPDATE (1)**

The National Library of Australia has announced that the open source software code for the Australian Historic Newspapers discovery service (version 1) has been released. The service had been in beta mode for a year while users tested it, used to and provided feedback. The service allows users to correct the OCR text in historic newspapers to improve it, and also to add tags and comments to articles. During July, major improvements to the OCRE text correction feature were made. Users have corrected more than five million lines of text since release. The service was officially launched as Version 1 on 6 August 2009. All State Libraries and Territory Libraries in Australia are contributing historic newspaper content to the service. Current content is dated 1803-1954.

The code is available from:

**<https://code.nla.gov.au/redmine/projects/show/ndp-beta>**

The service is available from: **<http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/home>**

Details about user engagement and text correction activity are available at:

**[http://www.nla.gov.au/ndp/project\\_details/documents/ANDP\\_ManyHands.pdf](http://www.nla.gov.au/ndp/project_details/documents/ANDP_ManyHands.pdf)**

#### **54.4.2 DIGITAL UPDATE (2)**

**Rose Holley**, manager, Australian Newspaper Digitisation Program, wrote on 3 August 2009: It is now a year since the Australian Newspapers beta service <http://ndpbeta.nla.gov.au> was released to the public. This is the outcome of the collaborative Australian Newspapers Digitisation Program (ANDP <http://www.nla.gov.au/ndp>). The service contains 5.5 million historic newspaper articles dating from 1803-1954. More articles are added every week and there will be 40 million by the end of next year.

The Australian Historical Association recently held their annual conference at the Sunshine Coast and the historians raved about the Australian Newspapers online service and how much time it has saved them. It is no longer necessary to physically go to a library and browse through reels of microfilmed newspapers. Researchers can now keyword search across millions of newspaper articles in a matter of seconds via the internet. Having easy, free access from home increases their hours spent in “productive pleasure”. Researchers, authors and historians are finding fascinating, unusual and unique information in the newspapers, which is helping to further our knowledge of early Australian history.

The Light Railway Research Society of Australia (LRRSA) aims to record the history of the use of rail transport in Australian industry. They focus on the “little lines” rather than the “main lines” because they are largely undocumented in libraries and archives. Frank Stamford, Publications Officer says: “For over forty years old newspaper files have played a very important part in the historical research done by members of this Society, and having the newspapers online has made our task much easier and more productive”. The service has generated a great deal of interest, discussion and enthusiasm amongst the 250 members of the Society. John Browning and Phil Rickard are two of the key researchers and are looking for information on sugar cane mills and tramways in Queensland, and early tramways and tram roads in the Northern Territory and Tasmania respectively. They have found reference to tramways whose existence was not previously known, especially in the Northern Territory. Also newspaper articles on the early use of timber tramways in Queensland (c 1860) and industrial railways used in collieries, convict establishments and sawmilling in Tasmania (c 1830-1870) which were in operation almost forty years before the first steam-operated public railway opened in Tasmania in 1871.

Phil Rickard says: “The Australian Newspapers online enables any member who may be living far (or near) from a capital city library, to do a bit of researching from home and share the results with all members. For us the ANDP is reversing the tyranny of distance.” John Browning says: “Members see the service as a very valuable and much appreciated research tool”.

Another historical transport researcher, Ross Wilson, is researching Perth Tramways for the publication of a book. He says: “I’m often able to verify information on tramways more accurately from newspapers than other published resources, so this is really saving me time”.

Dr Clare Wright (researcher and author) is fascinated with women in early Australian history. She says: “In women’s history, it is incredibly difficult to follow a thread. Women change their names when they get married, and tend not to feature in official records.” However by being able to keyword search early digital Australian newspapers she has been able to find the threads of women’s lives and link them together. She has easily tracked down women who “disappeared” from records, but who actually moved state. She is currently researching the women of the Eureka Stockade. She found that the fugitive figure Sarah Hanmer (Eureka sympathiser in whose Ballarat theatre, the Adelphi, the Eureka miners intended meeting after burning their licences) left Ballarat and moved north, opening a new theatre in Brisbane.

Dr Bruce Moore, director of the Australian National Dictionary Centre at ANU (researcher and author) has been tracing the development of the Australian accent and the Australian vocabulary of Australian English, and linking these to the major movements in Australian history and culture. He and his colleagues are now determining words that originated in Australia (Aussie lingo). After finding verification in the past very difficult he says: “We can now search Australian Newspapers online and easily find occurrences of words we are trying to verify as being first used in Australia.”

Angus Trumble (author) is another happy researcher full of praise. He says on his blog: "I cannot think of any single resource for the study of Australian history that has in my lifetime come as close to providing almost overnight such an enormous sweep of access as does the National Library of Australia's brilliant Australian Newspapers beta service—"Historic Australian Newspapers, 1803 to 1954." I am wholly and happily addicted, and Australian Newspapers beta has already shone an important sidelight onto one or two pressing matters to do with fingernails that will feature in my next book to be published in 2010 (*The Finger: A handbook*)."

#### **54.4.3 NEWSPAPERS SEEM TO BE SOWN BY THE CAPRICE OF THE WINDS**

**Janette Pelosi**, of Sydney, sent the ANHG this item from the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 April 1854, p.2, col. 6 (extracted from *Frazer's Magazine*): "Newspapers contain everything and are found everywhere. The only difficulty is to read them. The threads of newspaper correspondents enclose the whole world in a network of espionage. Nothing can happen that is not sure to get into a newspaper while it is happening, and sometimes before it has happened. It is no idle bluster to say that the eyes of Europe are on you. The eyes of Europe are the newspapers of Europe; and these same eyes are on every man, woman and child, whose lives are of the slightest interest outside their own circles.

"It has been beautifully said of flowers that they start up in the most unexpected places, where there is hardly a handful of soil, and even where there is none, striking their tender yet vigorous roots into the crevices of the naked rock. The same thing may be said of newspapers. They seem to be sown like certain wild seeds, by the caprice of the winds. Wherever there is a settlement of a dozen people you may look out for a newspaper. The first necessity of a new population is a newspaper. It inverts sometimes the vulgar principle of political economy, which will insist that the demand produces the supply; for it happens with newspapers every now and then that the supply produces the demand. The newspaper of a little colony often comes into existence before the readers; some far-sighted speculator always being in advance with an article of consumption which he knows well enough will become indispensable by-and-by.

"Even New Zealand, while it was yet undergoing the early stages of an excruciating experiment, had a newspaper; and Hong-Kong, where the fatality of the climate might be supposed to deter any sensible man from risking more than a month's subscription, has its *Gazette*. Indeed we are not quite sure that a newspaper is not of social instinct. People get up newspapers where there is nobody to read them but themselves. Passengers on a long voyage, who have no news to tell except that which they get from each other, and nobody to tell it to when they get it, frequently amuse themselves by playing at newspapers. This is more remarkable than the most out of the way birth of flowers. A harebell on a rock is not half so surprising as a newspaper on board a ship."

#### **54.4.4 THE ESSENTIAL PRINTER**

Without him tyrants and humbugs in all countries would have their own way. He is a friend of intelligence and thought, a friend of liberty, of freedom of law, indeed, the friend of every man who is a friend of order.

Of all inventions, of all discoveries in science and art, of all the great results in the wonderful progress of mechanical energy and skill, the Printer is the only product of civilisation necessary to the existence of free men.

– Charles Dickens, circa 1850

#### **54.4.5 THE GLUE AND CURRENCY OF GOSSIP**

Lalita Tademy's *Red River* (Headline, 2006), a novel based in the Deep South of the USA, tells how, about a century ago, the people shared the news essential to their daily living (pp.265-266):

In the four square miles of The Bottom, it is possible during the busiest times of the year to go without catching sight of one another for days or weeks or sometimes months at a stretch.



Nonetheless, detailed goings-on within each family unit, whether of critical consequence like birth, death, or illness, or the not so essential, such as the misdeeds of a wayward child or philandering husband, or successes or failures in dealing with the white man, are preserved and passed along from one household to the next, reported and repeated, absorbed and commented upon as the glue and currency of the community. Out of sight does not equate to out of mind, but first-hand improves the flavour of gossip.

#### **54.4.6 STATE LIBRARY PUTS GOVERNMENT GAZETTES ONLINE**

The State Library of Victoria has made its complete collection of *Victorian Government Gazettes* available online. These include, *NSW Government Gazettes*, 1836-1851; *Port Phillip Government Gazettes*, 1843-1851; *Victorian Government Gazettes*, 1851-1997. The gazettes from 1998 were already available online. See *State Library of Victoria News*, March-June 2009, p.10.

#### **54.4.7 YOUR SAY**

**John Graham**, president, Ryerson Index Inc., writes: In ANHG no. 31 (2005), you first mentioned the Ryerson Index. For those who came in late, this is an index to (mainly) contemporary death and funeral notices in Australian newspapers. It is aimed squarely at genealogists, but we know of numerous government departments, legal firms, direct marketing firms and other businesses who are also regular users.

Much has changed since 2005. The Index has more than doubled, and now contains over 2.1 million entries. It is growing at the rate of about 900 new entries per day. There are complete runs of a number of important papers, among them the *Sydney Morning Herald* from 1969 to date, the *Lismore Northern Star* from 1968 to date, and the *Mudgee Guardian* from 1960 to date. We now have coverage of newspapers from all states except WA, plus the ACT.

The website has changed too, and now has a much easier to remember URL at [www.ryersonindex.org/](http://www.ryersonindex.org/). Organisationally, Ryerson Index Inc is now an incorporated association, and has a membership in excess of 130 active indexers. As well as concentrating on current newspapers, we also work with various libraries and family history societies to incorporate data from other indexes. We are currently working with the Goulburn Regional Library to include about 25,000 entries from the Ted Cross Index to the *Goulburn Post*, covering the period from 1930 to the present. We expect to have this data online by the end of the year.

#### **54.4.8 PRINTING EXHIBITS INSPIRE STUDENTS**

An exhibition of TAFE Graphic Design students' posters, influenced by their time spent at Armidale's Museum of Printing, was held recently at the New England Regional Art Museum (NERAM). Students interacted and photographed a variety of machinery and objects at the Museum of Printing on the lower floor of NERAM. The machines in the museum came from an era when industrial aesthetics were as important as functionality. One example on show was the beautiful carved lion's feet on a printing press, which might not have made for better mechanics, but would have enhanced the experience of those using the press every day. Can the economic value of aesthetics be measured? Viewers considered this as they saw posters that showed a modern take on an era of aesthetically pleasing machinery that was part of the printing press industry (*Armidale Express*, 5 August 2009).

#### **54.4.9 NEWSPAPERS IN BOSTON**

**Victor Isaacs**, of Canberra, recently visited Boston, USA, and reflects on the newspapers available to Bostonians: I looked at every possible newspaper I could find and read a number of them daily. The impression I got was that, compared to my previous visits to the US, weekday newspapers were thinner. The Sunday newspapers, however, are still enormous. Dailies cost 75c or \$1, except the *NY Times* and *Wall Street Journal* which were \$2. Sunday papers were up to \$5. Editorials were lengthy, and I gathered, unlike in Australia, are actually read by people!

What is hugely annoying in American newspapers is the ridiculous practice of not completing any article on the front page, requiring continuous page turning. There is no reason for this annoying practice. It even extends to articles on the front page of inside sections. *USA Today* is the honourable exception to this practice, and I lament that it is now common in Australia, especially with the *Australian*.

I found the narrower American broadsheet size convenient for reading on trains.

Boston is one of the few American cities still with more than one home-town daily. They are the *Boston Globe* (owned by the *New York Times*), which is a broadsheet, high quality paper; the *Boston Herald*, which is a tabloid size, popular paper; and *Metro* a free, morning commuter paper, on the usual style of these papers, a very lightweight read. I was surprised to find that all the New York dailies were readily available everywhere in Boston – not just, as expected, the *NY Times*, but also the two tabloid size popular papers, the *NY Post* and the *Daily News*.

My usual daily reading was *Metro* (because it was free) (M-F only), *Boston Globe*, *NY Times* and the two national papers, *USA Today* (which is M-F only) and *Wall Street Journal* (M-Sat only). Foreign news coverage in *USA Today* was okay and quite good in the *Boston Globe*, *NY Times* and *Wall St Journal*. As far as I can tell, both general news coverage and appearance have significantly improved in the *WSJ* since the Murdoch takeover. Certainly, compared to the *WSJ*, the *NY Times* seems a tired and old looking paper. I now know why it is called the “grey old lady”. The foreign news articles in the *NY Times*, are often, in fact, more in the nature of extended background reports, at the expense of broad news coverage.

I was very surprised and pleased that there was a lot of Australian news in the newspapers. This was certainly not the case on previous visits to the US. Of course, this may have just been co-incidence of what was making news at the time. Obituaries and death notices are very big in the US. Some local non-dailies sometimes gave the impression of being just a bit of wrapping around the obits. Reflecting Boston’s demographics, there were three Boston Irish weeklies.

## **5 – RECENTLY PUBLISHED**

### **54.5.1 BOOKS**

**Jacobsen, Kris**, *A Land of Promise: An Account of Jacob Isaacs, Jewish Convict and Benjamin Isaacs, Christian Printer and Publisher*, published by Kris Jacobsen, 116 Marconi Crescent, Kambah ACT 2902, kljacobsen@ozemail.com.au, 202 pages, paperback, illustrated (including of newspaper pages), \$27.50 plus postage. A comprehensive account of the lives of Jacob Isaacs and his son Benjamin Isaacs, who established the first newspapers in Parramatta and Bathurst, as well as being associated with newspapers in Sydney, Windsor, Goulburn and NZ.

**O’Connor, Terry**, *A Pictorial History of Queensland*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2009, Courier-Mail/Acacia Press, 336 pages, hardback. This book draws upon the pictorial resources of the *Courier-Mail* to lavishly illustrate the history of Queensland.

**REVIEW: *A Land of Promise: An Account of Jacob Isaacs, Jewish Convict and Benjamin Isaacs, Christian Printer and Publisher*, by Kris Jacobsen.**

Review by Victor Isaacs (The reviewer is not related to the subjects of the book)

This book has clearly been a labour of love for the author, comprehensively chronicling the lives of his forebears, Jacob and Benjamin Isaacs. Jacob was twice transported from England to New South Wales for crimes. Although this part of the story has no bearing

on newspaper history, nevertheless it is an absorbing account of grim conditions of poverty and vice in England and of the severe lives of convicts in NSW.

Jacob's son, Benjamin, was abandoned by his parents when a babe. He migrated to NSW. Benjamin had been trained as a printer. The narrative of his time in the newspaper and/or printing trade occupies the main part of this book. Benjamin was associated as printer and/or editor and/or publisher of newspapers in Sydney, the Bay of Islands (New Zealand)(twice), Parramatta (thrice), Bathurst, Goulburn and Windsor. He established the first newspapers in both Parramatta and Bathurst. The description of his struggles in the new, tiny settlement of Bathurst are especially interesting, particularly his loss of the newspaper as a result of a libellous feud with the local Chief of Police, himself also at times associated with early newspapers.

The book includes a number of attractive colour pictures of early NSW and reproductions of newspaper pages. It is very comprehensively sourced. This title is recommended as an excellent account of nineteenth century newspaper history.

#### 54.5.2 ARTICLES

**Bowd, Kathryn**, " 'Did you see that in the paper?': country newspapers and perceptions of local ownership", *Australian Journalism Review*, 31 (1), July 2009, pp.49-61. How much does ownership of the media matter to readers of country newspapers? This paper explores perceptions of ownership of four country non-daily newspapers in Victoria and South Australia from the perspectives of journalists, newspaper managers/owners and readers.

**Camden Historical Society Inc.**, "Camden retrospective: George Victor Sidman", *Camden Historical Society Newsletter*, Winter 2009, p.4. Sidman, owner of the *Camden News*, was made a life member of the New South Wales Country Press Association; he had been president in 1942-1944.

**Coleman, Peter**, "Busy Fairfax sites upgrade" and "Seven, then eight towers make a 'nice little press' ", *gxpess*, 9/3, August 2009, pp.10-11. Two articles reporting and discussing upgrades of press at Fairfax Media sites, such as Wagga Wagga and Tamworth, NSW, and Murray Bridge, SA, and at the McPherson family's print centre at Shepparton, Victoria.

**Fairfax, John B.**, "Trust, like respect, must be earned, and the media take their job seriously", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 August 2009, p.15.

**Foley, Steve**, "The battle of Sunday: The inside story of Melbourne's paper war", *Sunday Age*, 16 August, p. 13. On the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Melbourne's Sunday newspapers, this article tells the story of the simultaneous launch of three papers. See also James Manning's interview with *Sunday Age* editor Gay Alcorn, *Mediaweek*, 14 September 2009, p.9, and the *Age Extra*, Issue 6, September 2009, pp.6-7.

**Gourley, Paddy**, *Canberra Times*, Public Sector Informant supplement, Tuesday 4 August 2009, "The OzCar wreck: a lesson in gross incompetence". The author argues that "the Opposition's and News Ltd's skulduggery backfired, but not before harming the public service."

**Harris, Steve**, "The future is now", *Sunday Age* 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary supplement, 23 August. An essay, by the founding editor of the *Sunday Age*, about the future of newspapers.

**Howe, David**, "Will newspapers ever turn a profit online?", Australian Policy Online, 29 September 2009. <http://apo.org.au/commentary/will-newspapers-ever-turn-profit-online> Everybody's talking about content monetisation. In *New Matilda*, David Howe looks at proposals from Google and Microsoft

**Hyland, Tom**, "Stop the presses. Read all about it!", *Sunday Age*, 9 August 2009, Extra, p.11. The future of newspapers, and journalism, is under attack from the web. Can online pay walls save them?

**Keenan, Nick**, "Publishers shy of revealing detail", *Australian*, Media section, 17 August 2009, p.36. The head of print at MediaCom argues the need for a more

sophisticated level of detail in readership studies – such as figures on readership of particular sections within newspapers.

**Marr, David**, “Raised from the dead”, *Sydney Morning Herald*, Saturday 12 September 2009. The *National Times* was meant to stir, and it did, says the author, a former editor of the paper, on the eve of its revival as a Fairfax website.

**Parsons, Alan**, “This (Paperboy) Life”, *Weekend Australian*, 25-26 July 2009, Review, p.2. A whimsical recollection of a doing a paper run in Britain as a boy.

**Peterson, Ellen**, “Letters of a Nation”, *Memento*, Issue 37, July 2009, pp.22-23. This year marks the bicentenary of Australia’s postal service, the introduction of which would prove to be an important milestone for newspaper development in the colonies. To celebrate the anniversary, the National Archives of Australia has teamed up with Australia Post to encourage the sharing and preservation of letters that reflect aspects of the nation’s history.

**Powell, Graeme**, “The Literary statesman: Alfred Deakin and his papers”, *National Library Magazine*, September 2009, pp.18-20. Powell, who was for many years the Manuscript Librarian at the National Library, describes Alfred Deakin’s dual life: politician by day, prolific reader and writer by night.

**Smith, Neil**, “What else happened in 1883?” *Photographic Trader*, no. 140, September-October 2009), pp.22-24. Discusses the introduction of photo-engraving into Australian newspapers. Lists sources.

**Starck, Nigel**, “The mind of Russell Braddon”, *National Library Magazine*, September 2009, pp.12-15. A description of storyteller and journalist Russell Braddon’s remarkable life during and after suffering slavery in Changi prison camp.

**Tiffen, Rodney**, “The *Australian* at forty-five”, [inside.org.au/the-australian-at-forty-five/](http://inside.org.au/the-australian-at-forty-five/) For all its faults, it’s a miracle that the *Australian* exists, but it could be a whole lot better.

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** The ANHG celebrates its 10<sup>th</sup> birthday this month (October). The story of how the group and the newsletter began was told at length in issue 50 (at 50.4.8). Victor Isaacs, the founder, continues to contribute significantly to the *Newsletter*, as does Barry Blair, of Tamworth. Regular contributors over the past few years have included Larry Noye, Peter Gill, John Tidey and Robert Coleman, of Melbourne; Kay Hynes and Janette Pelosi, of Sydney; and Damian Bester, of Hobart.

The ANHG has **for sale** a handful of copies of its 503-page *Australian Newspaper History: A Bibliography* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). The price is \$67 (incl. p&p) for individuals and \$80 for institutions.

### ANHG subscriptions

Requests for a new or renewed subscription to the *Australian Newspaper History Group Newsletter*: A subscription covers ten issues (two years).

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