



THREE VICTORIAN COUNTRY NEWSPAPER OFFICES THAT YOUR EDITOR PHOTOGRAPHED DURING RESEARCH TRIPS IN 2002.

ABOVE: BACCHUS MARSH EXPRESS. **RIGHT:** CAMPERDOWN CHRONICLE, with WILLIAM JOHN HESKETH, AN EMPLOYEE FOR 53 YEARS TO THE END OF THE 1990s, STANDING OUTSIDE. **BELOW:** BULOKE TIMES, DONALD.



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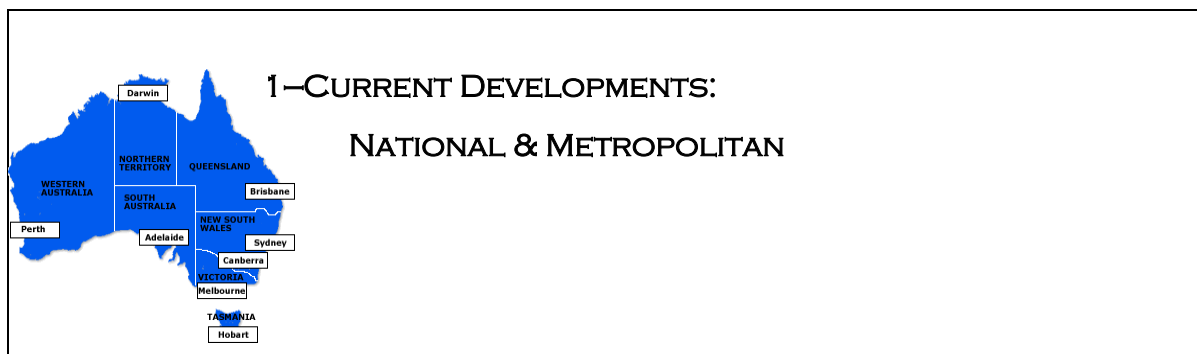
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<http://www.amhd.info/anhg/index.php>

Deadline for the next *Newsletter*: 9 December 2015.

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

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



84.1.1 Profitability (1): News Corp reports loss

News Corp's acquisitions of American digital real estate company Move, and book publisher Harlequin, are already paying off, lifting full-year earnings by 11 per cent following a strong fourth-quarter finish (*Australian*, 13 August 2015). The company's total revenue of \$US8.63 billion for the financial year 2015 reflected growth in the Book Publishing and Digital Real Estate Services segments. Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation increased 11 per cent to \$US852m. On a full-year basis, News Corporation made a net loss of \$US149m, compared to net income of \$US237 million in the previous year. This included impairment and restructuring

84.1.2 Profitability (2): Fairfax profit declines

Fairfax Media has posted a 63 per cent decline in full-year profit, but says it has seen positive signs in early fiscal 2016 trading. In the year to June, Fairfax (FXJ) posted a net profit of \$83.2 million, a 62.9 per cent decline on the previous year's \$224.4m. Revenue in the period fell 5.3 per cent to \$1.867 billion. Underlying revenue -- excluding the sale of two print plants and closed operations - rose 0.3 per cent to \$1.84 billion on the back of a 45 per cent increase from Domain, Fairfax's real estate division (*Australian*, 13 August 2015).

84.1.3 Readership remains stable

Readership of the country's major newspapers remained stable in June, with the number of Australians who read a paper in print or online rising 1 per cent to 16.4 million compared with the same period a year earlier (*Australian*, 6 August 2015). The number of people reading on smartphones increased by 16 per cent over the period, while tablet audiences were up 3 per cent, adding half a million readers across both channels compared with a year earlier. Industry body TheNewspaperWorks said total digital readership for newspapers rose by 3 per cent year-on-year to 11.6 million readers, while print slipped 4 per cent to 13.8 million.

A number of newspapers recorded increases in their June audience across all platforms. The *Northern Territory News* was up 20.7 per cent to 338,000 compared with a year earlier, according to Enhanced Media Metrics Australia data, while the *Sunshine Coast Daily's* readership grew 12.3 per cent to 357,000. The *Sydney Morning Herald's* audience fell 5.5 per cent, but it was still the most-read masthead across print and digital, with a total audience of 5.106 million, ahead of the *Daily Telegraph* (4.125 million), which also slipped 5.5 per cent compared with June last year.

The *Australian* remained the top national masthead, with an audience more than double that of the *Australian Financial Review's* 1.4 million. Month-on-month, the *Daily Telegraph*, *Canberra Times* and *Sunday Times* (Perth) all recorded audience growth across all channels.

84.1.4 *Courier-Mail* admitted to business hall of fame

The *Courier-Mail*, Brisbane's only daily printed paid-circulation newspaper since the closure of the *Sun* on 10 December 1991, has been admitted to the Queensland Business Leaders' Hall of Fame. The hall of fame is a joint initiative of the QUT business school, the State Library of Queensland and the Queensland Library Foundation. The *Courier-Mail* began publication on 20 June 1846 as the weekly *Moreton Bay Courier*. It became a daily on 14 May 1861, changing its name to the *Courier*; in 1864 it became the *Brisbane Courier*; and in August 1933 it merged with the *Daily Mail*

(estab. 1903) to become the *Courier-Mail* (*Courier-Mail*, 31 July 2015, p.2; Rod Kirkpatrick's research notes).

You can watch a nine-minute video of extracts from interviews with former editors of the *Courier-Mail* and the current editor, as well as the ANHG editor, Rod Kirkpatrick, if you go to <http://leaders.slq.qld.gov.au/inductees/the-courier-mail/>

84.1.5 Recent events

84.1.5.1 Deaths

Fraser, Jane: D. 23 September 2015 in Sydney, aged 72; born Johannesburg, South Africa; studied mathematics; became a high-school teacher before entering journalism; joined the *Australian* in 1983 and became founding editor of the paper's women's section; wrote about families, the home and royal tours; often wrote about history and power; at university she had been a member of the African National Congress and her return to South Africa in the 1990s to cover its historic free elections was regarded as a journalistic triumph; long-term columnist and celebrated feature writer, wrote two novels (*Weekend Australian*, 26-27 September 2015, "Review" section, p.2).

Gibson, Mike: D. 23 September 2015 on the NSW Central Coast, aged 75; sports journalist who began career in newspapers; worked for *Daily Telegraph*, covering various sports and writing a sports column; wrote whimsical column for *Australian Women's Weekly*; appointed co-anchor of Channel 9's *Wide World of Sports* in 1981 with Ian Chappell; read news for Nine; switched to Channel 10 and later Fox Sports; presented 720 editions of *Back Page* on Fox Sports, 1997-2012 (various websites).

Hansen, Brian Edward: D. 14 May 2015 in Melbourne, aged 82; *Argus*, Melbourne, 1950-56; *Border Morning Mail*, Albury, 1957-60; *Truth*, Melbourne (incl. editor, *Truth Sport*) 1960-90; sports public relations, publican, businessman, author of 20 books, mostly AFL football club histories and other sporting histories; autobiography, *The Awful Truth* (2004). (Contributed by Robert Alexander Murray.)

Keegan, Desmond Joseph: D. 11 June 2015, aged 81; born Narrabri, NSW; cadet surveyor; did national service in the RAAF; joined merchant navy; graduated with honours in economics and accounting at Sydney University; worked for *Australian Financial Review* during its transition from a weekly to a daily; spent years as financial editor of the *Sun News-Pictorial*, Melbourne; later worked for London's *Financial Times* and Toronto's *Financial Post*; twice financial editor of the *Australian*; at end of career worked in Melbourne corporate public relations (*Age*, 15 July 2015).



84.1.6 Stop the presses: Bangkok bombing

The Sydney *Daily Telegraph*, Melbourne *Herald Sun* and Brisbane *Courier-Mail* pulled out all the stops to print early morning editions of the Bangkok bomb blast that killed more than 20 people on 17 August. News of the tragedy emerged late at night Australian time (*Australian*, 18 August 2015). Although the *Telegraph* and *Herald Sun* have late printing times, the time of the incident meant last editions had already been sent to News Corp's NSW print centre at Chullora and the Victorian facility at Fisherman's Bend. But *Herald Sun* editor Damon Johnston was willing and able to change up at the last minute, getting the story into 180,000 printed copies of the newspaper with a special 1am edition. "We ripped up the first three pages of the edition to cover the bombing," Johnston said. "A small team came back into the office about 11pm and completely redid the front to capture the drama of the terror attack."

Courier-Mail editor Chris Dore stopped the presses at 11.40pm, enabling a new front page to make the entire second edition print run of 60-70,000 newspapers. Dore sent a remade edition to the newspaper's printers in Murarrie, situated in Brisbane's eastern suburbs, at 12.40pm. *Telegraph* editor Paul Whittaker made changes in the early hours of the morning with only 50,000-60,000 newsprint editions unprinted when he received a phone call from night editor Steve Jackson just after 1am as more information on the magnitude of the bombing and the death toll came to hand. Whittaker immediately contacted NSW circulation boss James King, who held up two trucks at the print centre, enabling the paper to print more than 5,000 copies in a 3am special edition with the headline 'Bangkok Terror'. The last version of page one was sent to Chullora at 2.40am, with last minute changes made just before 3am. "It was all hands to the wheel," Whittaker said. "We're here to publish newspapers if practical at any time of the night or day for big news events."

84.1.7 Appointments: *Good Weekend* and *Australian*

Ben Naparstek, editor of the *Good Weekend* magazine for Fairfax Media, has resigned to join SBS as its new head of editorial, online and emerging platforms (*Australian*, 20 July 2015). Naparstek, a former editor of the *Monthly*, leaves after three and a half years at Fairfax's weekly magazine. He oversaw changes in style and direction not always embraced by readers.

John Lehmann has been appointed deputy editor of the *Australian*, returning to the newspaper he first worked on as a reporter almost two decades ago (*Australian*, 29 September 2015). Currently editor-at-large to the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Sunday Telegraph*, Lehmann is the former editor-in-chief of the *Bulletin*. Lehmann replaces **Peter Fray**, who has been appointed University of Technology Sydney's new professor of journalism.

84.1.8 Fairfax Sydney print site sold for \$45m

Fairfax Media's former Sydney print and distribution centre at Chullora has been sold for \$45 million to Charter Hall Group's flagship, Core Plus Industrial Fund. The sale was announced days after entrepreneur Bobby Zagame paid \$16 million for Fairfax's former Melbourne print centre at Tullamarine (*Weekend Australian*, 8-9 August 2015, p., 8-9 August 2015).

84.1.9 Australian journalist acquitted in Thailand

The acquittal of Australian journalist Alan Morison and his Thai colleague Chutima Sidasathian on charges of defaming the Royal Thai Navy has struck a blow for press freedom in the region (*Bulletin*, TheNewspaperWorks, September 2015, p.3). The two faced the possibility of a prison term of up to two years for defamation and five years if they had been found to have breached the Computer Crimes Act over the article published on Morison's small Phuket news website, Phuketwan in July 2013.

84.1.10 Cover price of *Australian* rises

The cover price of the *Australian* rose by 20c to \$2.70 on 31 August. The cover price of the *Weekend Australian* rose by 20c to \$3.50 on 5 September. No change was made to existing subscriptions for the newspaper (*Australian*, 31 August 2015, p.2).

84.1.11 Hobart and the snow coverage: staff runs hot

Tasmania has recently had its best snowfalls in a decade and despite road and school closures, the Hobart *Mercury* really delivered (*Stop Press*, Davies Brothers Staff News, Issue 207, 17 August 2015). Newspaper deliveries got through in all areas, with only minor delays in some places. Business carried on as normal in all the *Mercury's* offices, despite most departments having one or two staff snowed in at home. Editor Matt Deighton said reporters, photographers and advertising staff had responded magnificently, sending in photographs and snow updates from the road. "From Paul Carter's rolling coverage to Paula Sward working on her day off, to Rox Casey battling the snow to actually get in here, to Imogen Elliott controlling our Facebook feed, to Damian Bester and Karolin McGregor who hit the road to get pics, to Jen Crawley using her powers of persuasion to

get us a fresh news pic, to the snappers getting brilliant shows, to our news reporters on the road, it was a great example of how we can and should run a major news event,” Deighton said. Special mention was made of advertising employee Selina Smith who captured an amazing scene of cars scattered across the Tasman Highway. This image also appeared in the *Australian*.

Tom Salom has been appointed executive general manager of the *Mercury* on a temporary basis after the retirement of CEO Rex Gardner (*Stop Press*, Issue 206, 28 July 2015, p.5).



84.2.1 News websites and popularity

Despite intense competition from a growing crop of overseas entrants, **news.com.au** remains the most popular free news website in Australia. The *Australian*'s website has cemented its status as the No 1 source for news among those with a comprehensive paywall (*Australian*, 27 July 2015). The *Australian* has applied its own analysis to official Nielsen online ratings audience data to reflect the newspaper industry's turn towards "paywalls", that is, charging for online access. Each month the *Australian* will publish Nielsen figures under three segments: free websites, moderate paywall websites, and comprehensive paywall websites. At present, Nielsen ranks Australia's news websites based on unique visitors alone, which (says the *Australian*) fails to address the dominant trend among newspapers owners, which have eschewed free models in favour of paywalls to generate subscription revenue.

After News Corp and Fairfax Media launched digital subscriptions models, Australia's third-largest newspaper publisher, APN News & Media, said in May it would become the first regional publisher to charge for online content, with the launch of a metered model at its Queensland daily publications. Under a metered model readers get a certain number of articles for free before being asked to pay a subscription fee. Under a "freemium" model, or more rigid paywall, certain content is always locked for subscribers only. The *Australian*, the *Australian Financial Review* and the *Wall Street Journal* use this model. Among the free websites, where all content is available and the website typically earns most of its revenue from advertising, visitors continue to flock to news.com.au.

It had a unique audience of 3.7 million in June even though its market leadership position has faced a strong challenge from sites such as Daily Mail Australia, the Huffington Post, the Guardian and the ABC. Of the moderate paywalls, whose sites offer metered models, the top two places are held by Fairfax Media's the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age*, with three News Corp-owned mastheads in the next three positions. The *Daily Telegraph*'s site was third with a unique audience of 1.6 million, followed by the *Herald Sun*'s, and the *Courier-Mail*'s, with 1.5 million and 1.3 million respectively.

84.2.2 Pendulum has swung too far: Sorrell

TheNewspaperWorks, 18 September: The pendulum has "swung too far" towards video and online content and may swing back in favour of traditional media, Sir Martin Sorrell, founder and chief executive of the world's largest media agency WPP, told delegates at the Future Forum at the Sydney Hilton Hotel. Sir Martin also questioned the effectiveness of advertising on digital platforms like Google and Facebook, criticising the relatively low audience measurement standards used online, compared to the engagement of newspaper media. "About half of all video is watched online without the sound. The scale that is used for viewership is three seconds. Now that I would even say is ludicrous in relation to the hurdle that a TV viewer ... or newspaper readership has to reach," he said.

84.2.3 A ‘bold’ prediction: print will outlive the internet

Brian Rock writes (*Bulletin*, TheNewspaperWorks, September 2015, p.17): “Print Newspapers will outlive the internet. (Not to mention broadcast TV and video games.)” Rock, who has spent most of his career in advertising, provides figures to support his “bold prediction”. He concludes his half-page column with this statement: “My expectation is that digital newspaper media consumption will overtake print readership in the next three to five years, after which both print and digital readership trends will stabilize.”



3—CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS: COMMUNITY & PROVINCIAL

FAIRFAX CONTINUES WIELDING SCYTHE: In the previous issue, ANHG highlighted that the “revitalisation program” outlined in items 83.3.1, 2 and 3 for Fairfax Media’s country newspapers had huge implications for the future of the regional press throughout Australia. The job cuts totalled 127 with about two-thirds of those being from editorial departments. Now, in this latest issue, the news in items 84.3.1, 2 and 3—affecting Tasmania, the Hunter region of NSW, and Western Australia—continues the crushing story of job losses in the former Rural Press Ltd papers, with more than 82 jobs likely to go and three papers to close.

84.3.1 Fairfax (1): Tasmania—appointments and disappointments

Appointments: They used to be foes, Launceston’s *Examiner* and Burnie’s *Advocate*. They fought circulation battles when the *Examiner* tried to barge into the *Advocate*’s territory. But, for a dozen years now, they have been controlled by the one company, which is now Fairfax Media Ltd. And Fairfax has appointed a group managing editor for its two Tasmanian regional dailies. Mark Baker is the appointee. The appointment came as *Advocate* editor Julian O’Brien was shifted to Wollongong, NSW, to become editor of the *Illawarra Mercury*. Baker has been with the *Examiner* since 2003, most recently as editor (*Examiner*, Launceston, 25 July 2015, p.2). He has since appointed new editors for both the *Examiner* and the *Advocate* (*Examiner* and *Advocate*, both 19 September 2015, both p.2):

Examiner: Simon Tennant, 45, is the new *Examiner* editor. He started work there in 1986 and began his journalism career in 1996. After several years reporting, he became a sub-editor in 2000 and was promoted to night news editor in 2005. He was most recently the paper’s digital editor.

Advocate: Courtney Griesbach is the new *Advocate* editor and the first woman to fill the role. She began as a cadet journalist at the paper in 2009 and became the chief of staff in 2012. She was recently named Team Player in the Executive Excellence category at the PANPA Awards.

Disappointments: Up to 13 full-time jobs could be cut at the *Examiner* and the *Advocate* as Fairfax undertakes a major restructure (ABC News, 30 September 2015). Staff in Launceston, Burnie and Devonport were told about the proposed changes on 30 September. Voluntary redundancies will be called for about eight full-time positions in editorial, with the remainder from administration and sales. The cuts are part of Fairfax’s NewsNow system, which started in 2013 in Victoria and will soon be rolled out in Tasmania.

84.3.2 Fairfax (2): 69 jobs to go in Hunter region, NSW

Fairfax newspaper staff across the Hunter region were reeling when the company announced 69 jobs would be axed in the region, ABC News reported (27 August 2015). Thirty-seven of the jobs that would go would be at the *Newcastle Herald*. The *Maitland Mercury*, the oldest NSW country paper, would drop back from daily issue to three days a week [see 84.4.2 for Rod Kirkpatrick's "*Maitland Mercury* memories"]. The bi-weekly *Singleton Argus* would become a weekly. Two thirds of the cuts were thought to be editorial positions and staff said the cuts would have a significant impact on output.

Staff in Newcastle and the Hunter were briefed on 27 August about the proposed changes at the *Newcastle Herald*, the *Maitland Mercury*, *Newcastle & Lake Macquarie Star*, *Port Stephens Examiner*, *Lakes Mail*, *Cessnock Advertiser*, *Lower Hunter Star*, *Dungog Chronicle*, *Singleton Argus*, *Muswellbrook Chronicle*, *Scone Advocate*, *Hunter Valley News* and the *Hunter Valley and North Coast Town & Country*.

It is the second time in as many years Fairfax papers in the Hunter have been hit with job losses. Maitland mayor Peter Blackmore said it was extremely disappointing the city was losing its daily paper. "The dedicated journos, the dedicated photographers, and even people in the local newsagencies, and now down to three days a week, I think it's terrible. Absolutely terrible, and shame on Fairfax." He says with the recent move to farm out the paper's sub-editing process to New Zealand, he is worried for the future of the *Maitland Mercury*. "For ages, in Maitland if it was in the *Mercury*, it was gospel, it was the truth. Now to cut down to three days a week, I'm sorry, but this is the beginning of the end as far as I can see."

In a statement, Fairfax Media said the restructure is all about "delivering a stronger, sustainable and modern rural and regional network of newspapers and websites, introducing new technology and contemporary editorial and commercial processes". Recently appointed Hunter group managing editor Chad Watson and group sales manager Jo Dryden will lead the restructured editorial and sales teams, respectively. Newcastle, where the *Herald* is planned to relocate to new offices on Honeysuckle Drive later this year, will operate as a hub for some group services. Reporters and sales staff will continue working from locations across the region.

84.3.3 Fairfax (3): Three papers to close in WA

Fairfax Media Ltd will close three of its country newspapers in Western Australia (ABC News, 18 September 2015). The three, all weeklies, are the *Wagin Argus*, the *Merredin-Wheatbelt Mercury* and the *Central Midlands & Coastal Advocate*. Merrel Pond, who was the editor of the *Central Midlands & Coastal Advocate* for 20 years until May this year, said she was not surprised at the closures. Fairfax will replace the three papers with an expanded *Farm Weekly* newspaper, as part of its centralisation plan. But Pond said this was unlikely to work. "The telecommunications today, it's easy enough to do, but you don't have the feet on the ground, hearing the local stories," Pond said. "I think it loses the local focus. To start with it might work reasonably well but I can already see, there's a lot of stories in there that aren't particularly pertaining to our region and that's been happening in the last six months since they haven't actually had someone on the ground. When you don't have that personal contact with people you just miss out on so much and you lose that local content. Local content, a lot of the stories are quite fluff pieces but they're also a lot of the piece that people like to read."

The editor of one of the papers set to be culled told the ABC that Fairfax Media staff were not allowed to make comments to the media during the two-week consultation period that started today. The company has also flagged voluntary redundancies of about 21 full-time equivalent positions across WA, in the editorial, administration and sales divisions.

84.3.4 Mount Isa: A grandson's reminiscence

On 1 September 2015, the Fairfax-owned *North West Star*, Mount Isa, became a tri-weekly after having been published as a daily since its first issue on 12 May 1966. James Joyce, a grandson of the founding managing editor of the *North West Star*, wrote an historical reminiscence for the first

Saturday issue of the paper (5 September 2015). What appears below is largely extracted from Joyce's article.

Joyce is executive editor of Fairfax's regional, rural and suburban publishing business, Australian Community Media. A journalist for more than 25 years, he is a former editor of the *Canberra Times* and a former deputy editor of the *Newcastle Herald*. His grandfather didn't stay at the *North West Star* for long because he did not like having Kelvin Fairbairn being given managerial authority over him (see Rod Kirkpatrick, 'A whirlwind of change for Northern Territory News, *PANPA Bulletin*, June 2006, pp.44-45). Bill Moloney's copy of that launch edition of the *Star* remains a treasured family keepsake.

Joyce says the launch of the *North West Star* was a brave bid by a band of enterprising adventurers to build something new in Queensland's rugged north-west: specifically, a new morning newspaper to compete directly with the *Mount Isa Mail*—an afternoon daily published by a young Rupert Murdoch. The *North West Star*, under the headline "A Star is born", spelled out its purpose on Page 1 of the first edition in May 1966: "Fearlessly and without favour, the *Star* . . . will dedicate itself to serving the interests of all the people of this great part of Australia."



Bill Moloney, a qualified printer who had moved into journalism as a reporter at the *Manly Daily* in beachside Sydney, had ventured to Mount Isa in the early 1960s with his wife Patricia and their five children to work for Mount Isa Mines. At MIM Ltd (now Glencore-Xstrata) Bill had taken a job as the staff journalist producing the company's in-house newsletter, *Minews*, and as associate editor of its regular gloss magazine, *Mimag*. Before making that trek to outback Queensland with the Moloney tribe in tow, Bill had started his own weekly newspaper in north-west NSW, the *Collarenebri Gazette*, which he'd run as a family concern for three years.

So when MIM management grew frustrated with coverage of the *Mount Isa Mail* and the company's public relations consultant, Sir Asher Joel, resolved to start his own newspaper in the town, the new publishing venture had an editor ready to steer it in Bill Moloney.

The *Mount Isa Mail*, launched as a bi-weekly in June 1953 and initially printed on the *Northern Territory News* presses in Darwin and flown to Mount Isa, had been purchased—along with the *NT News*—by Rupert Murdoch in 1960. On 22 November 1965, Murdoch made the *Mail* into an afternoon daily. But its editorial line, including in its coverage of strikes at the mines, apparently irked MIM management, prompting the entrepreneurial Sir Asher to launch a local paper in competition. The Sydney businessman and NSW Country Party MP had begun his media career as a copyboy at Sydney's *Daily Telegraph* in the 1920s.

On 8 July 1966, two months after the arrival of the *North West Star*, Rupert Murdoch closed the *Mount Isa Mail*. The Joel family continued to operate the *Star* until October 2006, when it sold the paper to Rural Press ahead of that group's merger with Fairfax Media in 2007.

84.3.5 Goulburn council decides against publishing a newspaper

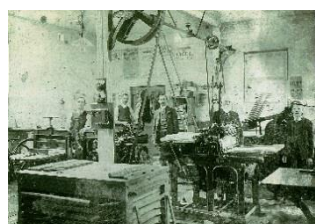
A bid for the Goulburn Mulwaree Council to publish its own newspaper has narrowly failed at a council meeting, ABC News reported on 16 September 2015. The plan was put forward after some in the council claimed the Goulburn Post was not providing fair coverage. The *Goulburn Post*, a Fairfax publication, is the town's primary media outlet. The proposal for a fortnightly publication included pulling all of the council's advertising from the *Post*.

Councillor Robin Saville, who voted against the project, said the exercise would have cost the ratepayers \$265,000. He said the proposal failed "by just one vote". "It was not our core business. The newspaper that we would produce would be inadequate," he said. "The newspaper would just become junk mail and so I successfully moved a motion and argued to my fellow councillors not to

pursue a newspaper." Despite supporting the publishing proposal, Mayor Geoff Kettle said he was comfortable with the council's resolution. "How do we improve our community engagement strategy? One of the ways I would have suggested was to put out a regular newsletter or paper," he said. "It is not about being in competition with our local press."

84.3.6 APN profit slides

APN News & Media has suffered a slide in first-half profit after ploughing money into trying to boost revenues at its newspaper and radio stations (*Australian*, 20 August 2015). The trans-Tasman media group, which owns the KIIS, iHeartRadio, and Pure Gold radio networks, saw net profit fall 67 per cent to \$7.5 million in the six months to June 30. It was \$22.6 million in the previous corresponding period. The result was weighed down by more than \$17 million in exceptional items related to the group's investments in revenue growth strategies. Revenues from continuing operations rose five per cent to \$427.6 million, with APN saying the softness in the ad market during the second quarter had continued into July.



4—NEWSPAPER HISTORY

84.4.1 A reminiscence by Ken Sanz: Size and shape

Ken Sanz has had a long association with newspapers, sometimes very tenuously. Starting as an afternoon paperboy in Marrickville, Sydney, while a high school student, he later joined the *Sydney Morning Herald* as a messenger, then became an apprentice hand and machine compositor and a journeyman compositor. He became a Salvation Army officer who once wrote the front page article four weeks in a row for a country weekly and ended his career as editor-in-chief in the Army's eastern states. In retirement he spent five years running the Army's eastern territory heritage centre and museum which included both hard copy and microfilms of 140 years of the *War Cry*. His passion for collecting all began with the purchase of the last issue of the *Argus*, Melbourne, at a free Sydney Symphony Orchestra recital at the Town Hall! And then he was addicted to collecting all manner of historical issues of Australian newspapers. He gave those away, and then started again. This is the first of two reminiscences.

Ken Sanz writes: There seems to me to be some confusion about what some people are calling "the rivers of gold", a term introduced to describe the classified advertisements in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Classified ads are paid by the line, display ad by the single column centimetre. The *Daily Telegraph* in Sydney, like the Melbourne *Sun-News Pictorial*, did not have as much classified advertising as did the broadsheets. During World War II, because of paper rationing, proprietors had to choose between restricting the actual page numbers, but retaining circulation, or keeping more pages but restrict the circulation. Those with large classified ads sought to use the second method of newsprint rationing.

After the war the *Sydney Morning Herald* profit base was helped by these line advertisements. They were set in 5-point Times Roman type. But with larger page numbers the ability of the presses reached their limits. At first it was decided that they could move from ten columns at 9½ ems per page for these ads to 11 columns at 9 ems, whilst retaining the line charge. Then, when papers continued to grow, it was decided to change the font from 5pt times roman to 4 ¾ pt adsans. This meant more lines per column, but to make it readable the letters were slightly wider.

As an apprentice we had the task of saving each day's adverts for inclusion in the following day's insertion. Some ads were daily, some every Wednesday and Saturday and some Saturday only. All

of these ads were collated in a galley and stored for the night of publication. Now all standing adverts had to be reset, reread and placed ready for publication. All of the 5pt ads were then melted down to return as linotype ingots.

Saturday's classified ads were started in spare time from Wednesday night, with full shifts on Thursdays and extra full staff on Friday nights. Linotypes had a limit on speed, limited to the speed of the operator and the speed of the machine in producing the slugs of type. In an effort to speed things up the *Herald* turned to tape driven linotypes. Later they bought four high speed linotypes to do some of this setting. The tapes were produced by teletype machines using a typewriter keyboard. These operators were paid a flat hourly rate from the linotype operators who were paid for every line set minus corrections.

The *Daily Telegraph* in the late 50s decided to print free classified adverts including births, marriages, deaths and funerals. The *Herald* discovered this when it printed some false adverts only to see them appear in the *Telegraph*. But court action was not successful—only the credit squeeze stopped the practice.

Some may remember the “Australia Unlimited” supplements which were produced annually in the 50s and 60s. They grew so big in page numbers that the sections had to be pre-printed and hand inserted until the time they no longer could be produced at a profit. They used good art work and photographs and had professional as well as staff writers.

Photosetting was another area to which Fairfax moved. There was set up a photocomposing department, not on the composing room floor but in the sixth floor with the art department on one side and the photo-engraving department on the other. Heading and captions were set there for Sungravure magazines such as *Woman's Day*. In the corner was a machine put out by the linotype corporation, which like a linotype had brass matrices, but a negative film in the middle with the letter on it. Instead of being made into a slug it was photographed as a line on a photographic strip. These were pasted up to fit the magazine layout.

84.4.2 Maitland Mercury memories

Saddened by the news that the *Maitland Mercury* is soon to cease appearing daily after 121 years, **Rod Kirkpatrick** has written a reminiscence of his time at the paper in the 1960s. Rod worked at the *Mercury* for three periods: 15 June 1964 to 25 May 1967; 25 September 1967 to 12 January 1968; and (as assistant editor) 14 October 1968 to 16 January 1970. In between, in 1967 he worked for Cumberland Newspapers for four months and in 1969 he was senior journalist at the Packer-owned *Manning River Times*, Taree, for nine months. He was the editor there in 1970-71. [The boxed circulation figures below and the line graph are based on figures from the Audit Bureau of Circulations. The *Mercury* changed from evening to morning issue on 5 June 1989.]

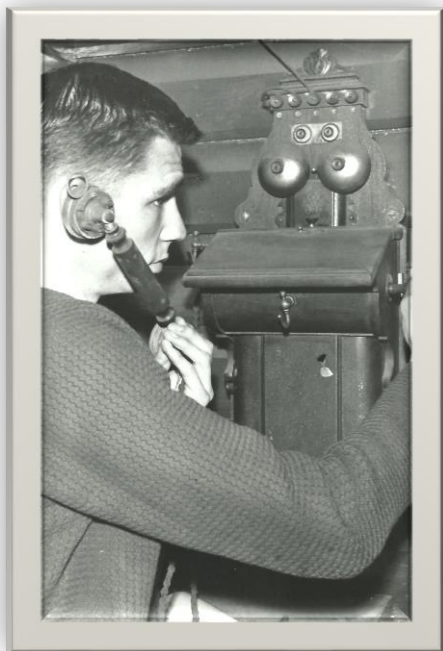


MAITLAND MERCURY BUILDING, 1977

HISTORY was the last thing on my mind when I started work at the *Maitland Mercury* in June 1964 as a 20-year-old D-grade reporter who had been a Sydney television journalist for two years. Yet little did I know that history surrounded me in the *Mercury's* cavernous two-storey, bank-style building at the corner of High and Hunter Streets. The *Mercury*, a daily afternoon newspaper printed in tabloid format on site, was the oldest country newspaper in NSW and had been published daily since January 1894. In 1964 the general manager, Ken Tucker, was a descendant of one of the founders of the

Mercury, Thomas William Tucker. And Ken Tucker's daughter, Terry, was one of two cadet journalists on staff, both female. Near the editorial offices on the first floor was a file room housing bound volumes of the *Mercury* going back to the beginning. And staring down at me from one of the walls in the editorial office was a copy of the editorial from the first issue of the *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, of 7 January 1843. It began: "We now present to the inhabitants of Maitland..."

When the *Mercury's* building was opened in September 1936, the paper could barely contain its excitement: "Imposing in outward appearance and designed within to afford every modern facility for newspaper production and provide for the expansion of the business for many years to come, the new home of the *Maitland Daily Mercury* stands on a frontage of 78 feet (24 metres) to High-street, and the visitor is immediately impressed with the artistic yet restrained architectural design of the building." The main entrance was up "a short flight of red and white terrazzo steps through massive plate-glass swinging doors into the main vestibule". But in the 1960s we journalists normally entered via a side door because the main office was not open by 8am when we started. Polished Queensland maple was liberally used in the hallway and offices. In 1936, a 10-metre long hall led through from the vestibule to the main printing room and the first room to the right, just inside the glass doorway, was the office of the "Lady Reporters". In 1964, there was one newsroom and it was up a broad flight of stairs, covered in 1936 in "rich, soundless rubber". I ran up and down those stairs many times. In 1936, news and advertising copy was fired to all parts of the building through air carrier chutes.



Rod Kirkpatrick poses for a *Mercury* photo, 1964, using an early telephone

When I began duties at the *Mercury*, manual telephony was in its last days in the district. The *Mercury's* number was Maitland 3. The Maitland switchboard operators knew better than anyone who the illegal S.P. bookies were in the city. When automatic telephony was introduced, and the *Mercury's* number became 33 6633, I was assigned to write a story on the great advance in technology—and privacy for telephone callers (see photo).

Each morning we reporters had to produce a steady flow of news stories for the early pages of the afternoon daily. If we weren't working the phones to obtain updated details on a story first reported in the *Newcastle Morning Herald* that day or obtaining details from a local organisation's meeting the previous night, then we were striding across High Street to the Town Hall on the civic rounds or through the shopping centre up the street to the police station and court house. And two or three typewriters always seemed to be clacking away against the seemingly ceaseless chatter of the teleprinter bring in AAP, Associated Press and other news from around the nation and the globe. Screwed up copy paper would be lobbed into a wastepaper bin as we hunted down an "intro" that would capture the main

point of the story.

On that first day, 15 June 1964, my main task was to find somewhere to live. David Lonsdale, a future editor of the *Illawarra Mercury*, Wollongong, and the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, Queensland, was given the job of taking me to a few prospective homes that accepted boarders. It was David's final day at the *Mercury* because he was joining the *Canberra Courier*, a weekly started by John Fairfax and Sons in Canberra to help sop up advertising that might have otherwise gone to Rupert Murdoch's planned national newspaper. Murdoch launched the *Australian* in Canberra on 14 July 1964. By then Fairfax had taken over the *Canberra Times* under a standing agreement (the Mentmore agreement) with the Shakespeare family and had lured John Richardson from the

Maitland Mercury editorial chair to launch the *Canberra Courier*. Richardson, in turn, lured some of his former staff members, such as Lonsdale.



The *Mercury* ran a series of lectures for its journalists on various aspects of the newspaper business. Here Peter Brownlie (far right), the advertising manager, speaks to journalists (from left): Judith Clemens, Rod Kirkpatrick, Bob Roulston, Dan Austin (standing), Barry Low and Terry Tucker.

Four years before I joined the *Mercury*, Sir Frank Packer's Australian Consolidated Press acquired the newspaper. John Bollard, a former editor of the *Horsham Times*, Victoria, and a Packer employee, was sent to Maitland on a temporary basis to edit the paper when Richardson departed in 1964. Dan Austin, later to become the regional editorial supremo for Australian Consolidated Press and Rural Press Ltd, was the news editor. Bollard was at times a volatile character. He sometimes referred to Packer as "God", and on one occasion stood near my desk and declared,

as though it were the final statement in any discussion, "I speak with the power of the Packers." At one point, in an attempt to smarten up the sub-editing and layout, he began sending out a "marked paper" each afternoon after publication. He would circle offending items in red and insert some comments. One day Bollard himself acted as the news editor and so was responsible for Page 1. One photo appeared twice on the front page that day. Red face, but no "red" paper after that.

I soon settled into a mix of sport and general reporting. I began writing the Tuesday back-page sporting column two weeks after I started. Doug Cole, who had previously been writing the sporting column, had departed. Sport produced its own timetable for the reporter, including a 6.30 start on Monday morning to cope with reporting on the weekend matches. I would leave Sydney about 3am on Mondays to drive to Maitland, ready to start work at 6.30. I would work an extra couple of hours on Mondays so that I could get away about 3pm on Fridays to drive back to Sydney. My car, a 1959 FC Holden, did not have a heater and I used to wear extra clothing underneath my work clothes for the drive to Maitland. Because I was returning to Sydney each weekend, I did not see any of the weekend sport, particularly the Maitland matches in the Newcastle Rugby League competition. This routine lasted only three months, however, because immediately before joining the *Mercury*, I had become engaged to my Sydney girlfriend, Maureen, and we married three months later. [We celebrated our 51st anniversary last month.] Several journalists left the *Mercury* within weeks of my starting there. Two of the replacement journalists married the female cadet journalists who were on staff when I joined. Another of the journalistic newcomers was Simon

***Maitland Mercury* circulation:**

1944: 5358

1954: 6614

1964: 7165

1974: 8070

1984: 7979

1994: 5505

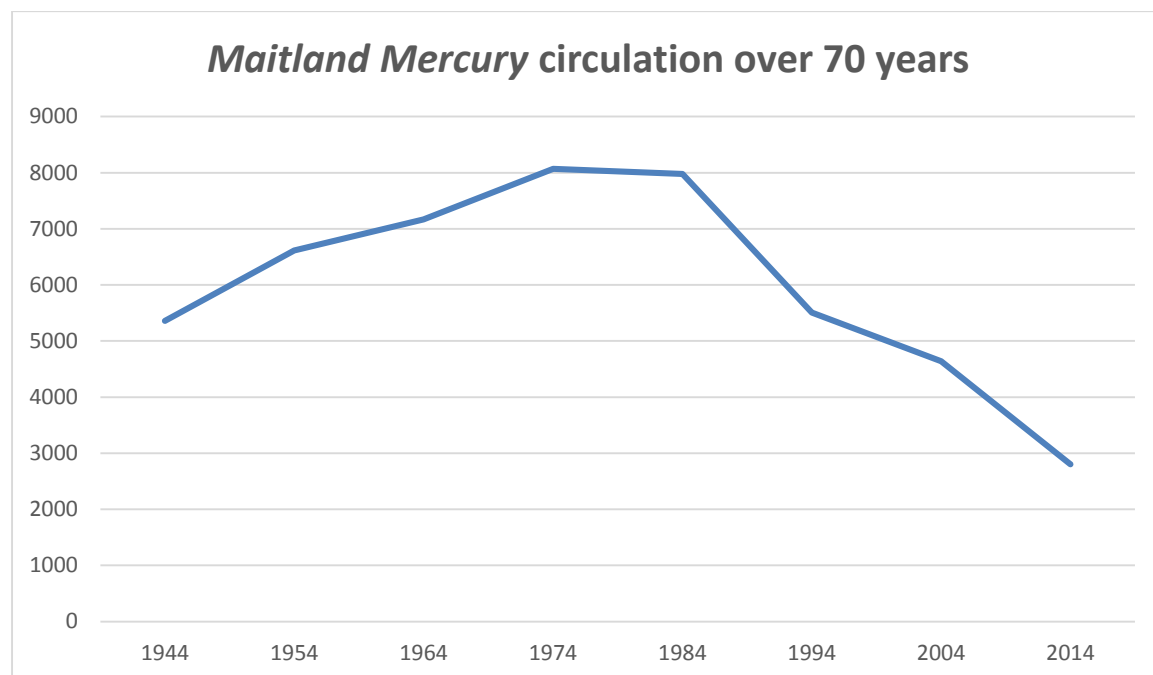
2004: 4642

2014: 2804

NB: The 2014 circulation was little more than the 1859 print run when the paper was a tri-weekly (*Mercury*, 1/1/1859, p.2)

Townsend, of Woy Woy. He was to become famous for being jailed as a conscientious objector to National Service during the Vietnam War and later for his children's television program, *Simon Townsend's Wonder World*. At the *Mercury*, he wrote the teenagers' column and did general reporting.

So, there was an influx of young journalists competing for the C-grade positions that were needed to satisfy the required Australian Journalists' Association Award structure. I won the one of the C-grades two months into my newspaper career and was soon sub-editing the free weekly *Cessnock Advertiser*, which competed against the paid *Cessnock Eagle*. I would write sport for the *Mercury* from 8am to 10am and then move across to the subs' table to sub the *Advertiser* copy which was delivered hourly by bus from Cessnock. There was a bus stop outside the *Mercury's* front door. When the *Advertiser* reporter took three weeks' leave in July 1965, I drove to Cessnock each day to report the coal-mining town's news.



I loved writing the sports column. It gave me the freedom to explore the stories I chose, to use different styles of writing and to delve into fascinating areas of Maitland's sporting present and past. Near the upstairs editorial office was a room housing bound volumes of the *Mercury* going back deep into the 19th century. I could have lost myself in the file room for hours. When single-wicket cricket challenges were in the news in the 1960s, I recall studying reports of single-wicket matches played in Maitland as early as 1845 (see *Mercury*, 21 June 1845, p.2, col. 3). I was fascinated to discover that the captain of an 1880s representative British Rugby team, Robert L. Seddon, had drowned in the Hunter River at West Maitland on 15 August 1888. He is buried at nearby Campbell's Hill. Two weeks before the Great Britain Rugby League team played Newcastle in June 1966, I checked through the files for results in matches going back 30 or more years. Newcastle, it seemed, had always provided the Brits with stiff opposition. Newcastle defeated Great Britain 21-16 in 1936 and 11-7 in 1954. [The Brits won 5-2 in the mud on 13 June 1966.] In December 1965 when Doug Walters, who grew up on a dairy farm at Marshdale, near Dungog, scored a century against England in his first cricket Test, the *Mercury* photographer George Steele was on hand to photograph Doug's dad as he put in a congratulatory call to the new cricket sensation. And I was writing a front-page story about the Walters family and the century in the *Mercury* the next day. A couple of years later I stood in for Walters when he was a no-show at a Maitland District Junior Cricket Association awards night.

The *Mercury* used to be on the streets at 3pm, Monday to Friday, except on Melbourne Cup day. In that pre-daylight-saving era, the Cup was run at 2.40pm. Printing would be delayed for about 20 minutes on Cup day and I would write the report on the Cup race. I would type out a few pars of background beforehand, listen to the Cup on radio, and type out several pars about the actual race with each slip of copy paper being snatched from me as it came out of the typewriter and taken to a Linotype operator. Another annual sporting episode was the visit in May of a former *Mercury* reporter to the newsroom to remind the sportswriter that 24 May would be the anniversary of the death at the age of 21 of the Maitland-born Australian boxing legend Les Darcy (James Leslie Darcy, 1895-1917, see *ADB* Vol 8). We would dutifully run a small story each year.



I did much more than write sport, however. For instance, I researched and wrote a two-part unassigned feature that examined what changes Maitland had made in the 10 years since the devastating February 1955 flood. My findings were basically that, despite a lot of promises and plans and talk in the months after the flood, little had changed and such a flood, if repeated, would be just as devastating. Writing the “Week by Week” and “Crosscurrents” columns was shared among the reporters. For “Week by Week”, you would walk the High Street shops from one end to the other, seeking news from the city’s business folk. Ken Lane, a Newcastle radio Rugby League commentator who ran a menswear store, was always good for an item or two. Johnston’s Shoe Store, run by cricketers Col and Alan Johnston, the Misses McLeod women’s clothing store and Ken Tubman’s pharmacy (diagonally opposite the *Mercury* office) were regular ports of call. In 1953 Tubman, with co-driver John Marshall, won the first Redex Around-Australia car rally, driving a Peugeot 203. “Crosscurrents” was the equivalent of the *Sydney Morning Herald*’s “Column 8”—well, we aimed high.

About February 1965 I became the Maitland correspondent to the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*—in addition, of course, to working full-time at the *Mercury*. This meant I was paid a retainer each month as well as so much per line for each of my stories that the *Telegraph* published. I was paid a fixed amount for covering the Maitland trots and greyhound meetings and a coalfields Rugby League match each weekend during winter. If there was not a match at Maitland, I would go to Kurri Kurri and cover the match there or even to Cessnock. After the match I had no time to sit down and write my report. I had to head for the nearest public telephone and make a reverse-charge press call to the *Sunday Telegraph* where a typist would take down the story that I composed on the phone. During some months the *Telegraph* correspondence earned me the equivalent of an extra week’s wages—not to be sniffed at by someone who began married life with virtually a zero bank balance.

The reporter sometimes ended up as part of the story—at least so far as the photographer was concerned—and so I featured in two front-page pictures during my times at the *Mercury*. The first was in the *Daily Telegraph* (31 August 1966), when I was interviewing a PMG training school superintendent and a police officer near a Greta mines subsidence area where two boys, aged eight and 12, had died that afternoon when crushed by a clay boulder. The second was in the *Mercury* (15 February 1967), when I helped an ambulance officer load a stretcher into an ambulance. On the stretcher was one of the 17 children who had suffered burns in a Maitland bakery blast. I was captioned as “an onlooker”, but a tell-tale notebook can be seen sticking out of my back pocket. In both instances, the picture accompanied my front-page story.

In September 1969, when I was the assistant editor of the *Mercury* and still writing my weekly sports column, my loyalties were tested. I had written what I thought was a great column item about the parents of two opponents in the Sydney Rugby League grand final who lived in the same street in Kurri Kurri. And I had a picture of the two fathers looking at a supplement previewing the grand final. The players were South Sydney (and Australian) captain John Sattler and Manly forward Bill Hamilton. The editor wanted to put the story on Page 1, I wanted it for my column. The editor won (see 4 September 1969, p.1), and so he should have.

In 1969 Maitland won three Newcastle football premierships: in first-grade Rugby League and Rugby Union and second-division soccer. I played a key role in reporting that amazing climax to the winter sporting season even though I was assistant editor. In my 15 months in that role, I acted as editor for three months, including the period of the first moon landing. I left the *Mercury*, for the final time, in January 1970 to become the editor of the *Manning River Times*. In 1983, while editing the *Central Western Daily*, Orange, I wrote many of the articles for the *Maitland Mercury's* historical feature to mark its 140th birthday. And in 1990-91, when I was based in Canberra as the Rural Press Ltd national affairs writer for its regional papers, many of my articles appeared in the *Mercury*.

84.4.3 Temora gold and the rush to get into print

William Francois Leighton Bailey, who had been news editor of the Sydney *Evening News*, wrote in 1928 a reminiscence of his father's newspaper experiences (*Newspaper News*, 1 August 1928, p.7). His father was William Henry Leighton Bailey, the founder of a string of newspapers in Queensland and NSW (including Sydney). This is what he wrote about Temora, NSW:



TEMORA HERALD MASTHEAD, 2 MAY 1882

“[In 1880] gold was discovered at Temora, and very soon there was a big rush there. Miners came from everywhere and it was not long before there was a tented field of fully 10,000. With characteristic energy, my father again got on the job and speedily arranged with F.T. Wimble & Co to supply a plant to print a double-demy 4-page newspaper weekly, to be called the *Temora Herald*. The late Sam Hawkins, who was proprietor of the old *Wagga Express*, also saw the possibilities of [a] paper on the new goldfield and announced he intended to publish the *Temora Star*. My father's big difficulty was transport from Sydney. The plant had to travel by goods train to Cootamundra, and thence 35 miles by bullock team to Temora. Sam Hawkins had a similar difficulty to contend with, but was many miles nearer Cootamundra, and everything was in favour of his beating my father by at least a week.”

“However, W.H.L.B. had a brilliant brain-wave, the result of which has in all probability never happened before in Australian journalistic enterprise. He interviewed his employer, the late Mr Alfred Bennett (who was the managing proprietor of the *Evening News*), explained his predicament and suggested in order to out-manoeuvre his adversary, that Mr Bennett should print 2000 extra copies of the next day's (Saturday) *News* with the title altered to *Temora Herald* and to imprint W.H.L.B., etc. These were to be sent away by train to Cootamundra, from whence they would be carried on to Temora by one of Cobb and Cop.'s big mail coaches.

“Alfred Bennett, being the sport he was, readily joined in the fight, and gave orders for the printing of the papers. They were quickly parceled and I accompanied my father to Temora where, each on foot, we distributed the papers free to the miners. Our plans succeeded, very much to the chagrin of Sam Hawkins. A week later a small printing plant, including a second-hand Albion hand-press, arrived safely; a galvanized shed was run up, and the *Temora Herald* was established. The *Star* came out a fortnight later [in fact, three weeks: ANHG editor], but the *Herald* was first in the field [research indicates three Temora papers, including the *Herald*, first appeared on 29 July 1880; one of these, the *Temora Telegraph*, is on Trove: ANHG]. So pleased with Alfred Bennett with my father's clever tactics that he refused to accept any payment for printing the first issue of the *Temora Herald*.

“After two years in Temora my father went to Gundagai and established the *Herald* there, in opposition to the *Gundagai Times*, Elsworthy's old paper that had had a free run of 25 years [15 years: ANHG]. Later on [my father] started the *Adelong Miner*, a small sheet issued weekly [from August 1884: ANHG], and placed me in charge at the age of 16 years. He sold out after 12 months,

fully satisfied that running country newspapers in those days was not the game it was cracked up to be.”

84.4.4 *Gnowangerup Star*: mother’s dying wish

Rod Walker, now the owner of the defunct *Gnowangerup Star* [see ANHG 23.39] and its museum-like collection of hot-metal equipment and letterpresses, wonders whether, out there, he will find a few old printers who miss the smell of ink and the chatter of linotypes. “My late mother’s wish was that it would not be sold off piecemeal,” says Walker, who’s seeking a buyer for the historic newspaper building and its contents (writes Graham Osborne, Print21.com.au). “The *Star* was established in August 1915 by my grandfather and remained one of the very last hot metal newspaper shops in Australia until [26 June 2003] when my brother Bill and my mother closed the doors,” says Walker. “Both my mother and brother, who were residing in Gnowangerup, died two years ago, leaving me as a sole beneficiary of the *Gnowangerup Star*.” [Gnowangerup is 400km south-east of Perth.]

The paper had an unusual editorial policy of trying to report only good news. “We didn’t have court reporting or anything like that because one day it could be your mate up on a drunk driving charge and they wouldn’t be very happy to see their name all over the paper,” says Walker. “It was a typical small town – kick one person and 50 fall over.” Walker’s mother, Margaret, wrote some of the newspaper copy and also helped her sons to hand deliver about 800 copies of the paper once a week. Walker completed his five-year apprenticeship at the *Star* with his father Zic Walker and says he has been reluctant to walk away from the building.

“But it has come to pass that as I am no longer living in Gnowangerup – I’m 130 km away in Albany – and I’m now approaching 70 years of age so the *Star* has become too much for me to handle,” he says. “My mother’s wish was that it would not be sold off piece by piece so I’m hoping to find a home for the *Star* office and buildings at a reasonable sale price. Walk in, walk out. A two-bedroom house and the office and machinery, all in working order, would be on offer.” Rod Walker can be contacted at gnostar@wn.com.au/

84.4.5 A newspaper is like...

The *Western Champion*, Barcaldine, mused on the different characteristics of a newspaper (3 July 1894, p.1). It said: “A newspaper is something like a family—it is mighty easy to start. It is also like fishing results—one of the most prolific sources for exaggeration; the fish as regards size and weight, the newspaper as regards circulation and weight of earnings during the first three months.”

84.4.6 New and silent master for the *Daily Telegraph*’s presses, 1905

Dungog Chronicle, 13 October 1905, p.3: Once more the Sydney *Daily Telegraph* has demonstrated its right and title to be regarded as the most enterprising of Australasian newspaper properties. It is not necessary to be in accord with a journal’s views or policy to recognise its influence or ambitions. An entire community is interested in the development and expansion of an institution—and a great newspaper is a national institution.

No apology is therefore needed in referring to the latest instance of the progress and expansion of the *Daily Telegraph* and its bright and interesting little weekly, the *World’s News*. It concerns the application of electricity to the magnificent machinery that prints the great journal of King-street, Sydney. The installation of the electric current—the harnessing of the beautiful Three-roll Hoe Presses used by the *Daily Telegraph* to the modern motive power—took place the other day, and was made the occasion of an interesting ceremony. The directors and management had the pleasure of inviting and welcoming to the machine-room a number of gentlemen representative of the civic and other interests of Sydney, as well as the principal members of the literary, commercial and mechanical staffs of the newspaper, to witness the formal starting of an installation that gives the establishment the distinction of being the best equipped and most up-to-date outside Europe and the United States.

This, is something for the commercial capital to be proud of — that the *Daily Telegraph* office should prove to be one of the first great press establishments, south of the line, in which lightning, brought to earth, has been chained to the chariot of information, literature and commerce. And the

magical transition from steam to electricity was effected instantaneously, and without hitch or hindrance. The great machines, which, in the small hours of one day, obeyed the hot, muscular insistence of steam, swung at their next commissioning as truly and as dutifully at the bidding of a new and silent master. And all this means economy of material and less wear and tear to the splendid machinery that serves the journalistic and commercial necessities of the *Daily Telegraph's* and *World News's* readers and clients. It, also, represents a nicety in calculation of the motive power, required on any occasion—a calculation formerly arrived at by conjecture.

After the machine containing the *Daily Telegraph* had been duly started, that containing the *World's News* was started, and excited a great deal of interest. The paper running in from great rolls was printed in black and red, folded up and bound together, and the edges trimmed—coming out in its complete form, ready for widespread distribution, and without any subsequent handling, at the rate of 24,000 copies per hour

Before manipulating the controller, the President of the Daily Telegraph Company, Major J. R. Carey, briefly addressed the gathering and tributed (sic) to the care and skill of the engineers engaged. He traced the history of the journal's machinery of 26 years, from the gas engine and two-feeder Wharfedale to the present Three-roll Hoe Presses. Subsequently, Major Carey proposed "Success to the Corporation of Sydney", from which the machinery drew its supply of electricity. Mr T. H. Nesbitt (Town Clerk) replied in the unavoidable absence of the Lord Mayor. He proposed success to the *Daily Telegraph*. Major Carey and Mr F. W. Ward (Editor) responded. Mr W. Wynne (General Manager of *Daily Telegraph*) proposed the "Australian General Electric Company". When the contract, was made, he said, they were assured that a plant would be supplied second to none in the world in regard to excellence. There were many large plants, perhaps, but none of a more complete and up-to-date character. In the two-motor system they had an improvement on anything else in Australia. The machinery, as put in, ran excellently, and answered all tests. He believed the plant was what it was described to be—the best in Australasia. Mr McKittrick, Managing Director of the Australian General Electric Company responded, and mentioned that world-wide interest had been taken in the construction of the plant. Other toasts were honored, including those of the President and General Manager of the *Daily Telegraph*. The warmly expressed congratulations will be cordially endorsed throughout the land.

84.4.7 Correction

Rod Kirkpatrick writes: I said in 83.4.7 that two errors of fact had jumped out at me from newspaper-related extracts from *The Encyclopedia of Victoria*. The errors were, indeed, errors, but I made an error in the title of the source. It should have read: *The Encyclopedia of Melbourne* (the *Cyclopedia of Victoria* appeared in three volumes before the advent of the *Sun News-Pictorial*; it has a significant section on the Victoria press).

84.4.8 Hobart: Pictures of Our Past

From 30 August to 8 September 2015 the Hobart daily and Sunday papers published a 10-part pictorial magazine insert, "Pictures of Our Past", featuring a pictorial cavalcade of Hobart and Tasmanian events of the 1920s and early 1930s. The inserts began with the *Sunday Tasmanian* on 30 August and continued in the *Mercury* during the week, the *Sunday Tasmanian* again on 6 September and concluded on 8 September in the *Mercury*. Many of the early images were taken from the *Illustrated Tasmanian Mail* which was the *Mercury's* weekly stablemate from 1877-1935. Damian Bester edited the "Pictures of Our Past" series. In the introduction, Bester noted that a panorama of the Royal Hobart Regatta is believed to have been the first news photo to appear in the *Mercury*, albeit well after politicians and advertisers had started supplying their own pictorial blocks. The inserted magazines were labelled: Sports & Recreation; Royal visits; Tasmanians at work; Streetscapes; People & Fashion; School days; On the road; On the water; Country shows and regattas; and On the town. Bester said, "It was a huge success all round, boosting circulation and generating a lot of goodwill. We piggybacked it with an education resource for schools which was well received, too."

84.4.9 Memorial for war correspondents opened in Canberra

A memorial dedicated to war correspondents was opened by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra on 23 September (ABC News, 23 September 2015). Australian journalist Peter Greste and the widow of Balibo Five journalist Greg Shackleton, Shirley Shackleton, were among those who laid wreaths at the ceremony. The idea of a formal memorial to journalists killed in conflict zones was sparked a decade ago. About 26 Australian correspondents have lost their lives reporting in conflict zones.

Journalist Peter Greste, who was jailed by the Egyptian authorities in 2014 and released earlier this year, reflected on the increasingly dangerous space foreign correspondents find themselves in. "The war on terror has hollowed out the neutral ground that journalists used to occupy," Greste said. "For a long time there was an understanding that journalists had a right to be on the battlefield even if they weren't always welcome," he said. "Now journalists are a part of the battlefield, we've got a war over an idea. We become targets in a way that we've never been before."



5—RECENTLY PUBLISHED

84.5.1 Books

Baker, Jeannine, *Australian Women War Reporters: Boer War to Vietnam* (NewSouth). Paperback, 288pp. \$39.99. This book provides a much-needed account of the pioneering women who reported from the biggest conflicts of the twentieth century. Two women covered the South African War at the turn of the century, and Louise Mack witnessed the fall of Antwerp in 1914. Others such as Anne Matheson, Lorraine Stumm and Kate Webb wrote about momentous events including the rise of Nazism, the liberation of the concentration camps, the aftermath of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and the Cold War conflicts in Korea and Southeast Asia. These women carved a path for new generations of female foreign correspondents who have built upon their legacy. More information: <https://www.newsouthbooks.com.au/collections/september-2015-non-fiction-titles/lead-titles/australian-women-war-reporters/>

A book review by Professor John Henningham

Alix Christie, *Gutenberg's Apprentice*, Harper Collins, NY, 2014, 406pp.

For those of us who enjoy picking up a bit of history from historical fiction, *Gutenberg's Apprentice* by Alix Christie is a good read. Its central character, Peter Schoeffer, adopted son of Gutenberg's financier Johann Fust, was to become the world's first successful printer and publisher. Gutenberg himself emerges as a not always likeable rogue, scheming, cantankerous, ethically shady, constantly in disputes and a merciless boss—traits for which there is historic evidence. Yet his genius in devising, driving and marketing the new technology is apparent. Schoeffer, a talented young scribe drawn unwillingly into the embryonic industry, is cast as the sober, sensible manager who keeps Gutenberg in line as best he can, constantly frustrated by the master's willingness to risk their major project for short-term gain (e.g. in doing a quick run of papal indulgences thus drawing attention to their big secret). There is real fear that church or state authorities will take over printing or suppress it.

In what seems a crazy brave scheme for their first project, Gutenberg as we all know settles on no less a challenge than the Bible, in Latin, together with St Jerome's wordy commentaries. It takes more than two years, for a print run of only 180 copies of its more than 1200 pages, and all done behind closed doors—the elaborate carving of letter punches and making moulds, manufacture of

type in the hot furnace, the arduous process of setting the type letter by letter, compositing, inking, printing, drying, proofing. Detail on the mechanics of printing abound—the formation of letters and casting of type, constant experimenting with techniques and mixtures of metals to get durable typefaces, as well as getting ink to dry and to print on both sides of the paper (or vellum).

All sorts of things are worked out on the fly, including some of the basics that have endured for half a millennium. Young Schoeffer even comes up with the idea of type justification, while the notion of printing spot colour through second passes also emerges—although it is initially abandoned for hand-drawn colour letters and illustrations added to each copy after printing. Chapter headings give a chronology of the project in terms of the number of completed quires. As might be expected, the publisher has used historic typefaces in the book, including Historical Fell Type, one of the earliest book faces used in England, and floriated initial capitals used by Gutenberg.

The novel is not entirely satisfactory; some of the characterisation is weak and attempts at artistic writing sometimes descend into artifice (though it can also hit the right note). At times the narrative drags, echoing the slow progress in getting the Bible printed. But Christie knows her stuff, as a letterpress printer as well as journalist and author, and she has closely studied the research on Gutenberg. The denouement, with hawking of the new product to bemused merchants at the Frankfurt Fair, is written with flair, evoking the excitement and risks involved in unveiling a discovery that would change the world.

The book evokes the spirit of the times. As well as rumblings within the church and the emboldening of secular rulers, the big shocker in mid-15th century international news was the fall of Constantinople to the Turk, resulting in financial crisis with the loss of trade routes, the call to a new crusade and even the arrival of refugees. Resonances with today don't need emphasis.

The new way of producing books caused angst to the existing industry, fears of devilry at work as well as derision of flaws in the first outputs and conviction that hand-written books would always be superior. Among her other achievements Christie brings to life the scriptoria—the writing factories where scribes did their hand copying of manuscripts, relishing their superior role in a growing and indispensable technology that would seemingly last forever.

84.5.2 Articles

Bennett, Lachlan, “150-year-old paper leads digital revolution”, *Bulletin*, TheNewspaperWorks, September 2015, p.19. This is about the Toowoomba *Chronicle* and its place in the vanguard of APN's digital-subscription newspapers.

Callick, Rowan, “My 40-year love affair with PNG”, *Weekend Australian*, 12-13 September 2015, p.20. A journalist writes of his 40-year association with Papua New Guinea, with particular perspectives on the journalistic and publishing challenges that arose.

Cheng, Amy, “On yer bike, Rex”, *Bulletin* (TheNewspaperWorks) September 2015, p.15. Rex Gardner has spent more than four decades in newspapers. Now, after retiring in July, the former managing director of Davies Bros is following one of his life's great passions: riding a motor bike.

Cox, Peter, “Here's a quid. Take this photo to my pal on the paper please, it's urgent”, obituary of Neville Bowler, press photographer 1930-2015, *Age*, 16 September, p.52.

Ellis, Gavin, “Writing on the wall for outsourcing newsrooms”, *Bulletin*, TheNewspaperWorks, September 2015, p.18. Dr Ellis discusses the future for PageMasters after recent changes in the outsourcing-of-subbing policy of Fairfax Media and APN.

Holmes, Jonathan, “Objective reporting: it's a thing of the past”, *Age*, 9 September 2015, page 45.

Howell, P.A., “Lois Quarrel: A notable mid-20th-century journalist and her impact”, *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia*, no. 42, 2014, pages 29-42.

Morris, James, “Froth from the right—not serious history”, a review of Hal G.P. Colebatch, *Australia’s Secret War: How unionists sabotaged our troops in World War II*, published in *Queensland Journal of Labour History*, Issue 21, September 2015. The author uses newspaper sources to check on the accuracy of Colebatch’s statements.

Putnis, Peter, “Writing media history”, *Australian Review of Public Affairs*, September 2015. <http://www.australianreview.net/digest/2015/09/putnis.html>

Secombe, Mike, “Civil war at News Corp”, *Saturday Paper*, 26 September 2015, pp.1 and 4. Analyses coverage of new Prime Minister Turnbull, contrasting the approaches of the *Daily Telegraph* and columnist Andrew Bolt (very bitter at the change of PMs) and in the *Australian* and elsewhere in News Corp papers (accepting).

Westfield, Mark, “Malcolm Turnbull: law, journalism, business deals, banking”, *Australian*, 21 September 2015. A professional profile of the new Prime Minister, who was sworn in on 15 September.

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