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BLOOD

8.00am The switch

The phones ring, the switch lights up. News tips, complaints, publicists, nutters, queries, suggestions, advertisers, newsagents. In the bowels of the newspaper office—or perhaps at its heart—the switchboard operators field these calls. They are brisk and no-nonsense and are the junction where reporters, editors, advertising managers, typists and senior executives encounter the general and opinionated public. Ads are placed, classifieds typed in, hot news of corruption listened to. messages delivered. Just putting you through now.'

No one in the building seems to know exactly where the switchboard room is apart from the telephonists themselves. These women are efficient and largely characterised by their distinctive voices: some warm, some dry, some a bit sharp. They are vital, they have views, and they aren't shy about when they patch through a call.1

9.00am

Reporters

When the David Syme & Co staff are relocating the newspaper office in 1969, the battery of state-of-the-art telephones goes into the new Spencer St building before desks, filing cabinets or reporters. The phone technicians have worked hard, the switchboard staff are all trained up and the lifeblood of the news organisation is in place. The many reporters who will use this equipment more than almost anything else in their journalistic toolbox are encouraged by editors to always answer ringing phones at unattended desks. Often this involves hearing reader complaints, but it is a great way of connecting with the community.

9.30am

Shorthand class

Facing out of the Exhibition Street side of the H&WT building, the shorthand teacher Mrs Travis has her new gaggle of cadets ranged around the table. She's teaching them some shortforms and ST loops. The copy-boys and -girls fresh out of secondary school will spend a year running important errands such as getting cups of tea, before a cadetship proper arises. Then they may get their claws on hotly contested 'rounds' such as state and federal politics, the courts, welfare, industrial, religion or police, or step into the alternative realities of sport, business, arts or features. Some will rise like cream (or helium); others will use the place as a stepping stone to other careers; a few will flee, traumatised. Fragments of shorthand will stay with most of them.

10.00am

News conference

News conference begins very early at the Herald & Weekly Times building on Flinders Street, the senior Herald editors meeting at breakfast, the Sun team meeting about 10am. There are people such as the chief-of-staff, news editor, pictorial editor, arts editor, business editor and sports editor, along with people from the interstate bureaux and the graphics department. And, of course, the Editor. They briefly analyse the previous day's paper—now, as they say in the industry, today's fish'n'chip wrapper. Then, they sort out today's news-list, who has been assigned to what, picture opportunities. Reporters are briefed. Calls are made. Phone books and Melway directories and dictionaries consulted. Library clippings perused. Dictaphones are proffered, shorthand deciphered, typewriters assaulted. They walk everywhere. They meet contacts. They go to press conferences. They infiltrate the city. They see evidence of their newspaper everywhere: being read, carried, sold, advertised, repurposed, scrunched up and discarded.

10.30am

The tea lady

She does the rounds of the building and calls everyone 'love', from the executives along Mahogany Row (called Chipboard Row by disrespectful journalists) to the women in classifieds, to the men in the composing room, to the rabbles of journalists. Tea, coffee, fruit buns, biscuits, sandwiches. It's tiring but she loves the all-sorts she meets in the course of a day. They all know her name.

11.00am

Halls of power

At the magistrate's court, the first case is heard. In the back row a young cadet nervously scribbles shorthand taught to her by Mrs Travis. It's nerve-racking: she wishes she has the skills of the stenographers she's seen at Parliament. She has to get the guts of this case sorted out and written longhand in her notebook within the hour. She'll phone in the story for *The Herald* through Jean the copytaker. Like all the copytakers, Jean's not just a typist—she questions little things, queries words and names as she types. She's the first line of defence before the cadet's report hits the newsdesk, subs, check-subs, proof-readers, stone-sub, comps, and printers. The cadet's pace is matched by her colleagues around town at Parliament, Trades Hall, police rounds and the higher courts, while other reporters hook into news and briefings concerning health, social welfare, religion, arts, sport and business.

12.00pm **Paperchase**

Huge bolts of newsprint must be carefully moved and fed into the machinery for this evening's edition. Paper is expensive and the dayshift guys remember how, during World War II, H&WT newsprint consumption dropped 35 per cent.2 Despite this, The Herald and The Sun averaged 340,000–350,000 sales a day back then. Sometimes the bolts of paper topple off the forklift and cause a tremendous boom, shaking the building: such victims cannot be salvaged; nor can 'overs' and 'spoils'—newspapers that weren't cut, trimmed or inked correctly. Ink is

checked and replenished, machinery

ensure the place is ready for the next

the locker rooms.

serviced, supplies ordered; and cleaners

onslaught of shift workers trailing into

1,00pm

City workers

In the City Square, the Treasury Gardens, the park benches along Swanston, Bourke, Collins or Elizabeth Streets, and down by the river alongside the railyards, lunchtime people eat sandwiches and catch up with the news. These are the days before swiping tiny screens. In the mid-20th century, the city centre's workforce is diverse: heavier industries grimily inhabit the fringes of the central business district and some—such as the rag trade of Flinders Lane—cling to the very centre. Likewise, the big newspapers have their presses on-site, such as Flinders Street (the Herald & Weekly Times) or Spencer Street (The *Age*). Blue overalls and boiler suits are the identifying uniform. At their workplaces—porters in their booths, clerks at their desks, shop-ladies in their tea-rooms, loading-dock workers leaning against timber beams reading the paper is the usual morning activity. The crossword, death notices, classifieds, letters-to-the-editor, comicstrips, shipping news, stock exchange, law notices, market prices, Corinella, Weg, Keith Dunstan, Bob Millington, Leunig, Tandberg: these are as compelling and well-read as what editors and journalists call 'hard news'. There's something for everyone.

1.30pm

Letters to the Editor They froth, they rage, they praise and they make it plain: letter-writers have collectively contributed (without pay) to what has long been a mainstay for Melbourne's newspapers—the daily letters pages. For editors and passionate readers who take the time to write and post their two-bob's worth have provided insights into the local community, as well as sparking ideas for news stories and features. They have been the barometer for what is topical and divisive in

2.00pm

Melbourne.

Budding journo Her career is launched in Melbourne in 1959, not by a big daily, but a student paper. She is probably thrilled seeing her name in Farrago with her first published article. She's written 'Rationalism – An interesting challenge for Christians'.3 She doesn't know this is the first of hundreds she'll write for newspapers in Melbourne and around the world, that in a decade she'll turn this insatiable ability for writing into book-form with The Female Eunuch, establishing a long career as the Melbourne-born international author, journalist, broadcaster, feminist and conservationist. She doesn't know that, conscious of posterity, she will archive almost every piece of correspondence associated with her print journalism. Among all this including ephemera such as her 1971 press card for Vietnam—she will have many written exchanges with editors and subeditors. She might have an inkling she is cataloguing what her future archivist will describe as a 'micro-history of print journalism and print journalists'. 4 This archive will contain 'carbon copies of typescripts, pasted up pages, galley proofs and copy marked with printer's instructions—important pieces of newspaper material culture', and evidence of commissioning, editing and subediting practices that will

2.30pm

is Germaine Greer.

Truth

He has arrived from New Zealand looking for a job as a journalist. He joins *The Sun*—a good education—but receives a far more vivid one with the wild men of *Truth*, a paper he thinks is a scandal sheet to some but to others a voice for the neglected common man. Many regard Truth as 'a scandalous abomination, not to be spoken of and never read'. Equally, everyone in Australia seems to have heard of 'Heart Balm', the paper's sex advisory

almost disappear by 2016.5 Her name

3.30pm **Cartoonists**

The day's big events are becoming clear and the cartoonists and graphic artists have been briefed. The graphic artists prepare maps, tables, panels and 'do-ups'. Cartoonists, guided by a deep perception of the fragilities and steelier sides of human nature, do working roughs. Some evolve into classics, others become scraps on the ground.

4.00pm

Advertising room There is a fierce line between the advertising and editorial people. Journalists don't like them on the editorial floor because they think they are trying to influence them. Yet ads are the fuel for the editorial engine, and at times when newspapers are the best vehicle for advertising, the luscious waves of ads flowing in are known as 'rivers of gold'.

4.30pm

Truck drivers

The loading bay men are changing shifts: The Herald goes out in various editions and the late shift will do tomorrow's Sun. The trucks depart what is usually called 'the Herald building', historically significant as housing the publication of The Herald, The Sun News-Pictorial, and, later, The Herald Sun. Together, these have been the most popular Victorian newspapers since the 1920s. The drivers' trucks out the front of this building were, in previous incarnations, horses and carriages. The drivers have no inkling of a future where the ground floor of this building will be a feted restaurant called The Press Club, or where the floors above drivers' imaginations that one day newspaper delivery will involve news items being uploaded onto something called a website: where the newspaper is paperless, where you can't hold it in your

The newsagent

He has been at his stand at Flinders Street Station since early morning. The Gas and Fuel Buildings rise opposite. He has his stacks of afternoon papers: some go to the boys who will stand outside the station, others take pride of place at the front counter with the other papers. Here they are, crisp and smelling of inkywarm paper: The Sun News-Pictorial, The Age and The Australian. Nearby are The Sporting Globe, Truth, The Weekly Times and all the magazines.

This is the news and it is lodged in the biological clocks of the populace, especially the commuters. Little does this seller know that news-stands will soon become a thing of the past. He doesn't know that in 40 years it will be difficult to find a news-stand on the city blocks.

5.00pm

Newsboys He yells out 'Getcha' Erald'ere' or simply *'Eeeerald!'* as loud as he possibly can as city workers heading for trams and trains trot past him. Newsboys, noisily evident on many city corners and in front of the two railway stations, are almost legendary in Melbourne, romantically remembered and still much-missed. Their larrikin ways, though, earned them a reputation as being lovably tough little nuggets who brought much personality to the street-side selling of the daily news. These boys would come into the city straight after school and work for two hours or so, earning their pocket money, while other boys would do local paper rounds in the mornings in their home suburbs. Former newsboy Bob Urguhart had various spots: outside Melbourne Town Hall, Kings Hotel and Bourke St Coles. He would race in from school, collect his Heralds and magazines from the shop, and later editions would be dropped off at his spot: City, City Extra, Home and Final editions. 'I would have been about 14. You'd be doing it for hours, calling out 'Erald, and not even think about it... [One night] I got on this tram and I was going home, and I was dog-tired. And then, automatically, I just called out "'Erald, 'Erald!" Everyone laughed.' He was a newsboy from age 10 to 16, loved its social nature, usually worked six days a week, and remains a committed member of the Newsboys Foundation, whose heritage in the Newsboys Club (founded 1893) continues today with a wider welfare role for young people.

Newsgirls

then a journalist, then a historian, a university lecturer and an archivist. On a March day in 2014, Rachel Buchanan, author of Stop Press: the last days of newspapers, is on the street with two of her daughters, at a time when *The Age* has just moved from broadsheet to 'compact', The Saturday Paper has just been launched, and the Fairfax printing centre at Tullamarine is about to close. Buchanan and daughters are handing out 525 free copies of Melbourne Sirius, a newspaper about newspapers. Inside, it documents 525 dead newspapers produced in Melbourne since 1838, plus 175 of their mastheads. To mark the publication, produced as part of a State Library of Victoria creative fellowship, Buchanan and her daughters become newsgirls at places such as the old Argus, Herald & Weekly Times and Age buildings. 'This is Sirius! Get your Sirius here!' they cry, continuing that long tradition of raucous newspaperselling in which girls did occasionally figure—an early poster for *The Age* shows a girl offering the paper, mouth open with her clarion call.

She was once a stringer, then a cadet,

6.00pm

Commuters On the red-rattler from the suburbs, the young man has his lunchbox at his side and his Sun News-Pictorial aloft. As the train passes under Princes Bridge into the platforms reeking of fish'n'chips and salt'n'vinegar, he finishes reading. He always starts with the 'other' front page (Sport, back page) then flips it around to read news, working through to the letters and comics. He folds it and leaves it on the seat. It will be read by a student, a young mother, a nightshift worker, an office worker. It will go up and down the line until the cleaners come. Decades later, in 2001, a new

phenomenon will grace empty train and tram seats: the free commuter tabloids MX (published by News Ltd) and Melbourne Express (Fairfax). MX proves a huge success, succouring an afternoon newspaper habit in the 19–39 age groups, and lasts until 2015, by which time commuters prefer scrolling their devices. Express, a morning paper, shuts down after only seven months, thanks to Australia's then-worst advertising market in a decade.7

8.00pm **Compositors**

What once occupied many rooms

with machines and hordes of staff now exists within the confines of a laptop. Pre-digital, workers from various disciplines bring type and image together. In early Melbourne, typesetting and presswork is the 'heart and lungs' of pioneering colonial newspapers: type is set by hand, and each letter is handpicked and inserted. A good tradesman sets 2500 words in a ten-hour day.8

By the end of the 19th century Melbourne's newspaper publishing rooms have 'few of the ordered rhythms of an industrial environment' dominated by an assembly line.9 In 2017, with abandoned Linotypes and letterpresses in junk heaps, we are in an age of printing where 'printers no longer get their hands dirty but push buttons, program computers and wear collar and tie'.10

8.30pm

People make papers

'Hey Andy, say s here that machines are going to replace everyone soon.' 'Aah, not us, mate. People make papers.' 11 The company asks him to make a film. The idea of 'a-day-in-the-life' is a popular one, picked up from magazines such as Life, but this film has another driving idea: to demystify the process of how a newspaper comes together and to portray the diversity of people involved. Its soundtrack is especially rich with the thrum of machines, the slap of paper, the serious voices of editors in conference.

9.00pm

Golden Age and

The Phoenix

Pubs are often referred to as 'the branch office': journalists are known for heavy drinking. It is the 1970s–80s and the Phoenix services the H&WT in Flinders

Street while the Golden Age is just

around the corner from *The Age*. There are also less official drinking holes closer to office desks. Many journalists, particularly subeditors, beaver away into the night, so, at *The* Sun, they have The Subs' Club. No one can say for sure when this started, but it becomes an institution, with 'its own freemasonry of rituals and coded language'. 'Every night,' says former subeditor, Dean Donoghue, 'when the second edition went to press around lam, the chief subeditor would open the batting with the cry: "All up." At this, the fridge, cunningly out of sight in a cupboard in the subs' room, was unlocked and drinks could then be

'At The Age, the make-do spirit of the times gave birth to The Bog Bar. This was so named because it shared its meagre facilities with the men's loo and locker room. Actually, it was the men's loo and locker room, transformed with a little imagination into the twilight room. Sort of.' 12

11.30pm **Matric students**

It is January 1969 and soon the first bundles of *The Age* will be trundled out on a trolley in the loading bay. This edition contains a supplement listing the Victorian Leaving Certificate results for the 1968 matriculation exams. Students and parents wait anxiously near the entrance, the bundles are dumped onto a makeshift desk and staff let the crowds through the barriers. Good news, bad news and everything in between: it comes in black and white just as it does on weekends when, in later decades, people will line up to wrestle with an enormous copy of the Saturday *Age*, to scour the real estate and motor listings for their perfect opportunity.

1.00am Night shift cadet

She's not sure why she's been put on late-shift police rounds—it's pretty much considered a punishment and

as an arts writer she'd rather be at the cinema. She has to monitor phones, stomp up to the police media unit in Russell Street police station to deliver the first edition, and listen to the scanner (which picks up police channels). Then she'll put on her bright yellow overcoat and go out to soothe the boredom with a Stalactites souvlaki.

5.00am

Street sweepers

Early-opener business owners and municipal workers are out sweeping various lengths of city street. It is cold and gusts of chill wind blow bits of newspaper along the footpath, the crest on The Sun saying 'Daily at dawn'. It's yesterday's news. Today, there will be other 'stories'—the tales of the city that knit together its people, events and its character.

6**.**00am

Big news

He is not a morning-radio person, so when he opens his home-delivered paper it is a shock. This morning, September 12, 2001, he cannot believe what he is looking at—the city he visited only a year ago appears to be in cataclysm and the headline 'War on America' tells him the essence of the event. Still pictures—aeroplane fireballs, people jumping and fallingare somehow more searing than the television images he will later see, repeatedly. He sits down to read the horror. His tea goes cold.

- Gawenda, Michael (2017), Age Editor 1997-2004, in interview with author: 'I used to try to have monthly lunches where we would invite people from every section of the newspaper, including the switchboard ladies—and we would talk about *The Age*, what was happening, what they thought about what we were doing, what wasn't working, what we could do better.'
- 2 Lockwood, Kim (1990), in Gaylard, Geoff, One Hundred and Fifty Years of News from The Herald, Southbank editions, p10.
- 3 Farrago (1959), University of Melbourne, p3. 4 Germaine Greer archive (2017), University of Melbourne, 2014.0046 PRINT JOURNALISM 1959-2010 http:// gallerv.its.unimelb.edu.au/imu/imu. php?request=multimedia&irn=86704scope
- 5 Germaine Greer archive ibid.
- 6 Williams, Ken (2017), Truth, Age and Sun journalist, in emailed correspondence with author: 'For my sins, it later fell to me to produce three "Heart Balm" books. collections of those letters to be sold on newsstands. Truth was run on a professional basis, as a metropolitan newspaper like The Age or The Herald, and it paid metro rates, and better. Many a talented journalist passed through its portals and some luminaries were to get their start there.'
- 7 Kirkpatrick, Rod (2001), 'Goodbye: End of the Line for Express', ANHG Newsletter, 15 (November), p1.
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- 9 Kirkpatrick, Rob, Dailies, ibid., p111. 10 Kirkpatrick, Rod (2004), 'Hot Metal: Last Man Standing', ANHG Newsletter, 26 (February), p14.
- Schepisi, Fred (1965), director, People make Papers, Cinesound, black and white
- 12 Donoghue, Dean (2017), Sun and Age journalist, in emailed correspondence with author: 'Uninitiated guests were often puzzled by the plea: "While you're on your silvers!" This was a cleverly disguised request, quite clear to a patched member, that actually meant: "While you're on your feet, old boy, could you fetch me another bottle from the London Bridge?" Silvers meant silver beet, rhyming slang for feet, naturally, London Bridge should be perfectly



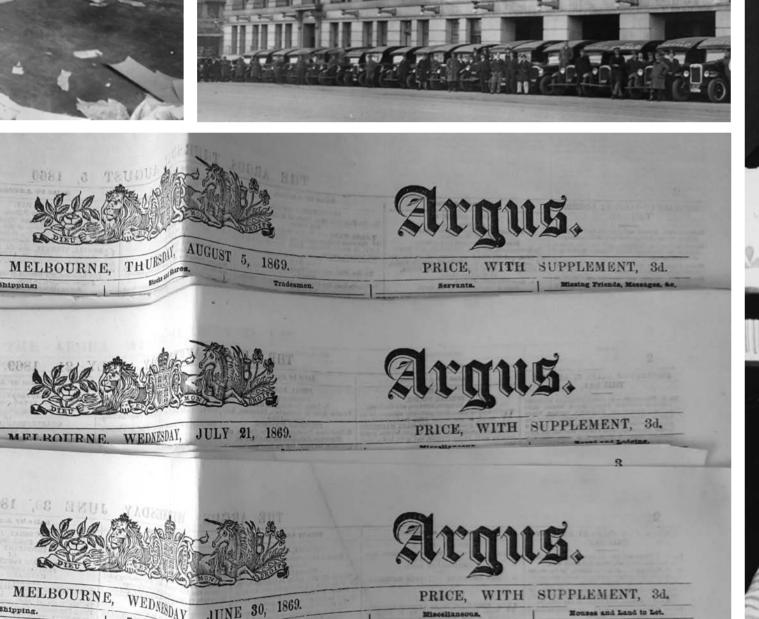


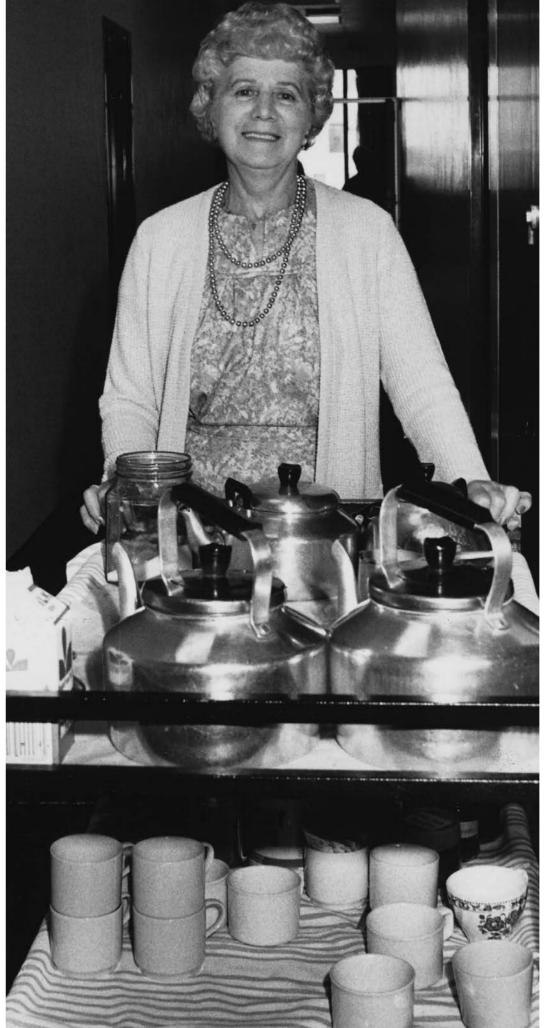
















MELBOURNE,

Digits to Digital

This is a story of busy hands and ticking clocks.

It begins before the digital age—when newspapers rustle in your hands, and publishing involves many skilled employees. These workers' fingers meddle with ink, paper, machinery, photographs and words, all in a race against the relentless hands of the clock. It is hard manual labour, and a noisy affair, too. The clicketyclack and zip of typewriters, reporters gossiping, printing presses screaming, editors and compositors yelling, delivery trucks roaring, newspaper bundles thumping on to the footpath, newsboys squawking: this is the truculent newspaper business for most of its history in Melbourne.

A bustling hand-made industry, it resembles some vast orchestra, disseminating printed information, much of it with a local focus. These papers are institutions, interdependent with their communities.

As Melbourne's big papers have traded the groan of the mechanical age for the click of the digital world, there have inevitably been fewer human digits involved. Many elements of the industry's multi-tiered labour force have become redundant or re-purposed; others have been retrained to inhabit a web-based world that boasts astonishing speed, flexibility, and once-unimaginable delivery-systems for readers, who have themselves been re-branded 'audiences'.

As the physical object of the newspaper has become a smaller concern, beset by multiple online competitors, so too have we witnessed a profound change to the way newspapers—as physical objects and as a cultural phenomenon—impinge on the urban fabric and, more deeply, the way they have influenced the psychogeography of the city.

Here, we explore the life of this city's daily newspaper cycle and the many types of people whose hands and minds have helped define what is marvellous—and not—about Melbourne.

1969 when The Age move slide specialists). The Herald

City of Melbourne Art and

City of Melbourne Art and

"Sporting News

The

The

to BELFAST and PORTLAND.

W R S T E R N
Salls for the above ports
Every TUESDAY,
At 1 schools per

The Sportsman

The & Sun

THE SUNDAY HERALD

M. Sunday @

Sunday Observer



Sunday 200



TOUXIIVQ TOWN TALK.

The Tribune

Truth











The News in Brief

Printing in Australia begins with George Hughes cranking out inked paper on a modest woodscrew press at Sydney's government house.1

Victoria's first printing press is brought to Port Phillip by Lieutenant-Governor David Collins, using it to print the Garrison and General Orders.²

It is John Pascoe Fawkner who makes the first Melbourne newspaper, the single-page handwritten Melbourne Advertiser.3 The tenth issue of the Melbourne Advertiser is in printed form but Fawkner later cancels publication (he had neglected to register the paper).4

1840

The Port Phillip Herald, printed on a handoperated press, is the forerunner of today's

1846 *The Argus* is born. 1854 The Age is born.

1869

With its lineage in The Port Phillip Herald and The Melbourne Morning Herald (1849), The *Herald* becomes the city's big afternoon paper.

A 'prolific and diverse press' flourishes without competition from other media,6 and technological change brings typesetting machines such as the Linotype from Baltimore. Most early papers are dominated by local news, with special supplements containing 'the latest news from Europe' when boats come in—that news being up to 14 weeks old.7 Even so, during the first ten to fifteen years of publication of the first Australian newspapers, it is 'an achievement to produce a legible newspaper'.8

The Sun-News Pictorial is born.

1957 The Argus closes. 1960s

Television draws advertising and readers, resulting in a continuing trend of fewer newspapers and lower circulations.

City of Melbourne Art and

The Argus, June 30,

Rachel Buchanan,

The Sunday Herald, The Sunday Sun

and *The Sunday Age* are launched. 1990

The Sun News-Pictorial and The Herald merge to become The Herald Sun. In 1991, Sunday Herald and Sunday Sun close to

make way for The Sunday Herald Sun.

1990-2017

The internet emerges and while roughly the same number of papers are being published as a century earlier, for a population almost six times greater, print circulations continue to drastically decline, especially between 2000–2017.9 Even so,

printed newspapers persist, including the

high-quality newcomer *The Saturday Paper*

'200 Years of Printing in Australia', Biblionew

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Andrew Stephens is a writer and editor. A former Age journalist (1987–2016), he worked as a reporter, subeditor and feature writer. He did his cadetship at The Sun News-Pictorial (1983–87) when there were still typewriters.

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City Gallery Melbourne Town Hall

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Ink in the Blood: The life of Melbourne's newspapers

Melbourne's newspapers have long had a daily race against the clock to reflect the city's life and personality, and connect it to the world. They have deeply affected the psychogeography of our metropolis.

