



Country Press New South Wales Inc.

Australia's oldest newspaper industry association

Founded 1900



112th Annual Conference

Bayview Boulevard, Sydney • 12 October 2012

JUDGES' COMMENTS 2012



Country Press New South Wales Inc.
Australia's oldest newspaper industry association
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2012

Newspaper Awards & Judges' Comments

112th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
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90 William Street,
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October 12, 2012

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JOURNALISM JUDGES 2011-2012

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Journalism

JUDGE: Roger Brock

Roger Brock has 35 years' experience in journalism with Fairfax Media. He was editor of the Newcastle Herald for four years and has served in several senior editorial roles at the Herald including deputy editor, chief of staff, chief subeditor and features editor. He began his cadetship in journalism with the Illawarra Mercury newspaper before joining the reporting staff of the Newcastle Herald.

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Leadership and Community Involvement

JUDGE: George Richards

George Richards retired in 2004 after 45 years with John Fairfax and Sons, mostly with *The Sydney Morning Herald*. His father, Chas Richards, uncle Len Richards, and brother Dick (now fishing guru for *The Daily Examiner*, Grafton) were Sydney journalists. He began as a copyboy with *The Daily Telegraph* in 1950 and as a cadet in 1952. He worked in Wagga Wagga for six months, when Frank Packer tried to build up the (now defunct) *Wagga Evening News* in opposition to *The Daily Advertiser*. He was recruited by *The Herald* as a sub-editor in 1958. He was News Editor of its London bureau 1973-76, and at various times Chief Sub-Editor, Chief of Staff, Editorial Training Manager, and for his last 15 years with Fairfax, writer of Column 8. He is a volunteer in Rotary and has edited two major magazines on Australian Rotary projects. He published four books of collected items from Column 8.

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Writing

JUDGE: Russell Eldridge

Russell Eldridge is a retired editor of The Northern Star newspaper. He now writes fiction, freelance articles, trains journalists and conducts corporate media training. Russell began his career in South Africa, working on The Natal Witness, the South African Press Association and the Johannesburg Star. He emigrated to Australia in 1979 to work for the Sydney Morning Herald. He made a lifestyle change and moved to the NSW North Coast. After two glorious years of hippiedom, he was sucked back into mainstream journalism and worked for The Northern Star, based in Lismore.

He retired as Editor in 2008. Russell has won several regional, state and national newspaper awards including W G Walkley Award Commendation. He edited and co-wrote a history of South African Tennis. He is a founding member of the Byron Bay Writers' Festival committee and regularly moderates sessions at that Festival. He also has a long association with the Ubud Writers and Readers Festival as a volunteer, and more recently as a moderator.

The Media Monitors Award for Local News Reporting

JUDGE: Mal Kearney

Mal Kearney retired after a life-long career in journalism, photography and publishing. This includes experience as a reporter for weekly, tri-weekly and daily newspapers and eight years as the journalism and photography trainer for Rural Press Limited/Fairfax Media until 2008.

Editor of a weekly newspaper (The Newcastle Star), two tri-weeklies (the Singleton Argus and the Port Macquarie News) and a daily (The Maitland Mercury). Most of his reporting career was with The Newcastle Herald and he returned to writing at The Maitland Mercury between Editorship of The Newcastle Star and the Mercury.

Training for Rural Press and for Fairfax Media when the companies merged meant travelling to about 100 newspapers sites around Australia and New Zealand for one-on-one coaching sessions.

The Country Press New South Wales Award for Feature Writing

JUDGE: Graham Gorrel

Graham Gorrel has had more than 50 years experience in newspapers. Beginning at The Wagga Daily Advertiser in 1958 before moving to The Area News, Griffith, in 1963. For more than 20 years he edited regional daily newspapers at The Daily Liberal, Dubbo, and The Daily Advertiser, Wagga, before being made Chief Executive Officer of The Daily Advertiser Group (now Riverina Media Group) in 1991. He has retired but maintains a close interest in the newspaper industry by writing a weekly column in The Daily Advertiser, has a

JUDGES 2011-2012

newspaper consultancy business and judges newspaper and journalism awards in NSW, Victoria and South Australia.

He has spent time in England working for the North London Newspaper Group and The Sun, Fleet Street. He was a director of the Pacific Area Newspapers Publishers Association for 10 years and president for two.

The Media Super Limited Award for Sports Journalism

JUDGE: Ian Heads

Ian Heads has covered the passing parade of Australian sport for almost 50 years - as a sportswriter for newspapers and magazines, since 1988 and as author or co-author of 40 books. He has helped tell the stories of some of Australia's most renowned sporting figures - including Mark Taylor, Jack Gibson, Matt Burke, Ken Arthurson, Ian Thorpe and many others.

He wrote a definitive history of rugby league '*True Blue*' in 1992 and co-authored the major (1988) Bicentenary book: '*200 Years of Australian Sport; A Glorious Obsession*' and '*And the Crowd Went Wild*' (2011) – both with Gary Lester.

Other works include: '*Backpage - Australia's Greatest Sporting Moments*' several club histories, plus, with Geoff Armstrong and Herb Elliott, the book '*Winning Attitudes*' - designed as a guide and inspiration to members of the Australian team at the Sydney Olympics, 2000.

In 2008 he co-authored with David Middleton the major work, '*A Centenary of Rugby League, 1908-2008*' - the official celebration of the game's first 100 years.

A former president of the Australian Sportswriters Association and a senior Media Liaison Officer for the AOC at the Atlanta, Sydney and Beijing Olympics, Ian received the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in 2010 for "service to the media as a sports journalist, author and mentor".

The Canon Award for Photography

JUDGE: Angela Brkic

Angela Brkic was born in Sydney and has gained a Visual Arts BA in Photography from Sydney College of the Arts-University of Sydney.

Angela has worked as a newspaper and editorial photographer for over 15 years and is currently working as the Picture Editor at Australian Associated Press.

The Media Super Limited Award for Feature Supplements

JUDGE: Barry Wilson

Barry Wilson has been actively engaged in publishing and the newspaper industry for 30 years. In 1987, as founding editor, he co-launched the Merimbula News Weekly and the Merimbula Tourist Fortnightly on the Far South Coast of NSW.

In 1994 he was appointed special projects manager for Macquarie Publications and in 1996 joined the Kiama Weston Group of newspapers and appointed group managing editor in 1998. The Kiama Independent was an inaugural PANPA "Newspaper of the Year Award" winner and Weston newspapers always featured prominently in CPNSW awards.

In 2006 Barry established Asset Media Services, a global media consulting business providing specialist guidance to regional and community newspapers. He has judged newspaper competitions for both CPNSW and VCPA since 2008. He is currently an ISWNE (International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors) board member and has attended their international editorial conferences since 2009.

He is a current councilor and past president of CPNSW and most recently appointed to the board of ROMAC (Rotary Oceania Medical Aid for Children).

The Media Monitors Award for Special Publications

JUDGE: Greg Watson

Greg Watson is a Life Member of both the Country Press New South Wales and the Country Press Association of Queensland and a past president and current Executive Board member of Country Press Australia.

JUDGES 2011-2012

Greg completed an apprenticeship at Queanbeyan Age and spent over 20 years in the family newspaper business in Tumut, before joining Rural Press in management positions at Sunshine Coast, Redlands, Port Macquarie and Sydney.

He left Rural Press/Fairfax to work on New Straits Times group of national newspapers in Malaysia, before joining the Hodgson families Beaudesert Times and Jimboomba Times newspapers 3 years ago. Greg re-joined Fairfax Media's Queensland Community Newspapers following the recent sale of the newspapers to Fairfax Media.

The Goss International Award for Newspaper Presentation

JUDGE: Nick Hartgerink

Nick Hartgerink spent 24 years as a journalist at the Illawarra Mercury in Wollongong, where he was Editor from 1995-2001.

He is now a media consultant and author, based at Kiama on the NSW South Coast. He has written five books, including a best-selling biography of motorcycle racer Wayne Gardner (1989) and a history of the University of Wollongong for its 60th anniversary (2011).

PRINTING JUDGE 2011-2012

The WO Richards Award for Technical Excellence in Newspaper Production

Sponsored by Norske Skog

JUDGE: Warwick Moore

Warwick Moore has 42 years experience in the printing industry over a broad range of printing disciplines. Many of those years were in heatset web offset and coldset newspapers both in Australia and overseas. Warwick has been a teacher at Sydney Institute in the Printing Machining Section for 25 of those years.

ADVERTISING AND MARKETING JUDGES 2011-2012

The DIC Award for Locally Produced Advertising

Circulation up to 5000 and Circulation over 5000

JUDGE: Ross McPherson

Ross McPherson is Executive Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of the McPherson Media Group and is based in Shepparton, where his family has published The Shepparton News since 1888. The group comprises of a dozen other paid mastheads around the Goulburn Valley and Southern Riverina as well as printing and internet businesses. Ross is a director and past-president of the International Newsmedia Marketing Association and was a long-time director of PANPA.

The DIC Award for Commercial Supplement

JUDGE: Greg Watson – *See Award for Special Publications above*

The DIC Award for Advertising Ideas

JUDGE: Brian Daly

Brian Daly is Group Creative Director at Australia's largest regionally based independent advertising and communications agency, Enigma, based in the regional city of Newcastle. With over 17 years' experience in the industry, Brian has worked on local, national and international brands to create memorable, effective campaigns for a broad cross section of clients, from small retail outlets to major government and corporate entities, including Newcastle Permanent, RSPCA Australia, TAFE, GPT, and Hunter Tourism.

A writer, director, composer, musician and one-time Red Faces winner, Brian has earned many national and international awards in his career, most recently the Australian Marketing Institute's NSW Brand Revitalisation Award for Newcastle Permanent Building Society.

The Norske Skog Award for Newspaper Marketing and Promotion

JUDGE: Ross McPherson – *see Award for Locally Produced Advertising above*

JOURNALISM

SECTION 1

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Journalism

“Country journalism is distinguished by its intimate contact with readers; it mirrors the life of the community and is the authentic currency of rural activities. Country papers can build themselves impregnably into district esteem by their championing of country needs...I am pained to see a country paper without an editorial. It is not enough for a paper to be a mere recorder of what happens. A virile and enterprising paper leads rather than follows.”

From “*What is ahead of the country paper?*” an address by
EC Sommerlad to the annual Country Press conference in 1945

Ernest Christian Sommerlad has an honoured place in the history of the Country Press Association of New South Wales. When proprietor of the *Glen Innes Examiner*, he was appointed general manager of the Country Press Co-operative Company and moved to Sydney in 1929. During the following 23 years he became Managing Director and Chairman of the Company, Secretary, President and life member of the NSW Country Press Association and life member of the Australian Provincial Press Association.

He led the Association through the crisis of the 1930s Depression and World War II and was an outspoken champion of the country press and country people.

On his death in 1952, members of the association contributed to a memorial fund to establish the E C Sommerlad Memorial Awards for Journalism – the first journalism awards established in Australia. The initial two, first contested in 1953, were state-wide, regional awards for Journalism and for Editorial Leadership and Community Involvement, the latter being supported strongly by the Rural Bank of NSW. In 1971, the Award for Editorial Writing was added. These awards were designed to recognise and encourage the three main areas of journalism which E C Sommerlad practised and vigorously advocated throughout his 40 years in the newspaper industry.

General Comments

In an unprecedented climate of change for print journalism in Australia, the entries in this year's EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Journalism demonstrate the vital role newspapers still play in rural and regional Australia.

For many communities, their local newspaper is not just a paper of record, it is part of the fabric of society. It provides a voice that other media cannot match.

At the same time, many in regional journalism are looking to their online assets to enhance and grow their audience reach, making the best use of new media to meet a growing demand.

This year's entries show that ‘country journalism’ is alive and well. The commitment and dedication of rural and regional journalists, many operating with limited resources, demonstrate a passion for the profession.

Congratulations to all entries in this year's award.

DAILY NEWSPAPERS

THE NORTHERN DAILY LEADER, TAMWORTH

A strong newspaper that presents extensive coverage of local issues. Its design is generally clean with good use of photos and graphics with attention grabbing front pages. There are occasional clashes of headings on facing pages that need to be avoided and some headings appear to be heavily condensed.

JOURNALISM

SECTION 1

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Journalism

A highlight of the entries submitted was the coverage of the death of a police officer, killed in the line of duty. This story was covered comprehensively and sensitively.

Other strengths include interesting opinion pages including links to a website blog, Saturday's 'The Break' section with an eclectic mix of weekend reads, and strong campaigning journalism on the issue of graffiti. Thursday's Admit One entertainment section is also comprehensive and informative. A variety of features and inserts add to the reader's experience.

WESTERN ADVOCATE, BATHURST

This newspaper reflects the diversity of the Bathurst region. Apart from a comprehensive coverage of local news, the paper provides a good mix of sport, lifestyle (particularly the Saturday Panorama section) and opinion. Impressive inclusions were the Gold Crown Carnival eight-page wraparound and the Game On 16-page winter sports liftout. The paper features a high story count in news giving readers great value but some pages might be a little too busy.

BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

THE INVERELL TIMES

This is a well-structured newspaper that relies on well-designed front pages to sell itself with good use of pictures and graphics to complement its journalism. The paper's links with its community are obvious, with local content predominating including news from schools, local government, churches, weddings and engagements, obituaries as well as a variety of inserts. Sport is covered well with news stories and details. The Inverell Times boasts a good mix of story lengths with solid reads interspersed with briefs and columns. The Times extra section gives readers a thorough rundown on what's happening in the region. A real strength in the entries submitted was the 16-page lift out on the Inverell Business Awards.

THE SINGLETON ARGUS

The Singleton Argus prides itself on its relationship with its community and tackling pressing issues in its circulation area. It provides a balanced coverage on the debate over mine development and its impact on the environment. All editions submitted included strong editorial content. The authoritative reporting is supported by strong editorial opinion and debate is encouraged through letters to the editor. The paper offers a broad range of reading options in its Heartland section. The Domain section includes editorial content and sport is given broad coverage. While the look of the paper is clean perhaps some of the typography could do with a review. One of the highlights of the editions submitted was the paper's Anzac Day edition wrap. The Singleton Argus does a good job of breaking news in a very competitive market.

NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

The battle over a coal seam gas proposal by Santos was one of the key issues affecting the Namoi Valley in the past 12 months. The area became a battlefield for the debate nationally and presented the Namoi Valley Independent with a challenge and an opportunity. The paper needed to provide a balanced coverage of the issue and, at the same time, advocate for the best outcome for its community.

Other issues covered in submitted editions included road safety, health, a savage storm and a local perspective on the NBN debate. But it was the coverage of a fire that destroyed a landmark building in Gunnedah that brought out the best in the newspaper. The fire itself and its aftermath were given extensive coverage and the building's place in the town's heritage has been documented for posterity thanks to the Namoi Valley Independent.

Another strength of the paper is its obvious connection with its readership. The paper devotes a great deal of space to community organisations such as service clubs, schools and the hospital as well as accepting submitted obituaries, weddings and letters to the editor. The paper's sport coverage was the best in the category.

JOURNALISM

SECTION 1

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Journalism

TRI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

MUDGEE GUARDIAN AND THE WEEKLY

A highlight of the submitted editions was the coverage of the Mudgee Cup and some great front page photos. Both papers provide a broad coverage of issues and encourage reader feedback. Strong points were social pages, sport and opinion pages. More variety in inside page design with fewer horizontal layouts could enhance the paper. Editorial content is strong with issues such as road safety, electricity pricing and a forum on the future of Gulgong.

SOUTH COAST REGISTER, NOWRA

The South Coast Register's editorial catchcry is: "If it matters to you, it matters to us". This philosophy is demonstrated in the papers solid community focus in news, sport (both senior and junior), business and features including a comprehensive Bay and Basin Extra section. Local faces, local voices and local views prevail. The papers layout is well organised with strong use of photos. The front page presentation on the John Bull Centre fire was particularly strong. The papers sport section is excellent. There is scope for more variety in Page 1 pointers promoting inside editorial content.

THE AREA NEWS, GRIFFITH

The front pages of the Area News immediately give readers the impression that this is an editorial team that really 'means it'. The paper picks the best story of the day and gives it full treatment in words, pictures and graphics both in print and online. Well-written human-interest stories predominate. Each edition submitted presented a surprise for the reader.

Coverage of the Griffith flood was outstanding. The 'Water World' wraparound edition is no doubt a souvenir. The papers front and back page composition varies from issue to issue demonstrating an innovative approach to design. Each front page of the submitted editions was eye catching.

Editorial content is varied. Apart from general news and sport there are strong opinion pages with vox pops, letters and an editorial, business, rural news, a kids page, motors, entertainment and a footy tipping competition. The Griffith Super Chef promotion demonstrates the papers awareness of the need to present soft news as well as the hard.

The papers online journalism was very impressive, particularly in its flood coverage, no doubt increasing readership. Features included a flood map, great photos and important information for readers on how to get help and how to give it.

An outstanding entry!

WEEKLY AND ONE JOURNALIST NEWSPAPERS

GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

A review of content, structure and design has resulted in a lively, informative and inclusive newspaper that presents a balance of hard news, opinion and community input.

While the paper obviously takes its role as a news provider seriously, it isn't afraid to take a lighter approach to some stories. Its reporting is generally concise and punchy, enhanced by attention grabbing headlines and strong pictures. It provides a good mix of courts and police, community, social and sport events. The general look of paper is organised and clean. The most recent edition submitted also included front page illustrated pointers, a must for any paper wanting to attract readers.

From the editions submitted, the highlight was the papers strong campaign for improvements to the Pacific Highway, featuring four pages of comprehensive coverage including a powerful, first person piece from the editor.

JOURNALISM

SECTION 1

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Journalism

Another impressive aspect of the paper was its innovative approach to new media and technology with a QR Code link on the front page to its website and various pointers inviting readers to follow the Guardian News on Facebook.

An impressive, well presented and connected newspaper!

THE GILGANDRA WEEKLY

This paper celebrated 100 years in print last year and is an integral part of the local community. The paper obviously puts great store in its traditions and this is reflected in its look. Highlights of the submitted editions included a great coverage of Australia Day activities with an impressive spread of pictures, a lively display for a big race meeting, and coverage of the Gilgandra Show with four pages devoted to results.

While the traditional look of the paper obviously works for its readership, perhaps some thought could be given to freshening up some aspects of the paper's design such as reduced column widths, new dinkuses and more photos (especially in sport).

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

The Monaro Post publishes a weekly newspaper averaging 32 pages, two tourist magazines, two farm magazines and a lifestyle magazine annually. Submitted entries showed some creative use of photos, good use of colour and a comprehensive coverage of the main issues in the paper's circulation area. The paper featured a great footy tipping competition and an informative 'Post & Rail' section. The Dancing with the Cooma Stars was also an entertaining addition. A strong wrap on the areas floods demonstrated a commitment to providing useful information to readers. The papers design could be improved with fewer single-deck, horizontal story layouts and narrower columns for easier reading.

THE RIVERINE GRAZIER, HAY

This paper's mantra is "The Heartbeat of Hay" and it displays a strong connection with its community. It presents the necessary mix of news, sport and community input. It also fulfils a role as an opinion leader with an editorial. The layouts of editions submitted were a little 'tight'. Opening up the pages with more space between headings, copy and rules would be an advantage.

MILTON ULLADULLA TIMES, ULLADULLA

Only selected pages were submitted rather than complete papers. The submitted pages featured good examples of campaigning journalism with comprehensive coverage of surf safety and the need for a respite care/group home. The paper has a strong voice, backing its reporting with authoritative editorials. Opinions from readers are sought regularly. News reports are well written and presented with clean and consistent layouts making the paper easy to navigate.

THE WARIALDA STANDARD

The Warialda Standard maintains a 117-year tradition of informing its readers with a strong emphasis on factual reporting and community engagement. The paper has a solid mix of news and sport, and provides an outlet for readers' opinions. The paper's position in the community is obvious when the area council and its mayor specifically address a letter to the editor in an edition of the paper. The Warialda Standard also fulfils its role as an opinion leader with strong editorials. The design of the paper could be enhanced with narrower columns for copy and fewer clashes of headings on pages.

JOURNALISM

SECTION 1

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Journalism

Certificate of Merit

The Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth - **Daily newspapers**

Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnadah - **Bi-weekly newspapers**

Guardian News, Numbucca - **Weekly & One Journalist newspapers**

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for

Journalism

2011-2012

is awarded to

The Area News

Griffith

Judge: Roger Brock

JOURNALISM

SECTION 1

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Journalism

FORMER WINNERS

1953	<i>The Daily Examiner,</i> Grafton	1972	<i>The Daily Advertiser,</i> Wagga Wagga	1991	<i>Illawarra Mercury,</i> Wollongong
1954	<i>The Border Mail,</i> Albury	1973	<i>The Evening Post,</i> Goulburn	1992	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette,</i> Richmond, and <i>Illawarra Mercury,</i> Wollongong
1955	<i>Manning River Times,</i> Taree	1974	<i>The Evening Post,</i> Goulburn	1993	<i>Kiama Independent</i>
1956	<i>The Canberra Times</i>	1975	<i>The Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1994	<i>Namoi Valley Independent,</i> Gunnedah
1957	<i>The Border Mail,</i> Albury	1976	<i>The Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1995	<i>The Valley View,</i> Tuggeranong
1958	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1977	<i>Richmond River Express Examiner,</i> Casino	1996	<i>Port Macquarie News and Namoi Valley Independent,</i> Gunnedah
1959	<i>The Daily Examiner,</i> Grafton	1978	<i>The Queanbeyan Age</i>	1997	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette,</i> Richmond
1960	<i>The Canberra Times</i>	1979	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1998	<i>Armidale Express Extra</i>
1961	<i>The Canberra Times</i>	1980	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	1999	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>
1962	<i>The Canberra Times</i>	1981	<i>The Daily Advertiser,</i> Wagga Wagga	2000-01	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>
1963	<i>The Daily Advertiser,</i> Wagga Wagga	1982	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	2001-02	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>
1964	<i>Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth</i>	1983	<i>The Daily Advertiser,</i> Wagga Wagga	2002-03	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>
1965	<i>The Border Mail,</i> Albury	1984	<i>The Daily Advertiser,</i> Wagga Wagga	2003-04	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>
1966	<i>The Northern Star,</i> Lismore	1985	<i>The Daily Advertiser,</i> Wagga Wagga	2004-05	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>
1967	<i>The Daily Examiner,</i> Grafton	1986	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2005-06	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1968	<i>Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth</i>	1987	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette,</i> Richmond	2006-07	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1969	<i>Moree Champion</i>	1988	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette,</i> Richmond	2007-08	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1970	<i>The Courier, Narrabri</i>	1989	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2008-09	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1971	<i>Windsor & Richmond Gazette</i>	1990	<i>Namoi Valley Independent,</i> Gunnedah	2009-10	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
				2010-11	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette,</i> Richmond
				2011-12	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>

JOURNALISM

SECTION 2

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Leadership and Community Involvement

General Comments

Despite the low number of entries this year, the three entries showed there is still a strong tradition in newspapers, whether in the country or the city, to involve themselves in community affairs to the extent that they lead the way in community thinking. As an aside: If the threatened disappearance takes place of many newspapers, whether major or minor, whether big city or small country, who will shape community thought and action on vital issues? Who will give the community an independent voice?

The three entries this year were from the *Milton-Ulladulla Times*, Ulladulla, a weekly; *The Singleton Argus*, a bi-weekly; and *The Northern Daily Leader*, Tamworth, a daily – a good spread of the types of country newspapers.

MILTON-ULLADULLA TIMES, ULLADULLA

The *Milton-Ulladulla Times* has a minuscule staff – the editor-photographer, a reporter and, if one of the by-lines is to be believed, another photographer named “Venice Paparazzi”. Hmmm.

- Harbourfest:

The work of the newspaper and civic groups to activate the Harbourfest food and wine festival the previous year bore fruit, with extensive promotion and news coverage for months and three editorials. The festival was organised and sponsored by Rotary, the newspaper, the Ex-Services’ Club and the Council. There was obvious involvement by staff and by the community organisations, there was imaginative promotion and it was well-supported by the public.

- Surf safety:

The newspaper ran a strong campaign for safety education and more patrols, which rose above the more obvious hand-wringing. There were five editorials, linked with reporting of beach issues such as rescues and two drownings. The *Times* urged that the Council patrol the main beach in the peak Christmas/New Year period, an unsuccessful campaign.

- Respite care:

Editorials highlighted the need for a home for young disabled people separate from old peoples’ homes, and for respite care for their carers. Many moving stories and interviews, gaining the interest of the Lions club in a facility at Jindelara. The Lions club organised a pilot respite care programme.

- “Poverty in Paradise”:

The *Times* finds a hidden poverty problem, with a need for more low-cost housing especially for the aged and the unemployed. It campaigns to raise awareness of the problem with one editorial but many harrowing stories through the year. Public support is gained with organisations, churches, schools and individuals arranging support and assistance.

Sports Awards: No editorials, but many news stories, promotions and sports results.

Comments

The *Times* punches above its weight with its community involvement and consistently takes a proactive stance with its campaigns. It has had the personal involvement of the staff in identifying community problems and needs, sometimes not suspected by the community, followed by strong, well-targeted campaigning. It showed it can take an idea and drive it a long way.

JOURNALISM

SECTION 2

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Leadership and Community Involvement

THE SINGLETON ARGUS

The Singleton Argus, with an experienced editor, an experienced journalist and a cadet, has had a number of civic problems to choose from to demonstrate it can be a strong voice in the community.

- The local Council (two projects):

The Council has had a running legal battle on its hands that bids fair to cost it a million dollars in fees. In the middle of it, the general manager resigned and a new temporary general manager was appointed. *The Argus* welcomed her with an editorial saying that she would “give council stability at a time when it desperately needs it” and worked to build a good relationship with her, a campaign that is credited with persuading her to stay. There were four editorials on the legal battle, and *The Argus* sent a reporter to Sydney to report on the court proceedings.

- The Singleton by-pass:

The Argus ran six editorials about the need for a New England Highway by-pass around Singleton, tied in with changes in speed restrictions on the highway and use of a back road on which police were said to be booking 16 drivers an hour.

- Coal mining and gas extraction:

This is a long-running dispute, not just around Singleton but also throughout the Hunter Valley. *The Argus* weighed in with five editorials on the coal v agriculture, town v mines debate, with the side issues of development, health, coal dust and increased traffic. *The Argus* gave the public a significant voice when the debate has been largely dominated by mining and environmental interests.

- Singleton missing out on funding:

There have been long-running complaints from the Singleton Council, and other civic bodies, supported by editorials and reporting in *The Argus*, on the way Singleton was receiving a less than average share of cash the State Government took from the Singleton area, especially in coal-mining royalties. In a way, the 2012 State Budget made welcomed provisions for road and bridge works in the area.

Comments

The Argus is a well-run newspaper and takes a leading part in the serious matters of the local community, but has been forced, apparently, to be largely reactive when commenting on the issues.

JOURNALISM

SECTION 2

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Leadership and Community Involvement

THE NORTHERN DAILY LEADER, TAMWORTH

For a country newspaper, *The Leader* has a strong editorial staff and a long history of leadership in civic affairs in the New England and North West of the state. Its entry lists a number of avenues in which it took the lead in discussing and acting on civic matters.

- Law and order:

The Leader perceived what it believed was increasing crime in the city and blamed the shortage of police for a crime wave in which the crooks were taking over the city. It called for action, and after meetings with the Mayor on the issue, and at *The Leader's* request, the Council called a public meeting. *The Leader* advertised the meeting without charge and ran a promotion to make sure the public knew about it. The newspaper suggested recommendations for the Council to put before the meeting, which drew an attendance filling the town hall. A petition calling on the State Government to act received more than 18,000 signatures. Additional police have been allocated and at the time the entry was prepared for this award, a second public meeting was scheduled to which the Premier, Police Minister and Attorney-General had been invited. Through the whole campaign, *The Leader* ran many, many crime reports.

- Additional police:

The NSW Police Association (Tamworth branch) and the Tamworth Regional Council campaigned for four years for extra police to be allocated, a campaign which became linked with *The Leader's* law and order campaign during the last year.

- The Tamworth Country Music Festival:

The festival, held in the weeks leading up to each Australia Day, has provided Tamworth with worldwide recognition and enormous economic benefits, mostly through tourism. *The Leader*, naturally, has reported on the festival since its beginning 40 years ago, and has had a growing leadership role in its development and promotion. Through months of build-up to the big day, the festival has filled the pages of *The Leader*, culminating in a 52-page colour magazine as well as a 40-page souvenir magazine with 40 years of photographs. *The Leader* also sponsors a number of events.

- A win over Prime Television:

Prime TV decided to move the production and reading of its New England-North West news from Tamworth to Canberra, after more than 40 years' production and broadcasting from its Tamworth studios. The Tamworth presenter was replaced with a presenter from Canberra. A chorus of protests followed, reported by *The Leader* and aided by an editorial that resulted in Prime, after a month, reversing its decision.

- Mining vs Farming:

An issue that has surfaced only in the last couple of years is coal –seam gas extraction which has spread throughout the rural areas of Australia, adding to the existing and constantly growing exploration and development of mining for coal and other valuable minerals. In *The Leader's* area, and according to the newspaper, the Liverpool Plains and the rich soils of the Gunnedah and Narrabri region are under threat.

The issue has a number of areas of concern, including forced access to rural land for exploration and the alienation of valuable agricultural areas by mining. *The Leader* devoted page after page throughout the year to reporting every facet, usually on the front pages, with editorials and a strong display of photos with text. The reports included large-scale protests in Sydney and smaller protests at the sites of development. *The Leader's* constant energetic reporting and comment kept the issue of mining v farming out in front.

JOURNALISM

SECTION 2

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Leadership and Community Involvement

Judging

Although there were only three entrants, each newspaper was a quite different size – a weekly, a bi-weekly and a daily. Their staff numbers differed, but they were alike in their ability to identify, cover and comment on important local issues. Each did a workmanlike job. So in comparing the performances, I looked at which newspaper had done best with limited facilities.

I chose the *Milton-Ulladulla Times* as the winner. It is a newspaper punching above its weight, dealing well with two major issues – safety on the beaches and caring for handicapped young people. As well, it promoted a strong local occasion in the Harbourfest, in which the *Times* played a major production role. It was strongly proactive in all its dealings with local issues.

The Northern Daily Leader had just as wide an area of interest in issues and local events. In fact, the Country Music Festival seemed to overshadow all other issues. It played a major role in bringing forward the lack of police, but must acknowledge that the change of Government was the major reason for the improvement in police numbers. Its work is highly commended and I award it runner-up.

I felt *The Singleton Argus*, challenged with a major local issue – the legal problems of the local Council and other disturbances within the Council – did a very good job reporting all facets, including having a reporter on the spot for Court hearings in Sydney. It also had the on-going traffic problem (and again the change of Government must have had a lot to do with providing the money for easing this area). Then it had the issue of coal-seam gas extraction, which the Hunter shares with a number of other rural areas. I believe *The Argus* did well, but its work was mostly reactive.

RUNNER UP:

The Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth

**The E C Sommerlad Memorial Award for
Editorial Leadership and Community Involvement**

2011-2012

is awarded to

Milton Ulladulla
Times

JUDGE: George Richards

JOURNALISM

SECTION 2

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Leadership and Community Involvement

FORMER WINNERS

1953	<i>The Wellington Times</i>	1973	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1993	<i>Kiama Independent</i>
1954	<i>Glen Innes Examiner</i>	1974	<i>Campbelltown-Ingleburn News</i>	1994	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>
1955	<i>Bega District News</i>	1975	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1995	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>
1956	<i>Kiama Independent</i>	1976	<i>The Forbes Advocate</i>	1996	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>
1957	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>	1977	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1997	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>
1958	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1978	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	1998	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>
1959	<i>The Daily Examiner, Grafton</i>	1979	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>	1999	<i>Merimbula News Weekly</i>
1960	<i>The Singleton Argus</i>	1980	<i>Nambucca Guardian News, Macksville</i>	2000-01	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
1961	<i>Richmond River Express, Casino</i>	1981	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>	2001-02	<i>South Coast Register, Nowra</i>
1962	<i>The Cessnock Eagle</i>	1982	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	2002-03	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
1963	<i>The Dubbo Liberal</i>	1983	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2003-04	<i>The Singleton Argus</i>
1964	<i>Cape Hawke Advocate, Foster</i>	1984	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2004-05	<i>South Coast Register, Nowra</i>
1965	<i>South Coast Times, Wollongong</i>	1985	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>	2005-06	<i>The Singleton Argus</i>
1966	<i>The Kyogle Examiner</i>	1986	<i>Moree Champion</i>	2006-07	<i>The Northern Daily Leader</i>
1967	<i>Central Western Daily, Orange</i>	1987	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	2007-08	<i>The Singleton Argus</i>
1968	<i>The Daily Examiner, Grafton</i>	1988	<i>Bega District News</i>	2008-09	<i>Deniliquin Pastoral Times</i>
1969	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1989	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	2009-10	<i>The Singleton Argus</i>
1970	<i>The Wyong & Lake District Advocate</i>	1990	<i>Lake Times, Warilla</i>	2010-11	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>
1971	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1991	<i>Bega District News</i>	2011-12	<i>Milton- Ulladulla Times</i>
1972	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1992	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>		

JOURNALISM

SECTION 3

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Writing

There were a disappointing number of entries for the award this year. But the winner and runner-up were both of a high standard and little separated them in making a decision.

GOULBURN POST

Strong writing and consistent standard, again. A champion of the community. The editorials are overwritten and would benefit from being trimmed back. While the writing is of good quality, it lapses into sentimentality and relies on emotive arguments. One editorial lets the standard down by descending into a scornful personal attack which appears to stop just short of calling for a tar and feathering.

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

The editorials in this entry seemed reluctant to make bold statements. They skirted around the point, making generalisations, thus losing impact. Not one of the editorials dealt with a local issue. In the judges' opinion, this misses the point of an editorial in a community paper. Readers want leadership, reasoned arguments and a firm point of view on local issues. For the bigger picture, there are other, more authoritative sources.

RUNNER-UP:

WESTERN ADVOCATE, BATHURST

The Western Advocate was only marginally pipped in this award. The editorials were hard-hitting and to the point, showing a willingness to take a stand. Some of the editorials could have been given a bit more depth to take the issues beyond a statement of position. But overall, they represented a commitment to speaking on behalf of the community.

WINNER:

NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

The Namoi Valley Independent displayed a consistently strong commitment to the concept of an editorial. The paper rejoices in its local nature, and each editorial presents a clear, coherent point of view. The editorials build an argument relying on specific information, not just motherhood statements or generalisations. There is no boastful rhetoric or mindless breast-beating. It would have been good to see examples of the paper stepping out of its comfort zone and taking a stand on an issue where local opinion was divided. It is clear that thought and effort has gone into each example. There was however one lapse which is all too common in opinion writing: The statement 'One thing most experts agree on...etc' lacks credibility unless the evidence of that agreement is presented.

The E C Sommerlad Memorial Award for

Editorial Writing

2011-2012

is awarded to

Namoi Valley
Independent

Gunnedah

JOURNALISM

SECTION 3

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Writing

JUDGE: Russell Eldridge

FORMER WINNERS

1971	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1991	<i>Namoi Valley Independent</i> , Gunnedah
1972	<i>The Singleton Argus</i>	1992	<i>The Macleay Argus</i> , Kempsey
1973	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	1993	<i>Namoi Valley Independent</i> , Gunnedah
1974	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1994	<i>Namoi Valley Independent</i> , Gunnedah
1975	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	1995	<i>Namoi Valley Independent</i> , Gunnedah
1976	<i>The Evening Post</i> , Goulburn	1996	<i>Namoi Valley Independent</i> , Gunnedah
1977	<i>The Queanbeyan Age</i>	1997	<i>Manning River Times</i> , Taree
1978	<i>Murrumbidgee Irrigator</i> , Leeton	1998	<i>Namoi Valley Independent</i> , Gunnedah
1979	<i>The Macleay Argus</i> , Kempsey	1999	<i>The Courier</i> , Narrabri
1980	<i>The Macleay Argus</i> , Kempsey	2000-01	<i>The Coonamble Times</i>
1981	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	2001-02	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
1982	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2002-03	<i>The Northern Star</i> , Lismore
1983	<i>Cooma-Monaro Express</i>	2003-04	<i>The Northern Daily Leader</i> , Tamworth
1984	<i>Kiama Independent</i>	2004-05	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
1985	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2005-06	<i>The Western Advocate</i> , Bathurst
1986	-	2006-07	<i>The Northern Daily Leader</i> , Tamworth
1987	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette</i> , Richmond	2007-08	<i>The Northern Daily Leader</i> , Tamworth
1988	<i>The Newcastle Star</i>	2008-09	<i>Merimbula News Weekly</i>
1989	<i>The Daily Advertiser</i> , Wagga Wagga	2009-10	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
1990	<i>The Daily Advertiser</i> , Wagga Wagga	2010-11	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
		2011-12	<i>Namoi Valley Independent</i> , Gunnedah

General Comments

It is gratifying to see newspapers are pressing their competitive advantage with reports that expand and, in some cases, drill down on their chosen news topics. Other media, notably radio and television, has little opportunity to go beyond the superficial when reporting big or complex events. Newspapers have that opportunity and are increasingly taking it.

One aspect of this is the way in which readers become news sources, and in significant numbers. Entries perhaps over represented with floods and fire nevertheless explored the human element of each of the tragedies, which gave the reader much more to experience than a simple 30 second bulletin could hope to match.

When news is bursting at the seams and pages cannot contain it all, papers are able to expand coverage to their websites. A few could use better signage to show this. Visual aspects of the craft were mostly well represented and supported words by being attractive calling cards and serving to explain the inexplicable. This judges' personal lament is that in this day and with the technology available, we too often don't meet readers' basic expectation to see their news in colour.

Language is still the challenge for many of the newspapers entered. Reporters owe it to their readers to have a vocabulary that can rise to the occasion of big news. This is not helped by an over reliance on sources to frame the narrative, and sources rarely have the journalists ability to report with brevity and clarity – or at least they shouldn't. Quotes followed by a paraphrase of the same fact, or vice versa, are too common.

The test applied in this award was, when all technical requirements are met or at least equal, was it a 'good read'. This was what separated most entries in what was after all a high standard.

THE WINGHAM CHRONICLE

Plans for a high voltage power line through its district gave The Wingham Chronicle a feast of copy in a mix of information and public sentiment. Unfortunately, it left too much of the information in the jargon of the technocrats and did not do enough interpretation and explanation for its readers. It might have been in other editions, but a map of the power line route occasionally revisited would have helped comprehension too.

Tough as a Tiger was a front page news report picked up from a mother's letter about her son's recovery from Perthes Disease to play his first season of his beloved rugby league for the under 10 Tigers. A worthy human interest story let down by some simple omissions, such as his age at the time of the report.

MANNING RIVER TIMES, TAREE

Floods and their aftermath, especially road conditions, were common fair for entries this year, and the Manning River Times gave its measure of coverage to the issue. It is an example of enabling the public to vent its frustration and sometimes at what seems our universally poor infrastructure. It was news reporting the public routinely generates and expects but it went to no new heights in the genre.

A report on Mid-North Coast logging was framed in 'growing concern' but was in fact an account of what conservationists were calling mismanagement of forests and a failure to comply with policies by Forests NSW. The bureaucracy had the chance to answer accusations through a Q&A panel, and readers were invited to see a gallery of "logging practices" on the newspaper's website. Aside from over-cautious labelling of the accusations, the report did not explain its own point very well and no doubt left readers wondering what they were being told had to do with them.

GREAT LAKES ADVOCATE

An elderly couple and their son died under the wheels of a semi-trailer on the Hume Highway, an accident that had wide metropolitan and state coverage when it happened. The three had some time ago moved to the area served by the Great Lakes Advocate, and the paper did well to set the victims in their adopted context and to provide local tributes. The first report was followed a month later with details of charges against the truck driver. It was a good example of providing the local context for a story that had had wide exposure.

SOUTHERN HIGHLAND NEWS, BOWRAL

A road death prompted a string of coverage in the Southern Highland News, again an accident that had wide coverage in metro and other media. The death of a tow truck driver who had stopped to help a young Blue Mountains woman whose car had broken down, and who also died in the accident, had tributes flowing. The story branched into calls for more protection for tow truck drivers often at risk in roadside recoveries. The dead woman's family pursued to cause of better road safety with a petition to the NSW Parliament, and the Bowral based paper used sister publications to ensure its coverage of the issue in its diverse forms was reported to Southern Highlands readers. Good reporting that made matters beyond the town limits relevant to readers.

A leisure centre proposal with a long history and few political implications and intrigues was the News' second entry, and it used all sections in the newspaper to inform and express views, news, of course, and a commentator's column, editorial and letter pages. Reports were peppered with pictures, artists impressions and caricatures of key players, which made the topic highly recognisable and visually interesting at most appearances. It was a topic that landed in the newspaper's lap, but it then took full advantage of it.

THE SINGLETON ARGUS

Bats can make a mess of the neighbourhood, Singleton's in this case. Bats, their bowel movements, noises, odours, and the public frustration over the lack of a solution, gave The Singleton Argus a topic with some legs. In fact, the newspaper followed the problem and the debate it generated through to a public meeting and perhaps the inevitable headline that "Bats will stay". As is so often the case in these circumstances, giving vent to public anger while counselling moderation is a tightrope, one The Singleton Argus is familiar with and accomplished.

Untangling a conflict between a family roadhouse business, bureaucratic regulation, public convenience and road safety was The Singleton Argus's second entry. Good thing the newspaper was there to show how common sense is sometimes the first casualty in such conflicts.

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

On previous occasions when this judge has considered entries, those that are about promotions, the newspaper sponsors, or is involved with have been automatically disqualified. Notwithstanding that they are often, even typically, well done and praiseworthy. They do not, however, in this judge's view, constitute local reporting that can be sensibly measured against news that originates beyond the newspaper's front door. The Monaro Post's Dancing with the Cooma Stars was, by all reported accounts, successful and good fun and probably generated a mountain of readership, but it was disqualified for the reasons above.

The Monaro Post, like most other districts, copped a soaking that the Post documented thoroughly, especially in pictures of fast-flowing water, neighbours conferring under umbrellas and the frantic efforts of volunteers to fill and distribute sandbags. The best flood coverage because of the strength of its pictures, but no more nor less comprehensive a report than others.

THE IRRIGATOR, LEETON

Floods are a source of almost guaranteed readership but they have their problems: How to be everywhere, the slow and stealthy rise of water in contrast with the devastation and damage it causes, and the myriad tales of victims, all deeply personal but almost identical. The Irrigator's flood had the "Shire awash", its headline proclaimed, but had page after page of people standing in or beside muddy water and bathed in sunshine. But The Irrigator made its words count, with comprehensive coverage topped up with useful information about road closures, health risks, public warnings and responsibilities. Even ministerial visits and sports cancellations were covered over a month. A laudable coverage.

For subject balance, The Irrigator's other entry was of a tavern torched by an arsonist. Pictures in this case were very visual, including the building well alight before the brigades arrived. There were more pictures on the newspaper's website and a selection of comments from patrons were lifted to the newspaper. It stuck with the topic until the alleged arsonist's first court appearance. Again, superior coverage of a newspaper's stock and trade.

MUDGEES GUARDIAN AND THE WEEKLY

In its first entry, the Mudgee Guardian and The Weekly coaxed readers through the earlier forecast closure of a cement plant, with its impact on jobs and the district's economy. In contrast to many similar scenes, the redundant workforce was generally accepting of the closure and appreciated the company's sensitive approach to the wind-down. This aspect might have been all too easily dismissed in many newspapers but it gave the Mudgee Guardian clear balance and showed its own measure of sensitivity to the distress.

A second entry explored diverse views about a proposed wind farm. It was balanced and informative, but the newspaper could have better summarised some of the issues and perhaps made a stand editorially.

NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

Another issue that has wide coverage in metro and other media is coal seam gas and its conflict over land use and potential degradation with farmers. Local rallies gave the Namoi Valley Independent a feast of copy and it was mostly comprehensively served and balanced. Information and sentiment shared a reasonable ratio, with the proponent's position placed prominently but in nowhere near enough detail. This may have been because the information published was all the company offered to plead its case.

Floods for Namoi Valley filled the Independent to brimming for several editions, again exposing the recklessness of some people in dangerous conditions, the damage bill and the paradox of soggy landscapes under blue skies. It is always difficult to single out any of the flood reports from the various newspapers that entered with this topic, but readers would certainly have devoured each as they were published.

THE INVERELL TIMES

The Inverell Times did not get its commercial toga in a knot when it was proposed to build a ten-pin bowling alley in the town or, alternatively, Moree. In a town with too little to entertain especially for young people, the bowling alley had a clear social benefit and the Times mobilised its readership through its pages and social media to lobby to be the chosen locality. Moree did likewise. In what has to be a good news story for our age, the proponent found there was so much support for an alley in both towns, he decided to build two. An example of a newspaper using its resources to make the town a better place for its people.

When trees are thoughtless and stand in the way of progress, they soon find out who their friends are. An electricity supply company wanted to cut them down, but citizens rallied and made their protest known at a public meeting. Time ran out for entries before the newspaper could report the tree's salvation or otherwise.

THE SOUTH COAST REGISTER, NOWRA

The Register is no stranger to the podium in these (and other) awards and it seems frequently and graciously helped in this cause by its local health service, whereby providers and regulators seem routinely locked in conflict. This time the recruitment of surgeons to replace three who had left went down to the wire with consequent threats to sustaining scheduled operations. The episode concludes with a letter from one of the doctors praising the newspaper and the public for their support; clear evidence of the newspaper good will with its readers and its sources..

A fire in a commercial centre after deadline had the Register recall its front page for a dramatic picture of firemen fighting the blaze at its height. Several editions following told of investigations, the clean-up, and personal accounts by business owners lamenting their losses and planning how to carry on. The report shows the Register's commitment to inform.

GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

"Road to death" a Grim Reaper-costumed citizen proclaimed on her sign on the Guardian News front page. Inside, there were three pages of reports and first person accounts of the death toll on the Pacific Highway at Urunga and nearby areas – again a topic that had wide media exposure. The editor contributed a personal account in coverage of a reported 300 person protest for action to improve highway safety. The coverage illustrates a newspaper can never go too big on a topic close to its readers' hearts.

Two months later, the Guardian News followed up on objections by residents in the path of a rerouted highway being planned. There was guidance in the paper to a relevant website to fully understand the proposed route, a process that can be increasingly used by newspapers to add value to their reports.

GOULBURN POST

The Post was ahead of Goulburn's flood, predicting it as a consequence of a deluge forecast 'in the next 24 hours'. The newspaper eased readers through preparations and evacuation, a contaminated water supply, safe return to homes and, ultimately, 'The big event that wasn't' – a cancelled festival that was rained out. The wash up extended to a thank you barbecue for volunteers, the cost for farmers and others, and a natural disaster declaration. Strong pictures (although too many small and in mono diminished their impact) flagged an in-depth and thoroughly readable account of events.

They take time to smell the roses in Goulburn and, instead of a sweet botanical scent, there was the whiff of skulduggery when almost 800 roses in several locations mysteriously died. A headline 'Floriblunder' hinted the cause was misadventure with weed spray but investigations were promised while the council and the community set about replacing the roses, a floral symbol for the city. In hard copy meets Agatha Christie, the Post did a good job on a thorny topic.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

MILTON ULLADULA TIMES, ULLADULLA

The Milton Ulladulla Times built an awareness campaign on beach safety after a man drowned in the summer holidays. It used all available means and newspaper sections to warn, educate and inform its readership and visitors to the dangers of some beaches, particularly those unpatrolled. The campaign stretched from late December to mid-way through February and it did manage to progress the story over that time, including flashbacks to rescues and events before the drowning that triggered the campaign. The series was badged with a dingus and the newspaper's view for remedies and action were expressed in editorials. It was a prime example of capturing the news then teasing it out through a comprehensive series and various elements. Other entries had done this, but none better than the Times.

JOURNALISM

The Media Monitors Award for Local News Reporting



WINNER:

THE NORTHERN DAILY LEADER, TAMWORTH

The manhunt for Malcolm Naden and the events before and since will probably be a television mini-series some day; it was certainly riveting reading as the fugitive led a spectral existence in the bush of the Barrington Ranges. The Northern Daily Leader's coverage of the manhunt was limited, as was the case with all media, mostly to the backstory because police kept a tight rein on information. This meant reporters, including the Leader, were left to interview townsfolk, farmers and anyone with an account or theory. Notwithstanding these limitations, the reports were highly readable.

The Northern Daily Leader's story of a policeman fatally shot was a distinguished piece of journalism – and it was dramatically presented on the pages. It was big news and, even factoring in a leveller because not all entries had such a powerful topic to draw on, it was thoroughly told. Though the content was customary for such a tragic event, it was its narrative and vocabulary that set it apart from most other entries. Reporters and the newspaper mined the community for sentiments and views such that the reader (even one remote from the events in time and geography) felt a personal connection. The Northern Daily Leader wins the award for Local News Reporting because it met all technical measures and had that magical quality of a tale told so well, it was impossible to put it down.

The Media Monitors Award for

Local News Reporting

2011-2012

is awarded to

The Northern Daily
LEADER

Tamworth

JUDGE: Mal Kearney



FORMER WINNERS

1955	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1974	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1993	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1956	<i>The Canberra Times</i>	1975	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	1994	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>
1957	<i>The Gosford Times</i>	1976	<i>Windsor & Richmond Gazette</i>	1995	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>
1958	<i>The Daily Examiner, Grafton</i>	1977	<i>Camden News</i>	1996	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1959	<i>The Gosford Times</i>	1978	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	1997	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1960	<i>The Young Witness</i>	1979	<i>Richmond River Express Examiner, Casino</i>	1998	<i>Southern Highlands News, Bowral</i>
1961	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>	1980	<i>The Evening Post, Goulburn</i>	1999	<i>Mudgee Guardian</i>
1962	<i>Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth</i>	1981	<i>The Evening Post, Goulburn</i>	2000-01	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1963	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>	1982	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2001-02	<i>South Coast Register, Nowra</i>
1964	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1983	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2002-03	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1965	<i>The Barrier Miner, Broken Hill</i>	1984	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2003-04	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1966	<i>Nambucca Guardian News, Macksville</i>	1985	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>	2004-05	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>
1967	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>	1986	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, North Richmond</i>	2005-06	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>
1968	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>	1987	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2006-07	<i>Western Advocate, Bathurst</i>
1969	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1988	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>	2007-08	<i>Glen Innes Examiner</i>
1970	<i>Wyong & Lakes District Advocate</i>	1989	<i>Cootamundra Herald</i>	2008-09	<i>Bega District News</i>
1971	<i>The Coffs Harbour Advocate</i>	1990	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2009-10	<i>South Coast Register</i>
				2010-11	<i>South Coast Resister</i>
				2011-12	<i>The Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth</i>
1972	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1991	<i>Illawarra Mercury, Wollongong</i>		
1973	<i>Mudgee Guardian</i>	1992	<i>Kiama Independent</i>		

General Comments

This was a tough judging assignment with an extremely high standard of journalism marking the 12 entries, nearly double last year's number.

A few of the entries might well have been better placed in the best news story category but the majority found the depth of investigative and probing journalism that produces strong in depth feature writing. The entries were a tribute to the writing and newspaper skills of the various editorial departments and indicated country newspapers still have much to offer their readers.

Overall, it was a joy to judge the category. It was a difficult assignment to cull a winner from the top entries even after a number of readings.

THE ARMIDALE EXPRESS

Both features were about high profile local identities; one a politician, the other a retiring radio personality which was by far the shorter and more reader entertaining article, detailing the personality's experienced comments about the radio industry's share of changes. Quality journalism in both entries.

THE SINGLETON ARGUS

An excellent entry including a three-part series by journalist, Louise Nichols, highlighting the town as a great place to retire, followed by an entry about the horrors of child sexual abuse and the portrayal of a woman's anguish when coming face-to-face some 50 years later with the man who assaulted her.

THE IRRIGATOR, LEETON

When a landmark like an iconic tavern is destroyed by fire it touches a good many locals. This was the theme of the newspaper's main entry. Well written with many quotes from readers although it may have been better placed in best news story category.

WESTERN ADVOCATE, BATHURST

Always a strong contender in this section the newspaper didn't disappoint. The entry about serious auditing flaws at the local council following an ICAC hearing was compulsive reading and well presented.

NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

Strong writing in each entry. The touching story of a well-known local woman with a rare benign tumour but still an uncertain future was skilfully handled by journalist, Jasmine Highfield. The second entry captured the feeling of townspeople and much history when the town's old co-op department store shut its door for the last time.

SOUTH COAST REGISTER, NOWRA

Last year's winner produced another top class entry with its feature about the Nowra Public School's 150th anniversary, not only a history lesson about the school but the district and education in general. The second entry about the controversy of the local council's administration of a quarry revealed strong investigative journalism and well balanced, too.

GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

Serving up an obituary as a feature article can be fraught with problems but the newspaper did so when a gruff and prickly community champion died. The newspaper told his story in a compelling read with a number of breakout stories in a well-planned feature.

THE NORTHERN DAILY LEADER, TAMWORTH

An interesting entry including a large series of features about the closing of a retail icon in the city but a smaller feature about the infamous Tamworth boys home and some of its notorious "inmates" was a compulsive read.

JOURNALISM

The Country Press New South Wales Award for Feature Writing

COMMENDED:

GOULBURN POST

Historically, the newspaper sets the benchmark for feature writing and it did so again with a series of articles on a police whistle blower and his long battle to gain recognition. This was balanced with an insight into the life and work of a local resident who makes string instruments.

THE INVERELL TIMES

Journalist Steve Green's two features were riveting reading and displayed a standard of journalism equal to the best by metropolitan standards. The feature about a train conductor's experience on the day of the Granville disaster was absorbing from start to finish and this was supported by an objective and balanced interview with politician Tony Windsor.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

MANNING RIVER TIMES, TAREE

Two entries from this newspaper, were both of a high journalistic standard. Both concerned issues about news stories of great importance to the region coal seam gas mining and floods. Each entry was well crafted and right up to the standard we have come to expect from this newspaper.

WINNER:

WINGHAM CHRONICLE

Journalist Emily Doswell's two entries were outstanding, especially the Australia Day feature headed by a moving piece about the town's citizen of the year, a young man who helps trauma victims pick up the pieces from his own near fatal experience. The second, "Helen Epov's Cheesecake", was a great tale about the evolution of the subject's famous cheesecake from milking the cow to the final product. Wonderful reading!

The Country Press New South Wales Award for

Feature Writing

2011-2012

is awarded to

Wingham
Chronicle

JUDGE: Graham Gorrel



Country Press New South Wales Inc.
Australia's oldest newspaper industry association
Founded 1900

JOURNALISM

The Country Press New South Wales Award for Feature Writing

FORMER WINNERS

1962	<i>The Northern Star, Lismore</i>	1979	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	1995	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>
1963	<i>Gunnedah Independent Advertiser</i>	1980	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1996	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond, & Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1964	<i>South Coast Times, Wollongong</i>	1981	<i>Tumut & Adelong Times</i>	1997	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1965	<i>The North-West Champion, Moree</i>	1982	<i>Murrumbidgee Irrigator, Leeton</i>	1998	<i>Kiama Independent</i>
1966	<i>Daily Liberal, Dubbo</i>	1983	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga</i>	1999	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1967	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1984	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	2000-01	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>
1968	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1985	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga</i>	2001-02	<i>Lake Times, Shellharbour</i>
1969	<i>Moree Champion</i>	1986	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2002-03	<i>Lake Times, Shellharbour</i>
1970	<i>Moree Champion</i>	1987	<i>Cooma-Monaro Express</i>	2003-04	<i>The Riverine Grazier, Hay</i>
1971	<i>Windsor & Richmond Gazette</i>	1988	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>	2004-05	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>
1972	<i>The Cessnock Eagle</i>	1989	<i>The Summit Sun, Jindabyne</i>	2005-06	<i>South Coast Register, Nowra</i>
1973	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	1990	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2006-07	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>
1974	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1991	<i>Illawarra Mercury, Wollongong</i>	2007-08	<i>Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth</i>
1975	<i>Nambucca Guardian News, Macksville</i>	1992	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	2008-09	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>
1976	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1993	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	2009-10	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette</i>
1977	<i>The Boorowa News</i>	1994	<i>The Riverina Leader, Wagga</i>	2010-11	<i>South Coast Register, Nowra</i>
1978	<i>Murrumbidgee Irrigator, Leeton</i>			2011-12	<i>Wingham Chronicle</i>

THE GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

- MEETING OF GREATS:

A morale building story on a promising RL season for the Roosters. Nice coverage of hopes for 2012, interspersed with memories of winning seasons 1962, 72, 92. (Although author Britt Ramsey did not use the interesting historical link involving the '2s' i.e. would 2012 continue the victorious pattern?)

But a good piece, evoking names of some fame (Jim Cody and Rick Stone) – a story that captures the essence of country footballof pride in past achievement and the link between that and the hope for the current team.

- 22 YEARS ON, BRIDGE CLUB FINDS ITS HOME SWEET HOME:

Seemed more of a general news piece report of a great day for Nambucca Valley Bridge Club after a quest of 22 years. Additional question of bridge's status as 'sport?'.....could be argued a game or mind sport well written by Christian Knight, including a snappy life and death bridge quote i.e. 'far more important than that!'

A genuinely feel-good story encapsulating the hopes and hard-work of a local club, culminating in them finally 'getting there'

WESTERN ADVOCATE, BATHURST

- TRENT'S TEST DEBUT WAS UNREAL:

This is a very good looking 'splash' on the back page (full page) Trent Copeland returning from debut trip with the Australian cricket team, Sri Lanka. A good story, well told by Sam Debenham – on an old theme: local boy makes good'.

I'd imagine there would be keen local interest in a story which reaches wider...all the way to rarefied air of the Australia X1. Good and even-handed coverage (challenges for Trent if he is to stay in contention for Australia, including the fact of his bowling speed being perhaps a problem). Some local pride in such stories, well reported and presented, with a very good pic.

- HOSKING'S A MAN DUE FOR SOME LUCK:

A yarn by Anya Whitelaw capturing the quintessential 'battling trots' trainer coming to town from Maitland with hope and horses . Some early problem with tenses but the story is a good one of a man who has confronted personal tragedy, serious injury, and the death of his best horse from EI.

It's an age old tale of the battler in whom the hope never dies and whose enthusiasm for his sport (harness racing) shines through. He seemed indeed 'due for some good luck ' as the Advocate headline suggested.

MUDGEES GUARDIAN

- CITY DUMP COUNTRY:

Ben Harris's look forward angle on his story on the City v Country RL match 'City dump Country' proved excellent...and prescient (i.e. Mitchell Pearce would indeed go on to be coach, Ricky Stuart's selection at half back for the 2012 State of Origin series). Good angle, with Brad Fittler 'endorsing' Pearce in the wake of the match at Mudgee. Ben also got it right inside, tipping Todd Carney as Pearce's halfback partner (He spoke to Country Coach Laurie Daley and got his views on Carney – adding to the story.

The main display was a strong news 'write-off' joined inside by two pieces that added up to a comprehensive coverage and a busy night for Ben Harris: (1) a solid 'old style' match report, the story of the game and (2) the dressing room reaction, Greg Bird's disappointment at Country's loss after fighting back from 24-0 down, coach Daley's views etc. There was acclaim too for the crowd, an enthusiastic 8621 presenting a case for continuing the tradition of City Country games with the concept under some threat. Very commendable coverage, telling readers all they needed to know.

- JUMPING FOR JOY:

Ben Harris's overview of the three days of the Trans-Tasman Touch Football series – with Australia clean-sweeping the Kiwis. Peter Whiting's high flying back page picture led into a very generous coverage of the event (touch football being an immensely popular participation sport which does not get

much attention on the wider media stage). Organisers must have been delighted with the strong presentation in words and picture of the three Test series open divisions.

Excellent work by all involved: Harris, Whiting, editor Robyn Murray and the editorial team, which put together such a lively and comprehensive coverage of an (always) highly competitive event – Kiwis v Aussies.

GREAT LAKES ADVOCATE, FOSTER

- WINNING START TO SEASON:

‘Winning Start to Season’: A good solid Un-bylined match report, covering the winning opening to the 2012 season for the Foster Tuncurry Hawks (rugby league) – supported by an action shot of an attacking raid which nicely captures the spirit of a winning afternoon. Story well written and informative, back page lead.

- PERSONAL BEST AT WANAKA:

Good piece on local athlete Jonathan Osborne’s win – and best ever performance in the ‘Challenge Wanaka’ (New Zealand) triathlon, an event with a genuinely international footprint. The story rightly, led the back page – well told by Mitchell Jennings and including a particularly colourful quote concerning Osborne’s beginning in the arduous discipline of competing in triathlons (a recall of working in the medical tent at the Australian Ironman at Foster, doing blood tests on ‘all these half dead people’....wondering ‘why on earth’ anyone would want to do it.) Before long he would be one of them! Osborne, a notable local athlete with an international connection, stood as one of only eight competitors to have competed in every event at Wanaka, since the event’s beginning in 2005. A good story, presented with a pic of Jonathan crossing the line in a personal best.

MANNING RIVER TIMES, TAREE

- IN MICHAEL’S MEMORY:

Mick McDonald’s back page story is a really good human interest tale (one with a sporting link) of a family’s quest to honour a 20 year old son who had been killed in a car accident. The Edge family had set out on a quest to raise \$150,000 to establish a second soccer field at Tinonee, in memory of Michael, whose sporting passion through his young life had been soccer. His first game had been as a five year old with the Tinonee Club. The accompanying photo – of Michael with a trophy he had won with the club – reflects the pride that the young man had obviously felt that day. It’s a story that turns sad, the loss of Michael his smile beaming out of the page and inspiring the determination of his parents, his partner and his three brothers to work single-mindedly to leave something in his memory.

Well written by McDonald the story could equally have been on the Times’ news pages rather than in sport– but was given a fine display in its positioning on the back page.

- IT’S THE NEAL NO DEAL:

(also Mick McDonald) – Back page splash on ongoing story (perhaps the last word) - relating to the Jack Neal Oval in Taree. The caption on action photo used with the (back page) story does not specify whether it is Neal Oval in picture. A longish piece with two sidebars (one on inside back) traces a saga that had begun in 2004 – with the punch line being that nothing is to happen (ie. Greater Taree City Council taking over the ground). Although well researched and written – the story, inevitably lacking the ‘human touch’ (being about a sports oval) is hardly a gripping one.

SOUTH COAST REGISTER, NOWRA

- OH SO CLOSE:

The South Coast Register couldn’t have been more generous in its treatment of the quest by the Shoalhaven team to win the Waratah State Basketball League in its first visit to the finals in 21 years. The paper’s front page of Monday August 29, 2011 captured a story of ‘so near and yet so far’ with a fine action picture and the words ‘OH SO CLOSE’ – leading to the full page splash treatment on pages 54 (semi-final win over Maitland) and 55 (a close loss in the Grand Final, 68-62 against Macarthur Heat). It was an excellent coverage, produced under pressure for a Monday edition of the ‘Register’

JOURNALISM

The Media Super Limited Award for Sports Journalism



- **JACK FLASH:**

A pretty remarkable front page story ('Jack Flash') of a 95 year old man, Jack Mathieson, who had travelled across the globe from Nowra to Riccione in Italy – and arrived home with five swimming gold medals from the FINA Masters Games. Jack revealed that winning gold medals at world championships had been something he had started thinking about 'way back in 1981' (when he was a lad of 64). A justified 'treatment' from the South Coast Register, with a celebratory front page picture and the story on page 98, telling of Jack's elevation to 'rock star status'.

COMMENDED:

MUDGE GUARDIAN, MUDGE

- City dump Country (plus associated coverage of City Country RL match)

GREAT LAKES ADVOCATE, FOSTER

- Personal Best at Wanaka

MANNING RIVER TIMES, TAREE

- In Michael's Memory

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

WESTERN ADVOCATE, BATHURST

- Trent's Test Debut was Unreal
- Hosking's a man due for some luck

Two ageless and well told and presented stories of country sport – one of a local boy who had made good on the world sporting stage, the other of a quintessential battler fighting against the odds in his chosen sport.

WINNER:

THE SOUTH COAST REGISTER, NOWRA

- Oh So Close
- Jack Flash

Two excellent stories – one of a most unlikely globe-trotting gold medallist, the other of a local team tilting bravely and just missing the title in their first finals appearance in 21 years.

Stories well told and well-illustrated, given star billing by the newspaper and extremely well presented

The Media Super Limited Award for

Sports Journalism

2011-2012

is awarded to



JUDGE: Ian Heads



JOURNALISM

The Canon Award for Photography



General Comments

The photography in the other entries should consider avoiding clichéd set ups and just bearing witness to the event.

COMMENDED:

THE NORTHERN DAILY LEADER, TAMWORTH

This entry of images display strong examples e.g. Horse Jumping, Rodeo, Rugby Sport Action, Lightning over Tamworth of what a skilled photographer can capture when anticipating the moment. The portrait of the priest, Father Anthony Koppman, although staged, has a nature to it that appears fluid. The elements of the composition and clever balancing of mixed lighting come together to create a lyrical moment.

MANNING RIVER TIMES, TAREE

The descriptive nature of these images illustrate the serious issues facing this community ('Wood for the trees' and Malcolm Naden). More experimentation with angles, lighting/exposure, composition should be considered. (Potholes on Manning Point Road).

WINNER:

HAWKESBURY GAZETTE, RICHMOND

The images have an authentic eyewitness approach to the events covered, avoiding staged, contrived set ups, they have taken an artful approach and captured the beauty, power and grace of thoroughbred races horses. (HAWKESBURY RACES).

The Canon Award for
Photography
2011-2012
is awarded to the

HAWKESBURY
GAZETTE
Richmond

JUDGE: Angela Brkic



JOURNALISM

The Canon Award for Photography



FORMER WINNERS

News

1955	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1970	<i>Windsor and Richmond Gazette</i>	1985	<i>Deniliquin Pastoral Times and The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>
1956	<i>Singleton Argus</i>	1971	<i>Coffs Harbour Advocate</i>	1986	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1957	<i>Richmond River Express, Casino</i>	1972	<i>The Evening Post, Goulburn</i>	1987	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>
1958	<i>The Border Morning Mail, Albury</i>	1973	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	1988	<i>Kiama Independent</i>
1959	<i>Singleton Argus</i>	1974	<i>The Macarthur Advertiser, Campbelltown</i>	1989	<i>Imlay Magnet, Eden</i>
1960	<i>Illawarra Mercury, Wollongong</i>	1975	<i>Shoalhaven and Nowra News</i>	1990	<i>Illawarra Mercury, Wollongong</i>
1961	<i>Illawarra Mercury, Wollongong</i>	1976	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1991	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>
1962	<i>The Border Morning Mail, Albury</i>	1977	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1992	<i>Kiama Independent</i>
1963	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>	1978	<i>The Evening Post, Goulburn</i>	1993	<i>Southern Riverina News, Finley</i>
1964	<i>Central Western Daily, Orange</i>	1979	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1994	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1965	<i>The Barrier Miner, Broken Hill</i>	1980	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>	1995	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>
1966	<i>Cooma-Monaro Express</i>	1981	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>	1996	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>
1967	<i>The Border Morning mail, Albury</i>	1982	<i>Cooma-Monaro Express</i>	1997	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>
1968	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>	1983	<i>Shoalhaven and Nowra News</i>		
1969	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>	1984	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>		

Study or Feature

1958	<i>Singleton Argus</i>	1972	<i>Southern Star, Moruya</i>	1986	<i>Lake Times, Warilla</i>
1959	<i>The Daily News, Murwillumbah</i>	1973	<i>Bega District News</i>	1987	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>
1960	<i>The Daily News, Murwillumbah</i>	1974	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	1988	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>
1961	<i>Singleton Argus</i>	1975	<i>The Macarthur Advertiser, Campbelltown</i>	1989	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1962	<i>The Daily News, Murwillumbah</i>	1976	<i>Shoalhaven and Nowra News</i>	1990	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1963	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1977	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1991	<i>The New Englander, Armidale</i>
1964	<i>The Border Morning Mail, Albury</i>	1978	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1992	<i>Singleton Argus</i>

JOURNALISM

The Canon Award for Photography



FORMER WINNERS CONTINUED

Study or Feature

1965	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1979	<i>Shoalhaven and Nowra News</i>	1993	<i>The New Englander, Armidale</i>
1966	<i>The Border Morning Mail, Albury</i>	1980	<i>The Riverina Leader, Wagga Wagga</i>	1994	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>
1967	<i>The Border Morning Mail, Albury</i>	1981	<i>Lake Times, Warilla</i>	1995	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>
1968	<i>The Border Morning Mail, Albury</i>	1982	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>	1996	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>
1969	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1983	<i>Lake Times, Warilla</i>	1997	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>
1970	<i>Coffs Harbour Advocate</i>	1984	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>		
1971	<i>Coffs Harbour Advocate</i>	1985	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>		

Photography

1998	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2003	<i>The Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2008	
1999	<i>The Northern Star, Lismore</i>	2004	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>	2009	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>
2000	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2005	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>	2010	<i>The Northern Daily Leader</i>
2001	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah, & Port Macquarie News</i>	2006	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2010-11	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>
2002	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2007	<i>Manning River Times</i>	2011-12	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>

JOURNALISM

The Media Super Limited Award for Feature Supplements



General Comments

This year the award for feature supplements attracted entries from 10 mastheads, well up on last year, providing 24 supplements to be judged. It was very pleasing to see the increased range of topics and the variety of styles. It is critical for editors to ensure their entries meet the guidelines, as there were some that were less than four pages and others where feature pages were published over a series of weeks. Judging challenges occurred when an entry was a commercial rather than an editorial feature and where a supplement was produced by one newspaper for insertion into a large number. It must be remembered that competitions such as these are looking to encourage not only creativity, but most importantly consistent quality; often one entry was excellent whereas the second did not maintain the same quality.

Feature supplements are complex with many nuances, each of which impact on the reader. Some features presented this year overlooked printing folios, datelines and even the newspaper title – so losing critical data, promotion and respect, especially when a supplement is removed from the paper and passed to another reader. A great feature is one that jumps out to its audience. Be it serious, funny or sad, it is a record of a special event and deserves extra attention to content and presentation. These elements not only include the feature page and stories, but also headlines, photographs, captions, layout and introduction.

It was pleasing to see that some entries included background statements to assist with judging. Information behind staff input, effort required, difficulties encountered, reader feedback and any impact on circulation or income did assist in differentiating the fine line between entries.

It was pleasing to see a significant increase in the number and variety of entries this year. Newspapers contributed greatly to their communities and the events they promoted. Stories were well written and many of the photographs taken by country journalists were priceless.

Newspapers are even more important in this digital age because their archives have authority, provenance and are stored in both hard and digital formats for future benefit.

Today, newspapers have to consolidate, embrace varied methods to gather their data and deliver their news in different formats and timelines. Our newspapers need to focus on creative presentations, utilising print, web, social media and integrating all delivery channels. Smart phones have delivered a communication revolution for newspapers, empowering readers' with their smart phones to read QR Codes and to expand the full digital story, photos and advertisements electronically. Supplements offer the platform to deliver these techniques and potentially achieve greater revenue for the publishers and their advertisers.

Feature supplements are alive and well, with the potential to break free with modern creativity, promoting and highlighting people, places and events in your own area. They deliver the depth and credibility that attracts reader interest due to the quality provided by journalists who work and live within their community.

THE ARMIDALE EXPRESS

The Armidale Express presented two supplements – 'Live Love and Play' and 'Seasons'. Both were gloss colour magazines in small tabloid format consisting of 32-pages. The first presented more as a regional magazine, being inserted into nine different newspapers and would have been more suited in another category. That said, it was professionally written, produced and graphically pleasing. The second entry was a high quality lifestyle magazine, featuring sections on home, fashion, gardening, food and wine and much more. Dated Summer 2011, it appeared to be a quarterly, seasonal publication – again better suited to another category.

WINGHAM CHRONICLE

The Wingham Chronicle presented two supplements, 'Wingham Beef Exports' and the 'We're a Tiger Town'. Both were of good quality, the first with some wonderful historic insights into the local beef industry and supported by excellent photography. It clearly displayed the industry's importance within the area over its 90-year history. Although the header offered more creative opportunities, the layout was clean and inviting, with good use of tints. The 'Tiger Town' feature was a great supportive, congratulatory pictorial but lacked the written journalism component that was required in this section. It was well supported by advertising and I suspect may provide an opportunity for a bigger spread, including strong editorial input if the club is fortunate to win another two premierships next year.

MANNING RIVER TIMES, TAREE

The Manning River Times presented two 4-pages run-of-press colour features. The first was 'Flair Awards', a fashion event with a good editorial overview on page 2 designed to direct readers to the supplement. This feature was certainly colourful, with all photos and captions laid over four pages on a saturated pink background. With over 50 photos there was plenty of depth, although congestion may have been avoided with some prudent cropping and photo selection. The captions were mini stories and greatly enhanced the presentation and reader pleasure. 'Chatham High School' was the second entry, again with a lead introduction on page two and the feature starting on page eleven. This supplement was impressive because it was put together by over 30 students handling all departments – journalism, advertising, design, layout and photography. Stories were well written and topical, as were the headers and captions with a structured layout and strong advertising support from local businesses.

THE SINGLETON ARGUS

There were two gloss A4 entries from the Singleton Argus. The 'Centenary of the School of Infantry' which was a comprehensive historic record focusing on the establishment of the school in 1973. The material was adapted from the historical records and presented in a clean, clear manner and supported by appropriate photos. Supplements of this nature are another way in which our newspapers support and inform communities of their proud heritage. The 'Singleton & District Guide' was the second entry and at 74-pages was the largest in the competition. A little disappointing to see a similar design as the Infantry magazine. Half the publication was allocated to a business and community directory while some story continuations pointed to the wrong page.

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

This year the Monaro Post presented 5 colourful tabloid entries and are to be congratulated in surpassing all other newspapers in their enthusiasm for feature supplements. Unfortunately, they did not include folios, dates or newspaper identifiers. Sizes ranged from four to eight pages with two clearly commercial supplements – 'Monaro Merino Week' and 'Snowy Veterinary Group'. The 'Cooma Show' featured an introduction by the Governor General and turned inside to a range of articles promoting the show. The 'Cooma & Sundowner Cups' featured an excellent photo collage cover supported by strong fashion articles and a bevy of colourful racegoers. 'Cooma Motorfest & The Snowy Ride', a 4-page supplement focused principally on photograph collages.

NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

Three entries were received from the Namoi Valley Independent which featured several interesting articles and numerous photos supporting community events. The first was 'Annual Porchetta Day' which consisted of two pages and continued in the next edition with three pages of photos covering the same event. 'Agquip 2011' was half a page in three different editions. Sadly none met the criteria for judging – a "supplement of four pages or more" was required.

THE INVERELL TIMES

The Inverell Times presented two 8-page supplements. First was the 'Rotary 2012 Inverell Conference' which featured a strong attention getting cover supported by seven pages of well-written and informative

JOURNALISM

The Media Super Limited Award for Feature Supplements



current and historic articles. There was an excellent mix of short and long stories, an attractive layout on bannered pages and well cropped, attractive photos. Next was 'Celebrating 15 Years' containing pertinent in depth stories, well laid out and held together by a common banner, soft tints and clean reproduction. Promoting the attributes of a 15-year-old community based, non-profit company, the supplement was a topical, informative feature for the whole community.

THE GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

The Nambucca Heads Guardian News presented a 7-page colour run-of-press and a 48-page A4 gloss magazine. The tabloid "100th Nambucca District Show" invited readers with an interesting historic cover and this theme continued throughout. It was pleasing to see an historic feature supported with advertising, although a little heavy in the last pages which restricted the size of some photos. 'Nambucca come play' was a Visitor Guide dated 2012/2013 indicating it had been entered into the wrong year. This also appeared to be more attuned to the Special Publications section. That said, perhaps some benefit can be obtained by looking seriously at colour tuning photographs (especially tourist attracting pictures), re-visiting typography and questioning the value of text over photographs.

LAKES TIMES, KIAMA

One of the new contenders this year was Lake Times with two run-of-press entries supported by a comprehensive explanation sheet. The first, titled 'Relive Illawarra', was actually a 4-page feature with an additional two pages run the following week. Perhaps a little disappointing splitting in this fashion, and although introduced on the first page of the newspaper, there was no space available for a more prominent cover page. Minor criticism though when the content was powerful, well-written, colourful with creative graphics, pull-quotes and for those in need, plenty of job tips. Second was 'Love Living Illawarra', a 64-page celebration of the region. As the managing editor stated, "the editorial team worked hard... to make sure we were giving the reader lively and informative copy.." and although this publication is perhaps more suited to another category, the staff certainly achieved a great deal.

THE NORTHERN DAILY LEADER, TAMWORTH

The Northern Daily Leader also presented two different styles, a 9-page centenary celebration of their newspaper and a 52-page gloss 'Festival' magazine. Their centenary feature was, as one would expect, well written and aptly showcased the depth of their archives, the service a newspaper provided its community and a wealth of memories for many of the townsfolk. Newspapers over a century old are becoming rarer, so it was excellent to see this self-promotion. A small disappointment were the shortage of photos and the uncomfortable length of some articles, devoid of quote-pulls or sub-heads. The 'Festival', the guide for the Tamworth Music Festival with an inviting cover, good lead stories and photos was pleasing to pick up. Also included was a 16 page program guide which was difficult to follow.

JOURNALISM

The Media Super Limited Award for Feature Supplements



Encouragement Award:

LAKE TIMES, KIAMA

For presenting a difficult topic positively, 'Relive Illawarra'.

THE NORTHERN DAILY LEADER, TAMWORTH

For an in-depth reminder of why newspapers are so important, '100 Years of Service'.

RUNNER UP:

MANNING RIVER TIMES, TAREE

For two contrasting and attractive community entries, 'Chatham High School, International Youth Day' plus 'Flair Awards 2011'.

Winner:

THE INVERELL TIMES

For their two excellent and diverse entries, 'Rotary Conference 2012' and 'Best Celebrating 15 years'.
Congratulations on a fine effort.

The Media Super Limited Award

for

Feature Supplements

2011-2012

is awarded to

**THE INVERELL
Times**

JUDGE: Barry Wilson



JOURNALISM

The Media Super Limited Award for Feature Supplements



FORMER WINNERS

1970	<i>Windsor & Richmond Gazette</i>	1984	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, North Richmond</i>	1998	<i>South Coast Register, Nowra</i>
1971	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1985	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>	1999	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>
1972	<i>Tumut & Adelong Times</i>	1986	<i>Tumut & Adelong Times</i>	2000-01	<i>Kiama Independent</i>
1973	<i>The Courier, Narrabri</i>	1987	<i>The Riverine Grazier, Hay</i>	2001-02	<i>Bega District News</i>
1974	<i>Glen Innes Examiner</i>	1988	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2002-03	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>
1975	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1989	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	2003-04	<i>South Coast Register, Nowra</i>
1976	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	1990	<i>Mudgee Guardian and Gulgong Advertiser</i>	2004-05	<i>The Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth</i>
1977	<i>The North Western Courier, Narrabri</i>	1991	<i>Tumut and Adelong Times, & The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2005-06	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>
1978	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	1992	<i>Deniliquin Pastoral Times</i>	2006-07	<i>South Coast Register</i>
1979	<i>Tumut & Adelong Times</i>	1993	<i>Port Stephens Examiner</i>	2007-08	<i>Namoi Valley Independent</i>
1980	<i>Port Stephens Examiner</i>	1994	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>	2008-09	<i>Muswellbrook Chronicle</i>
1981	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1995	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2009-10	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
1982	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	1996	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2010-11	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>
1983	<i>Kiama Independent</i>	1997	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>	2011-12	<i>The Inverell Times</i>

JOURNALISM

The Goss International Award for Newspaper Presentation



General Comments

The growth, quality and ingenuity of special publications produced by country and regional newspapers to complement their publishing activities continues to prove the print media is alive and kicking. Unfortunately, only a few of the best were submitted for this years' CPNSW's Award for Special Publications. The current Award conditions require entries to be a special publication published at least four times during the year, which excludes a review the many outstanding annual or special event single publications produced by CPNSW members.

The Awards Committee could consider two sections in this award – one for publications with four or more issues and the other for single publications to allow industry recognition of the many professional quality publications which play a key in the viability of success of country newspapers.

This year the *Singleton Argus* submitted four individual quality publications, including an excellent full colour A4 publication marking the centenary of the School of Infantry based in Singleton, but the entries did not meet the "four times, similarly-titled" condition.

The qualifying entries received from other member newspapers included quality monthly and quarterly magazines obviously published to complement their host newspapers.

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

Full credit also to The Courier, Narrabri, on the monthly quarter fold "*Namoi Valley Life*", which is a very aptly titled four colour gloss complement to the newspaper's reporting of local events.

The excellent pictorial coverage of recent feature social events makes it a '*must see who's in it this month*' read, with the local editorial focus and balance provided by well-written articles featuring local people and events. Pleasing to note the advertising content stands on its own without the 'commercial editorial', which supports monthly magazines in today's publishing environment. A great local read.

NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah, has entered *Namoi Valley Energy*, a well presented industry-based quarterly A4 gloss publication, which is also distributed through neighbouring newspapers at Narrabri and Quirindi. The mining sector is dramatically changing the lifestyle of local residents in the Namoi Valley communities and this publication features informative editorial to meet the obvious interest of the community thirsty for details of mining activities and future development. It is an industry voice serving both the community and mining employees, and has provided Namoi Valley Independent with a very positive financial boost.

THE NORTHERN DAILY LEADER, TAMWORTH

The Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth, entered its obviously successful "Taminda Advertiser", which is produced 6 times a year and focuses on business activity in the Taminda industrial estate. The strong editorial emphasis on the personalities behind the businesses provides a refreshing style for the "advertorials" and the well written, interesting feature articles give a good balance to the content and an overall great read. Industrial estates are generally not easy target markets for newspapers, but this publication shows how it can be done, and done well.

THE ARMIDALE EXPRESS

The quality presentation of The Armidale Express quarterly gloss tabloid magazine, *Seasons*, leaves little to be desired. Well-presented feature articles and diverse topic range are coupled with easy-reading layout, bold photography and attractive advertising graphic design to make this publication a great complement to the *Express*. The Fine Food cookery section is a standout.

The magazine is inspired by Armidale's four distinction seasons and there was a mix of good local articles supporting some "commercial" and regional content. However, a number of the well written feature articles and many of the general information "syndicated" pieces failed to contain any local references, which may not engage the reader as well as the other excellent locally written articles.

JOURNALISM

The Goss International Award for Newspaper Presentation

GOSS | INTERNATIONAL

WINNER:

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS NEWS, BOWRAL

Southern Highlands Snapshot magazine, published eleven times a year by Southern Highlands News, Bowral, is a head-turner, with readers attracted by the excellent photography and strong graphic design. However, it is the strong local content of the editorial, including the feature articles, which is most impressive and would be guaranteeing Snapshot is read and re-read. Local content is king, undoubtedly the reason this publication is attracting very solid advertising and has doubled in paging since commencing 3 years ago. I found some facing page combinations a little too busy, and suggest fewer pages for advertising.

The Media Monitors Award for Special Publications

2011-2012

is awarded to

Southern
Highland News

Bowral

JUDGE: Greg Watson



Media Monitors
STAY CONNECTED

JOURNALISM

The Goss International Award for Newspaper Presentation



General Comments

This year has been arguably the toughest in the history of newspaper publishing in Australia, with large-scale redundancies in the major capital city papers and big regional dailies as the internet continues to draw readers and advertisers away from traditional publishing.

Yet the smaller papers servicing smaller regional centres and rural communities in NSW have largely withstood this trend. Yes, they are operating in a challenging economic environment but many are not only surviving, but thriving. They are doing this because they understand their communities, and are able to give them what they want: good coverage of local issues and local people, in an attractive and appealing format.

Good presentation has never been more important, and the nominees for this category understand this important point.

DAILY AND TRI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

WESTERN ADVOCATE, BATHURST

The Western Advocate is a perennial standard-bearer for quality layout, strong, clean typography and general presentation. Advocate readers are left in no doubt as to which story is the page lead, and are guided through the paper with a consistently clean, modular style that looks good and is easy to read. I like the paper's creative front pages and the fact that the attention to detail is maintained in the excellent features and sports sections.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS NEWS, BOWRAL

The Southern Highlands News is a smart-looking paper with a bright, clean layout and a strong focus on features and sport. It is very professionally produced but probably lacks the editorial space (and therefore substance) to contend strongly for this award.

MANNING RIVER TIMES, TAREE

The Manning River Times is a feisty, busy paper produced with imagination and flair. I really liked its strong treatment on the front page, but the lack of consistent colour on the early general news pages must be frustrating for the staff as it does detract a little from the presentation. Excellent sports section.

NORTHER DAILY LEADER, TAMWORTH

Outstanding use of pictures is a feature of the Northern Daily Leader's presentation. Their layout staffs routinely uses good pictures full-width or full-height of the page, and this creativity combined with the extensive use of colour gives the Leader a really classy, professional look. Generous editorial space and wide open pages mean that the paper presents big stories really well, while the quality is maintained throughout the paper in its features and sports sections and its special features.

Highly commended:

Western Advocate, Bathurst

JOURNALISM

The Goss International Award for Newspaper
Presentation

GOSS | INTERNATIONAL

The Goss International Award for
Newspaper Presentation
(Daily and Tri-Weekly category)
2011-2012
is awarded to

The Northern Daily
LEADER

Tamworth

JUDGE: Nick Hartgerink

GOSS | INTERNATIONAL

JOURNALISM

The Goss International Award for Newspaper Presentation

GOSS | INTERNATIONAL

WEEKLY AND BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

ARMIDALE EXPRESS EXTRA

It is easy to see why the Armidale Express entered its Extra glossy weekly magazine in this category. It's an ambitious product for a regional newspaper, but the Express staff pull it off. The presentation is all quality, with great covers and a smart, consistent layout throughout.

MILTON ULLADULLA TIMES, ULLADULLA

The Milton Ulladulla Times looks to have taken a step up in the quality of its presentation since I judged this category last year. It is still bright and breezy in its style (perhaps reflecting its relaxed coastal location) with great use of pictures and colour. But it seems to have more substance now, with good weight on the headlines of its page leads and imaginative layouts from general news through to sport. The front page is still a bit too cluttered with advertising, but this is more than made up for with excellent presentation of the features section.

THE IRRIGATOR, LEETON

The Irrigator strikes me as an intelligent paper, with excellent headline-writing and strong headline fonts and type size an integral feature of its presentation. I loved 'Gin is just the tonic', which told the story of a new cotton gin that was expected to provide an economic boost for the town. The Irrigator has really creative front pages, backed up with consistently strong, clean early news pages.

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

As always, the fiercely independent Monaro Post dares to be different. Its presentation style draws more from magazines than newspapers, but the result is bright, colourful and easy to read. And that, after all, is what many readers are looking for.

THE INVERELL TIMES

The Inverell Times has a simple but attractive style, impressive for the good use of pictures.

THE GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

The Guardian News is a generally attractive paper, but the reproduction quality of some of the pictures in the copies submitted for judging left a little to be desired.

Highly Commended:

The Irrigator and The Armidale Express Extra.

Winner:

Milton Ulladulla Times.

The Goss International Award for

Newspaper Presentation

(Weekly and Bi-weekly category)

2011-2012

is awarded to

Milton Ulladulla
Times

JUDGE: Nick Hartgerink

GOSS | INTERNATIONAL

PRINTING

The WO Richards Award for Technical Excellence in Newspaper Production Printing Quality



General Comments

The judging of the W O Richards Award for Technical Excellence in Newspaper Production was extremely close this year with four newspaper editions of excellent quality. The final judging came down to a decision between two newspaper editions, The Monaro Post and The Courier.

All of the entries received were of a good standard but the four mentioned newspaper editions stood out from the others as being technically better examples of newspaper production and displayed very minimal faults.

COMMENDED:

THE NORTHERN DAILY LEADER, TAMWORTH

Wednesday February 8th 2012

GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

Thursday June 28th 2012

Both for the quality displayed in each edition.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

Thursday August 25th 2011, for the quality it displayed.

WINNER:

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

Wednesday 2nd of May 2012.

The Monaro Post demonstrated excellent cut offs and ribbon alignment. The black densities and contrast were of a very good standard and the unit to unit fit was also of a very high standard. There was minimum scuffing or set off and commitment to a consistent standard of newspaper production both in mono and colour was demonstrated.

**The WO Richards award for
Technical Excellence in Newspaper Production
2011-2012
is awarded to**


the **MONARO** postTM
the independent paper of the Monaro and surrounding regions

Cooma

JUDGE: Warwick Moore





General Comments

This award was established in 1976 by Dampier Advertising Pty Limited, a subsidiary of Country Press Limited. Its purpose was to promote excellence in the production of local advertisements among member newspapers of the New South Wales Country Press Association. Sponsorship was transferred to the Advertising Clearing House Pty Limited, a subsidiary of Country Press Limited, which was acquired by the Neville Jeffress Advertising Group in the 1980s. This company was sold in mid-1996 and renamed TMP Worldwide, supporting the awards for two years.

In 1999, the sponsorship of the award was assumed by Media Monitors Australia, a Neville Jeffress company, and traces its genesis to a subsidiary established by the Country Press Co-operative Company Limited in Sydney in 1927.

Both colour and mono sections of the competitions were judged on general impressions, originality and professionalism of design and copy caption.

In 2009, this award is assumed by DIC Australia and now open for all locally produced advertisement in two categories – circulation up to 5,000 and circulation over 5,000.

NEWSPAPER CIRCULATION UP TO 5000

Entries this year were uniformly of a high standard, exhibiting consistently clean layouts, easy-to-read text and appropriate illustrations. Strong headlines offering a benefit were the order of the day: generally excellent work in this category.

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

- Cooma Toyota

A fine workmanlike ad with lively typeface alerting readers to the clearance sale, backed up by tidy, readable layout and copy.

- High Country Automotive

Nice illustrations and agreeable layout lifted this ad, although the full page initially presented as two separate ads and the lack of indicative prices on the financed models was disappointing.

THE IRRIGATOR, LEETON

- Town and Country Tyres

A good example of a clean strip ad across the front page, although the horse head illustration and headline commanded my attention, rather than anything to do with tyre safety.

TEMORA INDEPENDENT

- Crutchins' IGA

Two good-looking ads, although I preferred the half-page with nine products and low prices, against a single product on the full page and a less powerful headline.

NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

- Gordon Turner Motorcycles

An attention-getting headline for second-hand deals is backed up with clean pictures, features and prices. Nice work.

- Gunnedah South Public School

Great photos drew me to this ad but I couldn't find the offer.



GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

- Nambucca Plumbing Supplies

Classic example of when an ad needs no illustration: the closing down sale in the headline is crystal clear, as are the types of products to be cleared. Fine colour choice – an ad with great impact. Good work.

- NAB

Puts faces to people for a normally impersonal institution. Nice idea – and good work extracting money from a major bank!

HIGHLY COMMENDED: MUDGE GUARDIAN

- Col Mathews Motors

The assembled young people at a bar with voice bubbles is an arresting photograph, inviting readers to examine the faces and the words. While I would have liked a current special offer or time-sensitive benefit to encourage immediate action, the generic benefits were well articulated in a compelling context – another excellent idea.

WINNER: THE IRRIGATOR, LEETON

- Wade Hotel

The quirky, circular shape and centre-of-page placement cannot be over-worked but there is no doubting the impact of this attention-getting ad. The handwriting and hand-drawings are clear and easily read, incorporating several specific offers and conveying a feeling of fun and engagement. Brilliant idea!

**The DIC Award for
Locally Produced Advertising
(circulation up to 5000)
2011-2012
is awarded to**

The Irrigator
Leeton

JUDGE: Ross McPherson





NEWSPAPER CIRCULATION OVER 5000

Overall quality was less consistent than last year and generally the category was outshone by its small-circulation cousins. That said, it was a close run between last years' winner, The Area News, and the Armidale Express/Extra, whose work was uniformly of a high standard.

THE ARMIDALE EXPRESS/EXTRA

- Carlo's Super IGA and Richardsons's Home Hardware

The full page ads promoting an IGA store opening sported excellent pictures on a gloss format, clever and effective use of testimonials and plenty of opening specials. Nice work.

The Home Hardware ads were more ambitious, using the Home Hardware colours and lots of handwriting and staff pics to draw the reader in. I found reverse type on blue hard to read and that on ochre not easy; the handwriting wasn't always clear and there was too much of it on one ad, but the ads had a very friendly, local feel and exuded 'trust'. The Outdoor Clearance ad was clean and inviting. All good work.

WESTERN ADVOCATE, BATHURST

- Adecco and Choice by Brights

The Adecco employment ad was let down by hard-to-read reverse type and the lack of a clear headline. Choice by Brights gave me no clue (as an out-of-towner) what it was about although the Free Rug Offer suggested carpets or flooring.

THE AREA NEWS, GRIFFITH

- North Bourke Gin

This ad had all the elements needed to grab the attention of rice growers and convey its message, although it was cluttered and untidy, conveying in my mind a slightly amateurish air about the client, which might not be what it wants.

WINNER:

THE AREA NEWS, GRIFFITH

- What's For Dinner?

The Area News again showed its flair for packing plenty of punch into a small ad. The headline asks that question most of us ask coming through the front door after work; a terrific picture and simple copy on a an elegant colour choice finish off a first-class advertisement.

**The DIC Award for
Locally Produced Advertising
(circulation over 5000)**

2011-2012

is awarded to

The Area News
Griffith

JUDGE: Ross McPherson



ADVERTISING & MARKETING

The DIC Award for Commercial Supplements



General Comments

There are some impressive features entered in this category, which provide testimony to the initiative and the quest for excellence shown by country newspaper advertising and editorial teams.

Commercial features are all about taking the opportunity provided by special events or topics to boost advertising revenues, and most entries were the result of effort around special occasions.

Entries required two features to be submitted and most entries included diverse topics and formats, from 4-page sports topics to all gloss quarterfold directories. I saw a key to this Award to recognise features which have an innovative focus on revenue generation and ideally published with the newspaper.

Some of the entries which are obviously stand-alone publications would certainly be more competitive in an award for single issue special publications. Sorting through and comparing publications can be fairly subjective, but it is one of the real rewards of this judging process to see the results of the obvious tremendous effort some of the smaller teams put into outstanding products.

THE IRRIGATOR, LEETON

An excellent 12-page feature highlighting the construction and the businesses involved in building and selling a home to raise funds for local charity, Jumpstart. Great initiative also demonstrated the newspaper's involvement in its community. The Group 20 Junior Rugby League finals in Leeton provided the topic for *The Irrigator's* entry second feature.

WESTERN ADVOCATE, BATHURST

A 24-page A4 gloss feature titled "Bathurst Home Front 2012" submitted by Western Advocate, Bathurst, featured good content of well-designed advertising and generated solid revenue. The feature was inserted in the newspaper and advertisers received bonus value with copies distributed through participating businesses. A Royal Bathurst show time feature also supported this entry.

MUDGEES GUARDIAN

Mudgee did country NSW proud hosting the Rugby League Country-City Origin match and taking full advantage of the special opportunity the Mudgee Guardian capitalised with an 8-page feature, which not only generated strong revenue, but provided a circulation boost as well. The newspaper also capitalised on a mining industry conference held in Mudgee by securing strong advertising support for an excellent 16-page 'wrap' feature. Both features provided strong revenues and full marks for capitalising on the special one-off opportunities. A good entry.

WINGHAM CHRONICLE

Special events also provided revenue opportunities for the Wingham Chronicle, with features on the 90th anniversary of Wingham Beef Exports and also the local Tigers winning the Grand Finals. The *Moree Champion* also grasped its sporting opportunity and produced an impressive 16-page feature for the Rugby Union grand final.

MANNING RIVER TIMES, TAREE

The Manning River Times, never misses the chance to capitalise on special local events and did a great job on a feature on a Rotary Club's 75th anniversary, and backed it up with an advertising focussed "Living Sustainably" ROP feature.

THE SINGLETON ARGUS

The best entry capitalising on a special events was The Singleton Argus' feature marking the centenary of The School of Infantry, which is based in Singleton. Whilst predominantly featuring historical editorial, the gloss A4 publication has solid advertising volume well formatted on each page. A quality product which produced a good profit. *The Argus'* second feature was the "Singleton & District Guide 2012", a 72-page A4 gloss business and community information booklet, which is undoubtedly a local "bible" of contacts for

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

The DIC Award for Commercial Supplements



business and community organisations. Advertising revenues were an impressive 20% up on budget. Another very good entry.

THE AREA NEWS, GRIFFITH

The Area News, Griffith, certainly met the Award's criteria with two excellent advertising features. Outstanding fashion jewellery advertising and magazine presentation highlighted a tabloid 12-page feature "The Diamond Destination" for GW Spiers/Lathams Jewellers providing all the criteria of visual appeal, attention-drawing content and impact on readers. Whilst The Area News' second publication did not look like a newspaper feature in the true sense, the B5 gloss "Buy Local Christmas Value Vouchers" was all advertising (and all about revenue). These two entries combined to make a very commendable Commercial Supplements entry.

THE ARMIDALE EXPRESS

Quality newspaper features always make an impact on readers, and usually provide that unexpected value-adding bonus for our loyal readers of paid country newspapers. And certainly the readers of The Armidale Express and its sister New England and North West publications would have enjoyed receiving the "Live, Love, Play" 32-page gloss lifestyle feature in their newspapers. Very strong volume of high quality advertising made this one of the standout entries for this Award. The accompanying second feature was the Summer issue of *The Armidale Express*' quarterly "Seasons" magazine, which carried a higher editorial content, but again ticked the boxes with great advertising and heaps of reader appeal. Two excellent commercial features done with purpose and planning.

GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

It is obvious that it took a huge effort from the Nambucca Guardian's small team to produce their two commercial feature entries. The "Nambucca Come Play" tourist visitors guide has great content, especially the advertising which includes all the attractions, accommodation, dining, etc., for the region. The publication is the region's key tourism promotion publication, and a major contributor of the *Guardian*'s revenues. The supporting feature was for the 100th Nambucca District Show, and the entry submission says every business in the Valley was canvassed ("no small task in itself") and produced strong support from businesses proud of their long association with the Show.

THE INVERELL TIMES

The Inverell Times also submitted its annual tourist guide, "The Fossickers Way", which is a high quality 48-page publication with strong revenue and informative advertising which obviously meets the needs of the many visitors to this part of the New England. However, it was the *Times*' second feature, '50's Plus', which I thought fitted the Award's "commercial" criteria almost perfectly. The cover photograph of the 16-page A4 gloss feature on retirement almost jumped up to engage the reader, and inside was filled with attractive advertisements and local business-focussed commercially orientated editorial. Great revenue too.

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

The Monaro Post, Cooma, submitted three separate entries in this Award. The first entry included the newspaper's two seasonal free tourist publications, "Snowpost" and "Sunpost", which highlight the alpine area's key attractions. Very credible special publications with strong advertising content.

The second entry included the two annual editions of the *Post*'s "Your Farm" magazines, tabloid supplements focussed on the important stud sales seasons and local show information. Two well presented products, capitalising on the bi-annual opportunity of advertising from rural sector businesses and local livestock studs.

A stand-out entry in this Award is a 56-page tabloid newspaper supplement on home building, renovating and lifestyle titled "Innovation", included in The Monaro Post's third entry. This feature highlighted the revenue opportunities available from publishing special topic supplements- in this case on furnishings, building and home improvements. A great effort from a small team, attracting over 100 advertisers supporting the supplement with some dynamic and informative advertisements. And some commercially

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

The DIC Award for Commercial Supplements



orientated editorial mixed with DIY and general information added to the “commercial” balance. An edition of the newspaper’s “Sunpost” supplement completed the entry.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

THE AREA NEWS, GRIFFITH

- The Diamond Destination

THE ARMIDALE EXPRESS

- Life, Love, Play

WINNER:

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

- Innovation

The DIC Award for
Commercial Supplement

2011-2012

is awarded to

the **MONARO** postTM
the independent paper of the Monaro and surrounding regions
Cooma

JUDGE: Greg Watson



ADVERTISING & MARKETING

The DIC Award for Advertising Ideas



General Comments

There were some great entries in this year's Advertising Ideas Award Category. It was encouraging to see a range of ideas that spanned from innovative use of traditional media to integrated online and offline campaigns that had a healthy impact on revenue and effectiveness for clients.

The submissions however were not judged on originality or effectiveness alone. The execution of the idea was also a very important component in the judging process – the quality of copy, design, typography, photography and so on were key considerations.

THE IRRIGATOR, LEETON

- Antoinette's Showcase Jewellers and Identity Fashion

Great way of extending reach and impact of this campaign through the innovative use of the jigsaw puzzle throughout editorial space. Great to see you literally thinking outside the advertising square. Some more finessing in the art direction and execution would have enhanced this entry even more, and reflected the premium nature of jewellery and fashion.

- Antoinette's Showcase Jewellers

A good way to bring attention and build excitement about the launch, bright art direction, cute illustration and nice tie in with the sparkly 'jewel/stars'. Which obviously worked well for the client. Consistent font usage and minimal copy add to the readability and impact of this campaign. Good thought in concept, execution and placement. Well done.

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

- Melbourne Cup Day

This is a really good, new idea, a very fresh take on Melbourne Cup Day. Working out the mechanics of the competition alone is impressive! A little more enhancement on the design layout, execution and art direction would have got this one a little further along in the race, but again, great effective idea.

MANNING RIVER TIMES, TAREE

- Taree Community College

Fantastic to see you implementing an integrated marketing approach to significantly enhance revenue and reach an effectiveness of the campaign. Would suggest refining the layout to give more punch and make more out of the opportunities provided by regular full-page colour press insertions.

MANNING GREAT LAKES EXTRA, TAREE

- 'Midcoast water'

Again, great to see you using the integrated marketing approach to create greater impact for your client and increase your revenue streams. The layout and design of the piece, however is quite busy, and the black type headlines on the deep green/blue gradients are very hard to read. More care on the design and layout would allow the ideas to flow a bit better.

- Love them wheels

This is a great idea – to devote a regular space to motor enthusiasts. Readers will come to look for this segment, and the revenue opportunities are consistent for this niche but passionate audience. And as you say in your submission, this audience will spend money on their cars, which ensures advertisers will want to be on board. Perhaps if the layout was more in line with car enthusiast magazines like 'Wheels' you may be able to appeal to this market even more. But the core idea of appealing to specific niche audiences on a regular basis is a very smart idea that could be expanded into other areas.

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

The DIC Award for Advertising Ideas



THE AREA NEWS, GRIFFITH

- Pimp my Pizza

A very cute idea showing great insight into your readership. I'm sure the ad would have had great cut through. A great effort to actually get three competing restaurants to appear together in the one advertisement. I think the core idea of 'Pimp my Pizza' could be used even more effectively – perhaps as a competition to get readers to write in and tell their unusual pizza topping combinations, or involve the advertisers on an alternate weekly basis to offer some distinctive topping for the month, or invite readers to suggest how they would like to 'Pimp their Pizza'. Some real potential here.

- Mother's Day campaign

Nice to see this series of ads really taking over the EGN section – could not have been missed by the readers. Perhaps a little more consistency in the design between page 3 and page 7 could have enhanced the connection and power of repetition. Also some sort of design element to run through the entire 8 pages could have really ramped up the branding for the shopping centre. Great idea to build on.

MOREE CHAMPION

- Moree 150th Anniversary Liftout.

Good to see this initiative - making the most of this one time, historic opportunity. Was obviously very successful in its advertising revenue and popularity as a keepsake/collectors edition for the people of Moree. The content is very engaging and relevant, however we feel that the design could have been more inviting in order to maximise reader engagement.

COMMENDED:

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

- Melbourne Cup Day

Intriguing and original idea of pairing readers with businesses in their Melbourne Cup Day sweep promotion.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

THE IRRIGATOR, LEETON

- Guess Who's Having a Sale Jigsaw Puzzle

For piecing together a campaign that really pushed the boundaries and utilised an innovative use of editorial space to enhance the impact of the advertising message.

WINNER:

THE NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

- Magazine insert 'Tucker- from Paddock to Plate'.

Of all the entries, we couldn't go past the quality of this production. It was first rate, the design contemporary and inviting, the copy and photography completely engaging. The timing of the publication to coincide with the local food festival was a great idea for the focus of the magazine Tucker, and the strength of the idea and production was borne out by the revenue the insert raised.



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THE AREA NEWS, GRIFFITH

- Post-flood DVD

Last year's devastating floods offered the Area News an opportunity to engage with the local community, producing a DVD from photos and video captured by its photographer. The free screening was a sensible touch but I thought the promotional ads could have run some more arresting images to draw readers in.

MOREE CHAMPION

- Flood Sweat and Tears

Like the Area News, the Moree Champion took the flood opportunity to produce an attractive supplement, generating revenues for the paper as well as donations to victims – a good outcome and well-executed.

THE INVERELL TIMES

- Travelling Times

Improvements on a borrowed idea produced some 'feel good' coverage of citizens pictured with the local paper at tourist icons around the world, with their stories. More newspapers should try this.

MANNING RIVER TIMES, TAREE

- Manning Mum of the Year

A creative way to engage readers and generate revenues around Mothers' Day. Full marks for combining print and online – the strong online response points to effective promotions of the future.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

THE ARMIDALE EXPRESS

The Gardens of New England calendar is a good concept, nicely executed – it includes a full local calendar listing all significant events for the year, accompanied by lovely photographs of local gardens. I noticed that, when succeeding pages are opened on its "hook," the calendar shows no mention of The Express.

WINNER:

THE IRRIGATOR, LEETON

The Irrigator's campaign to combat radio competition comprised a focused strategy to undermine the value proposition of radio compared to the paper. This was aggressive, powerful and effective. It produced great results with an extra \$20,000 in revenue in a short time; the promotional ad led with a clear illustration and headline enunciating the strategy. Great work.

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

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& Promotion



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Leeton

JUDGE: Ross McPherson





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