



Country Press New South Wales Inc.

Australia's oldest newspaper industry association
Founded 1900

2012-2013 Newspaper Awards & Judges' Comments

113th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Rydges Port Macquarie
1 Hay Street,
PORT MACQUARIE, NSW

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Proudly Sponsored By:



JUDGES 2012-2013

JOURNALISM JUDGES 2012-2013

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: David Sommerlad

David Sommerlad spent the early years of his journalistic career with daily newspapers in Newcastle, Sydney and Bradford (Yorkshire), returning to work as a reporter on *The Inverell Times*. He progressed as managing editor at Inverell and Glen Innes to become managing director and editor-in-chief of New England printing and publishing companies, eventually to merge as the Nornews Limited group based at Armidale.

After 30 years in the country, he moved to Sydney as executive editor of Rural Press Limited publications for six years before transferring to head the Country Press Australia and New South Wales industry organisations, with which he still has some executive connections.

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 immigrated 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 iSentia Award for Local News Reporting

JUDGE: Paul Roberts

Paul Roberts has 30 years' experience in the industry after starting his journalism career as a copy boy at News Limited in Sydney in 1983. He completed his cadetship on the Daily Telegraph and joined the rugby league team on the sports desk at The Telegraph in 1987. He transferred to London in 1990 for a stint as Sports Editor at Leisure Week magazine.

In 1991, Paul took up a position as sub-editor at the Hawkesbury Gazette and Courier, and in 1993 was appointed News Editor. He was promoted to Managing Editor in 1998.

Paul joined the Rural Press (now Fairfax Media) training team in 2005 and was promoted to Editorial Training Manager in 2008. He took on the added role of Training Operations Manager in 2010, and is now part of the newly-structured training team in 2013.

Paul, 49, spends his time away from newspapers and the media with wife Karen on their mountain bikes.

JUDGES 2012-2013

The Australia Post Award for Feature Writing

JUDGE: Graham Gorrel

Graham Gorrel has had 55 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 retired in 2003 but maintains a close interest in the newspaper industry by writing weekly columns in The Daily Advertiser on current affairs and sport. He judges newspaper and journalism awards in NSW, Victoria and South Australia and runs a weekly local news comment program on community radio station, 2AAA FM.

In 1978-79 he spent time in England working for the North London Newspaper Group and The Sun, in Fleet Street. He was a director of the Pacific Area Newspapers Publishers Association, the peak newspaper body in the Pacific area, for 10 years, two as president in 2002-03.

He was regarded highly as a sports commentator on television. Graham has been a member of Rotary for more than 34 years at the South Dubbo, Hornsey (London), Wollundry Wagga and Wagga Wagga clubs and he was awarded a Paul Harris fellowship in 2007.

The Media Super Limited Award for Sports Journalism

JUDGE: Ian Heads

Ian Heads has covered the passing parade of Australian sport for 50 years - as a sportswriter for newspapers and magazines and, since, 1988, as author or co-author of more than 40 books.

In 1988 he co-authored with Gary Lester the major (1988) Bicentenary book: *'200 Years of Australian Sport; A Glorious Obsession'* and the pair linked again in 2011 for the best-selling and *'And the Crowd Went Wild'*. His other works include: *'Backpage - Australia's Greatest Sporting Moments'*, several club histories, and, 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, *'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 a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Australian Sports Commission in 2006. In 2010 he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for "service to the media as a sports journalist, author and mentor".

In 2013 he is about to begin a new book, revisiting one of the greatest stories of NSW country sport.

The Canon Award for Photography

JUDGE: Jonathan Carroll

Jonathan has been working as a professional photographer with the Newcastle Herald for about 6.5 years. During his time at the Herald he has photographed Prime Ministers, celebrities, State of Origin matches, and everything in between. He has been abused, had punches thrown, and has been threatened with arrest. In 2012 he was banned from the Murrurundi Sheepdog Trials. He was a finalist in the 2012 PANPA Awards, and this year won Best Photography at the 2013 PRODI awards.

The Media Super Limited Award for Feature Supplements

JUDGE: Julie Ainsworth

Julie Ainsworth is the General Manager of Newcastle Newspapers Pty Ltd which includes mastheads such as The Newcastle Herald, The Newcastle & Lake Macquarie Star, Port Stephens Examiner, Lakes Mail & Myall Coat of Arms.

Her Significant career achievements include

- Winner of the Local Woman of the Year Award – Newcastle 2013
- Newcastle nominee for the Premier's NSW Woman of the Year Award 2007 & 2013
- Nominated for Telstra Business Woman of the Year Award 2000, 2004 & 2010
- Winner of the Newcastle & Hunter Woman of Enterprise Award 2004/2005
- Finalist for Hunter Business Chamber – Person of the Year 2000
- First female General Manager of Newcastle Newspapers since its inception

JUDGES 2012-2013

The iSentia Award for Special Publications

JUDGE: Mark Hodgson

Mark is a third generation newspaperman who joined the family newspaper as a cadet journalist at the age of 16. He also completed a trade course as an offset printer and platemaker.

Half way through his apprenticeship at the age of 22, he took on the role of managing director of the family business due to the death of his father.

Mark sold his printing and publishing interests to Fairfax Regional Media late last year and has since taken up the role of a builder's labourer during the construction of his and wife Gail's new home.

Mark is a life member of Country Press Australia, and Queensland Country Press Association.

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 2012-2013

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 26 of those years.

ADVERTISING AND MARKETING JUDGES 2012-2013

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: Mark Hodgson – 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.

JUDGES 2012-2013

The Norske Skog Award for Newspaper Marketing and Promotion

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

DIGITAL JUDGE 2012-2013

The Award for Online Editorial Coverage

JUDGE: Andrew Brain

Andrew has been in media for 15 years in both advertising and publishing capacities. 15 years means he saw the dotcom boom and subsequent bust, but stuck around to see it re-birth and blossom into the media phenomenon it is today.

Currently the Group Digital Manager at Bauer Media (Formerly ACP Magazines) is championing the national emergence of digital products within the business in the form of 70+ digital products across web, social, mobile, iPad and Apps.

The Award for Online Advertising

JUDGE: Andrew Brain – see *Award for Online Editorial Coverage*

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“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

Floods, bushfires, major sporting events, political scandal and human triumph and tragedy provided the main fare for entrants in this year’s EC Sommerlad Award. But there was so much more. New schools, agricultural shows, child-care deficiencies, cancer research fundraisers, highway black spots, environmental battles and mining concerns were just some of the issues that affected regional communities all over NSW and were exposed or explored in the country press.

This year’s entries again demonstrate the value of regional newspapers in Australia. These papers connect with their communities. They inform and entertain local readers and give them a platform to express their views on the things they care most about – their families, their businesses and their communities.

Many of the entries in this year’s awards demonstrated an awareness of the need to embrace new media, to start a conversation with readers and to keep them interested. The best entries provided variety in content and design – they took a fresh approach to each edition and maintained editorial standards of accuracy, balance and advocacy.

This year’s award highlights the dedication and commitment of rural and regional journalists. Congratulations to all entries in the 2013 EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Journalism.

DAILY NEWSPAPERS

WESTERN ADVOCATE, BATHURST

Submitted editions of the Advocate were dominated by the paper’s coverage of the Bathurst 1000 – the city’s biggest annual event. Coverage in the days leading up to the race was extensive and comprehensive culminating in a 16-page special edition wraparound. Saturation coverage of the race day both at the front and the back of the paper, follow-up reports in the days after the event and a souvenir poster, capped an outstanding effort by the editorial team. In general, the Western Advocate does a great job as a journal of record, producing a paper that presents a good mix of news, entertainment and sport. The paper’s layout is clean and concise though placement of various columns throughout the news pages seems a little

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disorganised in some editions. Reader feedback in the form of letters or web comments appeared rare also. A more comprehensive, illustrated index on Page 2 might help with navigation of the paper. The paper takes a strong stand on behalf of its region in editorials and by supporting various community causes. On the whole, the Western Advocate is an excellent paper, delivering impressive journalism to its readers.

THE DAILY ADVERTISER, WAGGA WAGGA

“The Riverina’s Own” newspaper is a lively, attention grabbing daily that impresses from Page 1. Bold headings, great pictures and creative layouts hold the reader’s attention throughout. The journalism is serious and hard-hitting when required and light and entertaining whenever possible. The news pages are easy to read, well-illustrated with breakout quotes, fact boxes and graphics, and readers are fed a balanced diet of leads, picture stories and briefs. The emphasis, of course, is on local news, but important national and world news also gets a run. The Advertiser does a great job of providing a platform for its readers in a two-page “Your Say” section that includes letters, a vox pop and comments from the web as well as a column, the editorial and a quick quiz. Each of the submitted editions looked fresh with a good mix of subject matter and design. Sections such as Junior Sports, The Guide, Out and About, Domain real estate and the Your Game sports lift out give readers outstanding value for money.

BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

THE SINGLETON ARGUS

The submitted editions of the Argus highlighted the paper’s extensive coverage of issues affecting its readership in its news, features, community and sport sections. Another impressive aspect was the paper’s use of digital media to enhance its relevance resulting in impressive online readership growth. One of the highlights of the entry was the paper’s coverage of the State Budget. The Argus’s sport coverage was the strongest in the section. Some editions demonstrated a willingness to try something different on front pages, although more use of graphics would be beneficial. Heading type sizes on the front page also need to clearly delineate the paper’s “splash”.

NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

The Independent’s mission is to provide the Gunnedah community with news of local and regional importance and it does this well. Covering a wide range of issues from local, state and federal politics, the challenge of reconciling mining and agriculture, to concerns over the construction of a tower as part of the National Broadband Network, the Independent reported without fear or favour. The paper features clean layouts, good use of colour and a strong sport section.

THE ARMIDALE EXPRESS

The submitted editions demonstrated the Express’s strong relationship with its readership. The paper’s Opinion page included letters to the editor, comments posted by readers on the Express’s website and an editorial. The paper’s coverage of the resignation of Richard Torbay amid accusations of corruption was outstanding. The paper understands the importance of variety in its news selection with a good mix of serious issues and lighter content on its front page. The Express features lively layouts, information graphics, great coverage of community news and a good sport section.

DENILIKUIN PASTORAL TIMES

The Times is a strong advocate for the Deniliquin community. The strongest feature of the paper’s entry was its coverage of the highly controversial Murray Darling Basin Authority Plan. The paper delivered a strong message by publishing a letter to the editor on its front page that encapsulated the anger and frustration felt in the region over aspects of the plan. The Times provides a voice for members of the community by publishing many contributions in various parts of the paper. The look of the paper could be enhanced with more use of colour on front pages and punchier headlines. Abbreviations in headlines should be avoided.

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TRI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS

The News does a great job in attracting readers with its creative, single-issue front pages. The paper picks the leading issue of the day and hits it hard. The papers submitted included comprehensive coverage of civic issues and the region's political leadership. The layout of pages inside the paper was at times too windy with varying type sizes in stories. The paper's Opinion Page is strong with contributions from readers via letters, comments on the News website and vox pops. The paper also advocates on issues affecting its readership in its editorials.

THE AREA NEWS, GRIFFITH

The Area News pushes the boundaries with its design and content. It is a bold newspaper that makes the most of a story. The paper uses innovative graphic design and clever headlines to present stories in a dramatic way. An example is the paper's treatment of a complaint from a visiting doctor about the service he received from a regional airline. This prompted a flood of reaction from readers, airline staff and other customers. Thanks to the Area News's work, the story received national coverage. The News demonstrates attention to detail throughout its pages. The creative use of dinkuses, graphics and typography complements strong editorial content in news, sport, business, features and opinion pages. The paper also appreciates the opportunities presented by new media, promoting its Facebook and web pages and includes contributions from both in its print edition. Editorials included in the submitted editions of The News reflect the paper's willingness to take a strong stand on issues on behalf of its readership.

SOUTHERN HIGHLAND NEWS, BOWRAL

The Southern Highland News does a good job of covering the news in its region, but it also places emphasis on connecting with its community by covering many local events, celebrating birthdays, weddings and anniversaries. Its Highlands Happenings and Lifestyle sections are particularly strong. The paper offers readers variety in its Weekender Friday edition as well as puzzle pages, opinion pages and plenty of sport. While the front pages of the paper are clean, perhaps more variety and innovation could be used to attract readers' attention. A better balance between the number of decks on headings and the body of stories would help also. The News should also be commended for its development of Facebook, Twitter and news websites.

MUDGEE GUARDIAN & THE WEEKLY

Both papers attract readers with strong local leads, good pictures and a mix of hard news and lighter content. Front pages are well presented with illustrated pointers and weather straps and a variety of layouts. The inside pages are clean and the paper is easy to navigate. The submitted editions included popular features such as letters to Santa and a great Christmas Carols wraparound. The standard of sport coverage varied from edition to edition but the paper does a good job of engaging its local community by welcoming contributions.

SOUTH COAST REGISTER, NOWRA

The Register encourages reader input and packs in as much as possible on its pages. A high story count resulted in some very busy editions, but generally the content is strong. The highlight of the submitted editions was the paper's coverage of the January bushfires in the region, with many readers telling their stories in a special edition. The Community Focus and Scene sections offer readers good variety in entertainment, the arts, television and books. A lot of space is given to an array of sports further enhancing the paper's claim to a "sense of ownership" among its readers.

WEEKLY AND ONE JOURNALIST NEWSPAPERS

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

Coverage of bushfires that threatened the region in January, culminating in a special edition complete with four-page wraparound, was the highlight of the Monaro Post editions submitted. The dramatic "Disaster averted" edition demonstrated what the Post could achieve. The paper provided details of the emergency and an account of a family who had lost their home to the fire. The paper played a major role in promoting an appeal for the family. The Post publicises numerous community events and provides a platform for readers to express their opinions. Inside page layouts could do with some more variation.

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MILTON ULLADULLA TIMES

Dramatic, attention-grabbing front pages with a mix of hard and soft news is a feature of the Times. Generally, page layouts are clean and many reports carried clever headlines. Highlights of the paper's reporting included the threat of bushfires to the region (running to 10 pages in one edition) and the sensitive coverage of the death of a young woman who fell from a building in Sydney. The paper boasts a variety of sections to interest readers such as Show Times, Times Tattler and Our Times. Sport receives good prominence and young readers are catered for also. The paper produced an excellent Show Guide and a show giveaway was promoted both in print and online on the Times Facebook site. The Times fulfils its advocacy role with strong editorials and publishes many reader opinions on its letters page.

GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

When a road closure prevented a Guardian News reporter from getting to the scene of major flooding in the paper's circulation area, a plea was issued through the Guardian's Facebook page for pictures from readers. What resulted was a two-page spread of images that depicted the impact of torrential rain. This demonstrates the papers understand the importance of social media and the opportunity it presents to newspapers to connect with their readers. The paper boasts strong news content, including police and courts as well as many human-interest stories. Its editorials are relevant to local issues and readers are encouraged to express their own views in the paper's letters to the editor. The editions submitted included a great footy tipping panel and birthday wishes and pictures pages as circulation boosters.

Certificate of Merit

The Area News, Griffith - Tri-weekly newspapers

The Armidale Express - Bi-weekly newspapers

Milton Ulladulla Times - Weekly & One Journalist newspapers

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for

Journalism

2012-2013

is awarded to

The Daily Advertiser

Wagga Wagga

Judge: Roger Brock

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The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Journalism

FORMER WINNERS

1953	<i>The Daily Examiner, Grafton</i>	1972	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1992	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond, and Illawarra Mercury, Wollongong</i>
1954	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>	1973	<i>The Evening Post, Goulburn</i>	1993	<i>Kiama Independent</i>
1955	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>	1974	<i>The Evening Post, Goulburn</i>	1994	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1956	<i>The Canberra Times</i>	1975	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1995	<i>The Valley View, Tuggeranong</i>
1957	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>	1976	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1996	<i>Port Macquarie News and Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1958	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1977	<i>Richmond River Express Examiner, Casino</i>	1997	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>
1959	<i>The Daily Examiner, Grafton</i>	1978	<i>The Queanbeyan Age</i>	1998	<i>Armidale Express Extra</i>
1960	<i>The Canberra Times</i>	1979	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1999	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>
1961	<i>The Canberra Times</i>	1980	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	2000-01	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>
1962	<i>The Canberra Times</i>	1981	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2001-02	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>
1963	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1982	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	2002-03	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>
1964	<i>Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth</i>	1983	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2003-04	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>
1965	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>	1984	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2004-05	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>
1966	<i>The Northern Star, Lismore</i>	1985	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2005-06	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1967	<i>The Daily Examiner, Grafton</i>	1986	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2006-07	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1968	<i>Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth</i>	1987	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>	2007-08	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1969	<i>Moree Champion</i>	1988	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>	2008-09	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1970	<i>The Courier, Narrabri</i>	1989	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2009-10	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1971	<i>Windsor & Richmond Gazette</i>	1990	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2010-11	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>
		1991	<i>Illawarra Mercury, Wollongong</i>	2011-12	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>
				2012-13	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>

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The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Leadership and Community Involvement

General Comments

As for the past couple of years, the entry in this section of the association's journalism competition has been extremely disappointing. It has been distressing for a variety of reasons. The most important is apparent evidence of a serious decline in the editorial leadership and involvement that traditionally has been the hallmark of quality provincial journalism. Then there is the obvious erosion of quality and conviction in the commentary provided as well as the range of subject matter considered, apart from the respect for and prominence traditionally given to editorial opinion.

It is patently clear that with media ownership changes, financial constraints and different approaches to content and presentation, the value of informed editorial commentary is often being sacrificed for a superficial review of significant plans and policies affecting country communities. This is diminishing the cherished power and privilege of serious editorial examination of local issues and events. Unfortunately, generational change and a decline in the volume of the printed media are advanced as justification, but the use of on-line platforms still provides ample exposure of serious editorial comment for public consumption.

This year – as in the past few -- only three publications entered this valuable editorial contest. Apart from the questionable ability of some newspaper editors, such is a distressing indication of the significant decline publishers are now placing on the integrity and intrinsic value of informed editorial comment and stimulation along with the practical, personal leadership and involvement that necessarily follows in the community context. Both the newspaper and the community suffer as a consequence.

This year, ***The Armidale Express*** made a rare, if not its first, appearance in this section of NSW Country Press competitions. Regrettably, those responsible must have misread or misunderstood the entry conditions as the required five examples of separate editorial leadership and community involvement to be submitted for assessment turned out to be various, on-going aspects of the one issue – a new library for the city, under consideration since 2004.

The Armidale-Dumaresq Council had paid \$500,000 for the building's design but required \$10 million to proceed with the project. After years of consideration and deferment by successive councils, an opportunity arose for a federal infrastructure grant. A funding application for an airport upgrade was originally lodged but the submission was withdrawn. With another grant opportunity pending, a Council change of heart looked hopeful with an *Express* editorial stating: "There is now no excuse not to proceed with the library...."

Unfortunately, this *Express* entry could not be considered as competition conditions had not been met.

This year's entry from ***The Daily Advertiser***, Wagga Wagga – a long-time contestant and often winner in Country Press journalism competitions – revealed its consistency in addressing community issues, some on-going for years. Such was its involvement in a long campaign for a new base hospital but, only last year, it was "discovered" no palliative care facility had been included in the \$282m re-development. With its provision becoming desperately needed by the ageing public of the region, the prospect of a small unit being included in the new hospital's "planning" stage was a small step forward.

The plight of many aged people was revealed through their personal stories in *The Advertiser* while strong funding representations were made by involved groups throughout the district and parliamentary representatives. These included a 4000-signature petition organised by a citizen advocate with support from the newspaper and elsewhere.

A Wagga Wagga private hospital board subsequently approved \$9m expenditure on a 14-bed rehabilitation and eight-bed palliative care unit but only two palliative beds will be available to public patients. This situation highlighted the desperate problem facing not just the city, but Australia with its rapidly increasing population of the aged. The issue attracted supportive *Advertiser* editorials with the Wagga Wagga experience providing a timely wake-up call for the nation.

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On another health issue, the newspaper revealed Wagga Wagga men had to travel an hour or two by car to neighbouring towns to have a 10-minute prostate biopsy if they were public patients. The lack of such a local facility caused a public outcry; the Wagga MP blamed oncologists; the hospital claimed it couldn't handle such functions with only four operating theatres; and governments became involved in the argument. The outcome, however, was the State Health Minister's assurance of a solution "within a couple of months".

The Advertiser's entry revealed encouraging progress in its years-long campaign with others to have CCTV installed in the city centre to help combat particularly alcohol-fuelled crime. Copious articles and editorials stirred the issue. The concept had lacked City Council backing but, during the year, it gave in-principle approval to spending \$500,000 specifically on cameras in the CBD after the newspaper and the city's "Committee-4-Wagga", backed by the Area Police Command, decided to launch a community appeal for \$100,000 to augment ratepayer funding and get the project started. If this goal is achieved, the State Government is likely to provide a further \$100,000. This combined effort was greeted as a significant step forward.

Wagga Wagga prides itself as being "the centre of one of the great sporting regions of NSW" with *The Advertiser* playing a key role in promoting and reporting sporting activities. To enhance this concept, the newspaper decided to revive "an old idea" of making an annual presentation of sports' awards "to the city's finest in adult, junior, and individual and team sections" with the newspaper's sports staff selecting finalists on a monthly basis. At the well-attended annual presentations ceremony, recognition was also given to "those constantly working behind the scenes" to produce "the region's amazing tapestry of achievement in a diverse range of sports".

With Wagga Wagga claiming to be "the home of many 'greats' of the AFL code", *The Advertiser* was quick to promote a pre-season clash between two national teams on the locally controversial, newly-completed Robertson Oval, re-developed at a cost of \$7 million. Partnering with the City Council, a game between Greater Western Sydney and the Brisbane Lions was staged, with players, coaches and officials praising the ground's playing surface and lighting. The newspaper was proud to be involved in the ground's upgrading and promotion of the significant event that attracted 7,000 spectators.

The extensive entry from the **Yass Tribune** was an excellent example of presentation – not always evident in this competition – and it was encouraging to have its appearance as a new publication in this journalism section.

Its five competition examples revealed a well-written and presented publication very much in touch with its readership which responded seriously to many issues through Letters to the Editor. The editor noted that five other significant issues it supported had to be omitted from the entry – services lacking at Yass Hospital; Burrenjack Waters State Park Trust abolition after 54 years; chronic regional shortage of child care; serious animal cruelty exposed; and an on-going wind-farm debate – thus indicating a newspaper seriously involved with its community.

JOURNALISM

SECTION 2

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Leadership and Community Involvement

From this judge's point of view, the newspaper was a classic revelation of how difficult it is for a relatively small country town to attract Government involvement when such is patently necessary. It also confirmed the vital contribution a good newspaper makes in serving a closely-knit community, recently extending its penetration with a Facebook facility.

The obvious strength of the *Yass Tribune* is through its serious, investigative news coverage with explanatory detail producing a well-informed readership. This attracted further investigation and reportage, resulting in strong community involvement with those engaged in local affairs and citizens generally receiving generous opportunities and encouragement to express their ideas in its news columns.

The editor favoured this approach rather than producing additional, regular editorial commentary which is a prime ingredient in the leadership this competition is designed to recognise. However, the editorials appearing in the issues submitted for judging were well-written and researched. Explanatory news commentary, with named author, compensated.

Understandably, leader-writing is an "extra" task on a small newspaper with basic staff, but it was apparent serious issues would have been given more "weight" if supported with strongly-worded editorials in the newspaper's own privileged space under its respected banner – provided they were written with the editorial "We"!

An excellent example of journalistic coverage was shown in the newspaper's thorough handling of the 2012 Yass Valley Council election campaign, hotly contested for the first time by candidate group "tickets" as well as independents. Much reader involvement was evident as the newspaper examined and explained the meaning of the new system. It was apparent from the entry that the *Tribune's* extensive treatment of the campaign was appreciated by the public.

Lane duplication plans for the 54km Barton Highway linking Yass with Canberra have been existing for more than 30 years and negligible practical progress has been stained with inevitable human tragedy. Local residents have had enough and the *Tribune's* extensive news coverage of community and politically involved campaigning, with editorial support, was indicative of regional indignation. The Prime Minister even received a deputation! Carry on! In the current funding climate, this campaign will be on-going for decades!

In a town seriously lacking public housing and with one of the worst-case rental situations in the state's SW Region, the *Tribune* gave extensive coverage to the financial plight of the much valued Rae Burgess Centre assisting "people at peril of homelessness". It helps around 180 families/individuals a year. The community rallied by forming a "Friends" supportive group and financial support was also secured from Mission Australia, Anglicare and via a one-off government grant. The newspaper's thorough reporting was indicative of a continuing campaign to keep the Burgess Centre operative for the Yass and district community.

The *Tribune* showed foresight in "re-igniting" a campaign for a major Yass High School upgrade following the destruction by fire in November 2012 of the industrial arts block. Built for 250 pupils, the school now has almost 500 students and is growing with constant district development. Supporting more than the simple replacement of the trade building, the *Tribune* pushed for implementing the first stage of the school's inevitable redevelopment plan and a meeting with funding authorities is now programmed.

JOURNALISM

SECTION 2

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Leadership and Community Involvement

Serious concerns in the communities of Dalton and Gunning about increased noise, truck movements, water contamination and damage to aboriginal artefacts were exposed by the *Tribune* when neighbourhood residents became aware of details of a government-approved AGL gas-fired power plant proposed to be built at Dalton. The newspaper covered public meetings and conferred with company and government officers. Concerned residents claimed a “win” – if only temporary – when AGL “suspended” the plan “within the proposed time frame”. But the newspaper remains alert as a “waiting game” continues.

In its first appearance as a competitor in this competition, the *Tribune* impressed with its coverage, content, conscience, community respect and support. Obviously, it is imbued with the spirit of its pioneering publisher in 1857.

RUNNER UP:

THE DAILY ADVERTISER, WAGGA WAGGA

WINNER:

YASS TRIBUNE

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

2012-2013

is awarded to

Yass Tribune

JUDGE: David Sommerlad

JOURNALISM

SECTION 2

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Leadership and Community Involvement

FORMER WINNERS

1953	<i>The Wellington Times</i>	1975	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1997	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>
1954	<i>Glen Innes Examiner</i>	1976	<i>The Forbes Advocate</i>	1998	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>
1955	<i>Bega District News</i>	1977	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1999	<i>Merimbula News Weekly</i>
1956	<i>Kiama Independent</i>	1978	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	2000-01	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
1957	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>	1979	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>	2001-02	<i>South Coast Register, Nowra</i>
1958	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1980	<i>Nambucca Guardian News, Macksville</i>	2002-03	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
1959	<i>The Daily Examiner, Grafton</i>	1981	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>	2003-04	<i>The Singleton Argus</i>
1960	<i>The Singleton Argus</i>	1982	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	2004-05	<i>South Coast Register, Nowra</i>
1961	<i>Richmond River Express, Casino</i>	1983	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2005-06	<i>The Singleton Argus</i>
1962	<i>The Cessnock Eagle</i>	1984	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2006-07	<i>The Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth</i>
1963	<i>The Dubbo Liberal</i>	1985	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>	2007-08	<i>The Singleton Argus</i>
1964	<i>Cape Hawke Advocate, Foster</i>	1986	<i>Moree Champion</i>	2008-09	<i>Deniliquin Pastoral Times</i>
1965	<i>South Coast Times, Wollongong</i>	1987	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	2009-10	<i>The Singleton Argus</i>
1966	<i>The Kyogle Examiner</i>	1988	<i>Bega District News</i>	2010-11	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>
1967	<i>Central Western Daily, Orange</i>	1989	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	2011-12	<i>Milton- Ulladulla Times</i>
1968	<i>The Daily Examiner, Grafton</i>	1990	<i>Lake Times, Warilla</i>	2012-13	<i>Yass Tribune</i>
1969	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1991	<i>Bega District News</i>		
1970	<i>The Wyong & Lake District Advocate</i>	1992	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>		
1971	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1993	<i>Kiama Independent</i>		
1972	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1994	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>		
1973	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1995	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>		
1974	<i>Campbelltown-Ingleburn News</i>	1996	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>		

JOURNALISM

SECTION 3

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Writing

General Comments

One criterion for this award is consistency across the three to four editorials submitted by each paper. This ended up being the deciding factor after all others were considered. Some papers produced excellent individual editorials that were not matched by the rest of the entry. Overall, the quality of editorials was of a higher standard than previous years. Leader writers could keep reminding themselves of the basics: Have a clear position in your head before you start writing; state it early; develop your argument with specific examples; wrap it up and get out.

THE AREA NEWS, GRIFFITH

This paper submitted a competitive entry, but the consistency wasn't there across the three editorials. Two were hard-hitting, relevant and gutsy, but the third contained no argument. Overall, a good effort.

DENILQUIN PASTORAL TIMES

A passionate local champion, the paper came up with the best individual editorial, putting a rocket under a lacklustre State member, terrific stuff! Other editorials in the submission lacked the same intensity and did not go below skin deep.

THE SINGLETON ARGUS

The editorials were well-informed about an important local issue. But while the facts were well presented, the paper did not seem to have a position and did not develop an argument.

SOUTHERN HIGHLAND NEWS, BOWRAL

The positions and issues were all reasonable, but the editorials need to carry more punch. The writing skills were not of a standard to represent the voice of a paper, and would benefit from further training.

NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

Good topics and reasonably stated. Arguments slid too often into jargon and generality, and sometimes lacked coherence. Uncertain grasp of grammar. Entry not helped by one editorial ending in mid-sentence.

WESTERN ADVOCATE, BATHURST

These were all regulation editorials, cleanly written, on worthwhile local topics. But they were bland. One editorial began 'There is not a lot we can add ...' This doesn't spur the reader to know more. There was little argument development in the submissions, more a stating of facts and a conclusion. A good editorial needs to inspire comment or debate.

SPECIAL MENTION:

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

Tackled local issues with passion and showed a willingness to develop arguments. Good potential for this award in the future if the writing skills could be improved. Perhaps shorter editorials would help combat over-writing.

COMMENDED:

THE ARMIDALE EXPRESS

Another high-quality entry which would have been in the running for the award but for inconsistency across the three editorials. One was highly creative in approach but fell away to generalisations; another was hard-hitting, well argued, but got the format of an open letter wrong; the third was a worthy local topic, but the argument lost its way

JOURNALISM

SECTION 3

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Writing

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

THE DAILY ADVERTISER, WAGGA WAGGA

The quality of writing in The Daily Advertiser editorials was consistently of the highest standard across this award. Each editorial was well informed and well argued. A tendency to generalisation and easy options probably cost the top award. An editorial on a national issue offered nothing new for local readers and took a few cheap shots that weren't backed up. One editorial on P-platers was close to the best individual effort among all the entries.

WINNER:

GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

The top two contenders for this award were desperately close, but the Guardian News gets the nod. The paper demonstrated that editorial writing is not an intellectual exercise: A clear, simply stated argument is all you need to achieve a good editorial that resonates with the readership. These editorials were not outstanding examples of the writing craft, but the message came across without effort. Each topic was relevant to the community, stated a position, developed an argument and offered specific solutions where required. Community leadership was displayed and a desire to engage with readers. The Guardian News entry reveals a paper in touch with its readers.

The E C Sommerlad Memorial Award for

Editorial Writing

2012-2013

is awarded to

Guardian *News*

Incorporating the Nambucca Valley Guardian News *Established since 1909*

Nambucca

JUDGE: Russell Eldridge

JOURNALISM

SECTION 3

The EC Sommerlad Memorial Award for Editorial Writing

FORMER WINNERS

1971	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1992	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>
1972	<i>The Singleton Argus</i>	1993	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1973	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	1994	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1974	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1995	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1975	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	1996	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1976	<i>The Evening Post, Goulburn</i>	1997	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>
1977	<i>The Queanbeyan Age</i>	1998	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1978	<i>Murrumbidgee Irrigator, Leeton</i>	1999	<i>The Courier, Narrabri</i>
1979	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>	2000-01	<i>The Coonamble Times</i>
1980	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>	2001-02	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
1981	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	2002-03	<i>The Northern Star, Lismore</i>
1982	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2003-04	<i>The Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth</i>
1983	<i>Cooma-Monaro Express</i>	2004-05	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
1984	<i>Kiama Independent</i>	2005-06	<i>The Western Advocate, Bathurst</i>
1985	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2006-07	<i>The Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth</i>
1986	-	2007-08	<i>The Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth</i>
1987	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>	2008-09	<i>Merimbula News Weekly</i>
1988	<i>The Newcastle Star</i>	2009-10	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
1989	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2010-11	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
1990	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2011-12	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
1991	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2012-13	<i>Guardian News, Nambucca</i>



JOURNALISM

The iSentia Award for Local News Reporting

General Comments

Spoon-fed information versus old-fashioned hard yakka journalism – this is the great conundrum for any judge of a news reporting award.

There's no doubt the 15 entrants in this year's award are connected to their communities – some better than others. But how many take the pro-active approach to their news reporting? There are few times when reactive reporting is enough. Perhaps coverage of an ongoing court case is one of those rare occasions when we report simply on what we see and hear, and work within the restrictions imposed by the foreboding anvil of subjudice hanging over our heads.

Quite simply, we can't stop the case and ask our own questions. Instead, we're forced to listen, watch and scratch down our notes. It's as passive in many respects as an entertainment writer locking him or herself away to critique the next Aussie TV mini-series.

The heart and soul of this news reporting section should be based on pro-activity, getting on the front foot and leading our readers in the wild chase for information crucial to them, their families, their communities, and their lives.

Too often, entrants in this award played the card expected by its readers. They were followers not leaders of the news. Many of the stories were much like watching that court case or mini-series, looking from the outside-in.

Pro-active journalism is getting off our chairs and jumping into that TV screen or courtroom battle. It's only from there can we quiz the combatants and tackle the issue on behalf of our communities' interests.

Time – or the lack thereof – is often cited as a reason for not digging deeper. But to borrow in part the words of Margaret Simons: "The heart of journalism still lies in the question 'what's going on?'."

So in a world of hi-tech wonders, multi-platform gizmos and complex acronyms, it will still be left to the old-fashioned art of questioning, information gathering and good old storytelling over the neighbour's fence to lead us into the brave new world.

With the focus currently on all things new, let's remind ourselves of a few home grown truths about who we are and what we do.

Reporting: Covering stories from outside the ropes is simply not enough (and never was); we need to be in the ring to understand the fight.

Communities: Those for whom we're asking the questions and getting answers.

Contacts: Where a story is born; don't allow it to die with them by not broadening its appeal.

Coverage: Taking the story to its natural conclusion, not over-playing it nor cutting it short so readers are asking each other "what happened about that?"

Depth: Provide the unexpected; that's what sets us apart.

Clarity: Don't write to sound important, make sure your readers understand what's important.

Intros: Brevity and clarity are not the same; but to be briefer is often to be clearer.

Quotes: Over-used because they too often under-perform.

Press releases: Absorb them, then throw them.

Emotions: Remember we all have them; so use them in your writing.

Packaging: Five small Christmas presents are always better than one giant box.

Clean copy: Your reputation!

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

A district on red alert for fire danger and feature-style follow-ups show how disaster was averted plus a Local Land Services restructure is explored. Shorter stories, smaller chunks in regards to packaging and sharper angles would broaden reader appeal. Information is important to readers, so too is storytelling - stories tell me "what", leads tell me "so what".



JOURNALISM

The iSentia Award for Local News Reporting

THE ADVERTISER, CESSNOCK

“Red alert” is also in the headlines in the Hunter. So too is a weekend deluge that cuts off Wollombi and cancels the Cessnock Show, proving again the weather is always a page one option. Coverage includes asking residents to populate website and Facebook with their stories and a follow-up on the anniversary of the June 2007 flood.

NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

Grabbing a slice of mining royalties for the community was at the heart here. Two well-written stories and part of a third highlight council inaction to seek the mining funds. Plenty of information could have benefitted with views from other parts of the community.

THE IRRIGATOR, LEETON

The Soldiers Club administration and possible closure of its golf course provided good community fodder. Eye-catching page one design was supported by follow-ups, breakout quotes and questions. Comprehensive overview story is well designed and a new Leeton Soldiers Club SOS column shows creativity and pro-activity. Both topics are taken right through to the end for readers.

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS

The “Oakeshott calls it quits” front page design is the standout cover among all entrants. The presentation is easily digestible throughout. The follow-up on ‘Mayor won’t stand’ is slightly confusing at first glance with a photo of Oakeshott. The series on the lack of mental illness services is well written and designed with personal and bureaucratic health angles, support services breakout and online reader comments. With the final submitted story dated March 20, editor and journalist must have decided to put the issue on hold.

SOUTHERN HIGHLAND NEWS, BOWRAL

Anger over Merrigang Street upgrades and tree removal plus the closure of Sunshine Lodge and the future of 80 residents provided a perfect platform for news reporting. More photos and emotive comments would have provided greater impact and brought the issues closer to the readers’ hearts. News coverage of the lodge burning offers a sad angle to the saga and underlines a good partnership with emergency services. However, the “community saddened” headline isn’t supported by photos of the community feeling the loss.

THE INVERELL TIMES

A Ute Muster fundraiser and a plan to cut electricity usage to zero at Bindaree Beef provide an eclectic mix worthy of a good community newspaper. The subsequent muster flop provides interesting reading as The Times catches up with the departing organiser. Too many details in the lead tend to dilute the message and large chunks of text inside make it a grind in parts, despite some worthy quotes and opinions. The final submitted story on Bindaree dated March 20 begs the question: was there a follow-up?

SOUTH COAST REGISTER, NOWRA

A mix of the quirky and downright tragic. The dodgy tender around an excavator is well written and offers in-depth detail. It does lose some impact because the process dates back to 2010 (no fault of the writer or newspaper, simply the flow of information out of the council investigation). Stories lead to a council inquiry into its own tender processes. The coverage surrounding three drowned fishermen is well crafted and highly emotive as it conveys the drama through the stories of eyewitnesses. Delicate treatment of the story continues when a fourth boater from the capsized craft takes his own life four months later.

THE MAITLAND MERCURY

“\$1m down the drain” provides a comprehensive investigation into financial dealings of Maitland City Council, and its failure to join a landmark class action which purportedly cost it \$1 million in compensation. Interesting, in-depth detail is well explained to broaden the appeal. It highlights other councils – and their windfalls - to provide a tangible comparison for readers. The other submission covers a prostate cancer drug costing one resident \$3944 a month. Stories in subsequent editions about another costly, but life-saving drug for Cystic Fibrosis and a resident no longer eligible to receive hormone therapy under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme are also explored. But they make no reference to the initial prostate drug piece. All three stories are



JOURNALISM

The iSentia Award for Local News Reporting

well written and worthy up-front stand-alone news pieces. However, an opportunity to tie the second and third stories into the previous ones could have added strength to the cause and provided greater clarity.

GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

A heartfelt story about a schoolboy's recovery from a horrific knee boarding accident offers revealing quotes. It's never easy to get a teenager to share so congratulations to the reporter for drawing out the boy's thoughts. "Bucca Boy" is also uplifting as a green sea turtle is nursed back from the brink. Follow-up stories/information pieces on other sea life in the area could have been options for summer editions, particularly during the school holidays.

SPECIAL MENTION:

MUDGEES GUARDIAN & THE WEEKLY

First, its Ulan Road stories campaigned for 10,000 signatures to have funding debated in State Parliament. It started with an easy-to-read down-to-earth headline and coverage about the numbers, and followed with a series of yarns to drive signatures, including a crash story to underline the road's dangers. The signatures are finally collected and announced in the June 17 edition. The fundraiser for a new \$100,000 Mudgee Rescue Squad vehicle is again tenacious, using news and sport to help cover the issue. Two too many giant cheque photos make their way onto the front page. Despite this, the appeal pays off and a simple page one story and picture signals the end to the campaign as a truck is delivered after less than a year.

COMMENDED:

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

For its coverage of the Boggabri coal train derailment and French band Daft Punk's global launch in Wee Waa. The subsequent closure of the rail line raises the question about the cost to the community. Answer: the disruption in transportation of tens of millions of dollars in agriculture, coal and other freight. An editorial, stories on a suspended trucking trial because of safety concerns and a flagging Narrabri pest control business help paint the picture of the grassroots impact. Finally, coverage shows services back on track before Christmas. A mention in the "thumbs up" column signals The Courier's final say on the matter. The Daft Punk global launch provides a good vehicle to promote the district and Wee Waa Show through stories and interactive community competitions.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

MILTON ULLADULLA TIMES

Its "Red alert" coverage the day following afternoon fires is a mix of strong images and information. The sometimes over-used "Our Heroes" headline blares across the following edition, part of an 11-page Shoalhaven fire threat special. It includes friendships forged, funding, photos, families, fears and tears, an editorial and lead letter. More salutes in a softer news feature-style coverage appear a week later. The second issue put forward by the Times – a resident's double mastectomy – reminds us that we can localise most world news events. This time it was putting a south coast face on Angelina Jolie's very public decision to bring breast surgery into the spotlight.

RUNNER-UP:

THE SINGLETON ARGUS

for its well-crafted series on a miners' accumulation camp proposal for 1501 "drive-in/drive-out" style accommodation rooms and its subsequent impact on the town's jobs. This coverage was always on the short-list for award winners as it kicked off by comparing and contrasting its own predicament with Narrabri and Moranbah, both already with similar camps. The Argus covers various angles from the protest group and developer as it follows the story through to final submissions. Similarly, its coverage of the initial disapproval of a mine near Bulga offers balance via "community win" stories from residents to the mining angles. The Argus also runs the Land & Environment Court's determination refusing Warkworth's approval, a brief history, and impact on the mine, its workers and suppliers as a court battle looms.

JOURNALISM

The iSentia Award for Local News Reporting

WINNER:

THE DAILY ADVERTISER, WAGGA WAGGA

Ashleigh Gleeson's coverage to highlight the city's shortfall in palliative care and another series about the lack of prostate services cuts to the core of community journalism – standing up for the battler's rights. The palliative care coverage was a mix of touching, well-written pieces about the terminally ill to more straight-forward news style coverage of hospital and government angles. A handy compare/contrast breakout helped show other regional centre palliative care bed numbers. Sadly, one of those telling his story died 11 days later. Emotive but respectful pieces were supported by clever design and powerful images. The question about the next step in coverage did raise its head with the final submitted story dated April 5. The wash-up of Wagga Wagga men having to travel hours to receive prostate biopsies was far more clear-cut with the Advertiser of June 29-30 trumpeting "Victory at last in fight for men" in its four-decked headline as the procedures are earmarked to begin the following Monday. Once again, design plays a key role as strong photos, breakout boxes of fast facts, Q&As and quotes are employed to help

The iSentia Award for

Local News Reporting

2012-2013

is awarded to

The Daily Advertiser

Wagga Wagga

JUDGE: Paul Roberts



iSENTIA
INFLUENCE • INFORM • INSIGHT



JOURNALISM

The iSentia Award for Local News Reporting

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>
				2012-13	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>
1972	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1991	<i>Illawarra Mercury, Wollongong</i>		
21973	<i>Mudgee Guardian</i>	1992	<i>Kiama Independent</i>		

General Comments

The disappointment that just six newspapers bothered to enter this year's competition (there were 12 last year) was overcome by the excellence and depth in the entries submitted.

Thus the job of finding a winner was a challenge. All entries were of a high calibre and exhibited all the hallmarks of newspaper journalism.

The individual subjects were varied but those newspapers who submitted entries about related articles exhibited the sort of community minded journalism that our newspapers have become well known and respected for.

SOUTH COAST REGISTER, NOWRA

Two perennial favourite's _ childhood abuse and a snake catcher _ were the subjects of the newspaper's entries. Each was handled and written with expertise. Glenn Ellard's story about the childhood abuse of a local woman was told in a warm and emotional style while Michelle Thomas's story of Dusty Jones, the snake charmer, displayed both humour and colour.

THE INVERELL TIMES

The entries submitted kept up the high standard expected of this newspaper. Journalist Steve Green's great feature writing style was to the fore in the touching story about Simba, "probably the oldest dog in the Inverell Shire". Patrick Fahy's story of the local lad turned international sports photographer encapsulated the photographer's passion for his vocation.

SOUTHERN HIGHLAND NEWS, BOWRAL

Journalist Emma Biscoe knows the ingredients for a good feature story and her two entries lived up to her reputation but by far her story about the former female police scientific investigator that uncovered the pressures the officer lived with before being medically discharged with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder was outstanding. This is a riveting story, expertly written.

COMMENDED:

THE ADVERTISER, CESSNOCK

Two entries of related articles, the first about local history features regarding schools and an old mine and the second a series entitled, Fix our Roads, which drew attention to the state of roads and some trouble spots, both of which encouraged readers to participate, were outstanding. The history features got great reader participation.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

THE SINGLETON ARGUS

The newspaper's entries lived up to its great reputation for outstanding journalism and eye for an absorbing feature. Being an army town the first feature about Anzac Day was filled with excellent personal stories. The second entry was a gem, written about Harry Dunn, 9, a Cessnock lad killed in a collision between his school bus and a truck and how a family, school and community came together to keep his memory alive.

JOURNALISM

The Australia Post Award for Feature Writing



WINNER:

WESTERN ADVOCATE, BATHURST

A compelling story and skilfully written by the newspapers, Andrew Meenahan, about a local family who responded to the suicide, due to depression, of their husband and father by competing in the New York Marathon to raise funds for the Black Dog Institute, was outstanding. Not that the marathon was a one-off effort by the family to publicise depression. The feature's in-depth analysis included other endeavours family members undertook to raise awareness and funds for the deadly disease. The newspaper's second entry, journalist Jo Johnson's account of her trip of a lifetime on the Kokoda Trail was also of a high standard.

The Australia Post Award for

Feature Writing

2012-2013

is awarded to

Western Advocate

Bathurst

JUDGE: Graham Gorrel



JOURNALISM

The Australia Post Award for Feature Writing



FORMER WINNERS

1962	<i>The Northern Star, Lismore</i>	1982	<i>Murrumbidgee Irrigator, Leeton</i>	2000-01	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>
1963	<i>Gunnedah Independent Advertiser</i>	1983	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2001-02	<i>Lake Times, Shellharbour</i>
1964	<i>South Coast Times, Wollongong</i>	1984	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	2002-03	<i>Lake Times, Shellharbour</i>
1965	<i>The North-West Champion, Moree</i>	1985	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2003-04	<i>The Riverine Grazier, Hay</i>
1966	<i>Daily Liberal, Dubbo</i>	1986	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2004-05	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>
1967	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1987	<i>Cooma-Monaro Express</i>	2005-06	<i>South Coast Register, Nowra</i>
1968	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1988	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>	2006-07	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>
1969	<i>Moree Champion</i>	1989	<i>The Summit Sun, Jindabyne</i>	2007-08	<i>Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth</i>
1970	<i>Moree Champion</i>	1990	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2008-09	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>
1971	<i>Windsor & Richmond Gazette</i>	1991	<i>Illawarra Mercury, Wollongong</i>	2009-10	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>
1972	<i>The Cessnock Eagle</i>	1992	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	2010-11	<i>South Coast Register, Nowra</i>
1973	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	1993	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	2011-12	<i>Wingham Chronicle</i>
1974	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1994	<i>The Riverina Leader, Wagga</i>	2012-13	<i>Western Advocate, Bathurst</i>
1975	<i>Nambucca Guardian News, Macksville</i>	1995	<i>Manning River Times, Taree</i>		
1976	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1996	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond, & Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>		
1977	<i>The Boorowa News</i>	1997	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>		
1978	<i>Murrumbidgee Irrigator, Leeton</i>	1998	<i>Kiama Independent</i>		
1979	<i>The Armidale Express</i>	1999	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>		
1980	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>				
1981	<i>Tumut & Adelong Times</i>				

SOUTH COAST REGISTER, NOWRA

- *KICK IN THE GUTS:*

The story was assessed good enough to claim the entire front page of the Register ...and it was. After all, the lock-out of a Southern Branch team from the Super Youth League and Premier League competition directly affected more than 180 young footballers in the district. The disappointment shines through in the words of Branch president Ian Cockburn, as quoted by journalist Gillian Lett.

SOUTHERN HIGHLAND NEWS, BOWRAL

- *ROBBO PULLS OUT OF FIRST GRADE COMP:*

A strong local news story of a team (hockey) starting a season in one competition, then pulling the plug to play (first grade) in another. Unexplained in Lauren Wright's story is the reason why the decision was such a 'late call' by Robertson Club officials – i.e. to start in the Highlands competition then suddenly decide that the first grade team would play in Illawarra instead. It's a good story, generally well told by Lauren ...although the reference to 'a bit of a' bombshell seemed a tad cautious. Just 'bombshell' would have had more oomph.

- *NEXT GENERATION PICKS UP THE BALL:*

A story reflecting the change of face of an ancient sport - with a steady trickle, perhaps more, of young people into the 'old person's game' of lawn bowls. Seventeen year old Hayden Dowell is the centrepiece and it's a nice local story, with a real 'family' touch - via the theme of Hayden joining his grandfather Bill as a regular competition bowler.

THE INVERELL TIMES

- *DEAF RUGBY COMING TO TOWN:*

Patrick Fahey's story tells of a big and first-time occasion in Inverell with the Australian Deaf rugby side coming to town to play the locals, the Inverell Highlanders. Included in the local side were Dave Kearsey and Paul Young who had played their part in the national (deaf) team beating the Kiwis in late 2012. A positive story – providing recognition of the opportunity for an unusual 'mix' of sporting teams.

- *HINDMARSH REFLECTS ON HIS CAREER DURING VISIT*

The Times didn't miss the opportunity presented by a visit to Inverell by a popular NRL star – Nathan Hindmarsh – and Patrick Fahy's lengthy interview with the affable 'Hindy' spilled inside from its place as the major backpage lead. In town for the 2012 Year of the Farmer celebrations, Hindmarsh reflected on the challenge of being a just retired player. "There's days when I think, jeez I'd love to be playing," he says. From a small country town (Robertson) Hindmarsh seemed much at home in Inverell. The interview contains no 'smoking gun' of information, but in it Hindmarsh tips Melbourne to win the premiership. He was right.

GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

- *SHE'LL BE RIGHT JACK AS STATE'S TOP BOWLERS HIT TOWN*

Under a snappy headline the Guardian News' Christian Knight provided a newsy preview of the arrival in town of more than 200 lawn bowlers for the annual Ken Howard Carnival. With some generous prize-money at stake the event had drawn some of the 'cracks' from out of town. "Come along and see some of the best credentialed bowlers in NSW," wrote journalist Knight in his Page 3 story.

MUDGEES GUARDIAN

- *READY FOR TAKEOFF*

The Mudgee Guardian's coverage of the impending arrival in town of the Parramatta Eels, and to a lesser extent the Gold Coast Titans couldn't have been more generous. On the back page, May 24, 2013, the Hayne Plane flew – a spectacular full width pic of the Eels Jarryd Hayne doing his thing. Journalist Ben Harris started his extensive coverage simply and strongly, and with just three words: "It's game time". It was a succinct and effective intro in what can at times be a verbose business. The Guardian's coverage of the big match via Harris spanned no less than five pages and 11 stories. It was a herculean effort and I suspect even the great Jack Gibson would have declared that in their attention to the big NRL event the Guardian and Harris had indeed 'played strong, done fine'.

- **STOTT SACKS CALL FOR HIS HEAD**

It was back to a smaller stage for The Guardian a month later – but nonetheless, a strong story. Mat Stott, captain-coach of the Dragons was digging in his heels declared he wouldn't be quitting his post, notwithstanding a 62-12 loss to Orange CYMS, the team's second 50 point defeat of the season. Coach Stott identified the difficulties he was facing as coach in a frank appraisal for the Guardian's Ben Harris. "Week in and week out we are getting {only} 20 blokes for three grades {to training}," he said. "It comes down to attitude and commitment and at the moment we haven't got it." The story was a solid local read revealing a late-season sporting crisis.

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS

- **JUST ANOTHER DAY IN PORT.. SWIMMING WITH A GREY NURSE SHARK**

Fishing – a sport or a recreation? That was the dilemma to be addressed in assessing and ultimately judging Port Macquarie News's coverage of 'certain maritime events' during January 2013. The News coverage of extraordinary events that took place in surrounding water was nothing short of spectacular in the paper's large format, and compelling in its words. The events were big, alright – notably the occasion of a local teenager catching a 144 kilogram marlin in the Golden Lure Fishing Tournament, and then the dramatic minutes that ensued when local fishermen struggled to release an endangered Grey Nurse from their lines. Both of the events and the stories that covered them led to ongoing controversy and debate- with criticism levelled at the fishermen involved. Newsworthy? No doubt! Sport? The debate continues....

COMMENDED:

THE DAILY ADVERTISER, WAGGA, WAGGA

- **FRIENDLY FIRE**

The Advertiser's full page opener was the real stand out in the midst of what unfolded as an extensive and excellent coverage of the 2013 Wagga Gold carnival. The kick-off page told a great story, of a father and son Glyn and Chad Schofield who both dreamed of taking out the \$240,000 Cup that day. On a striking page, father and son were pictured by Michael Frogley, holding the coveted Cup. The story by Matt Malone, an informed and professional turf-writer, introduced the human interest side of an historic carnival. Of the unusual situation of father racing son he noted: "Glyn said his protective instincts as a father will never leave him, but these days he is used to treating Chad like any other jockey on the track." As it turned out neither Schofield fulfilled his Cup dream this year - with an eye-catching next-day spectacular double-page spread telling the tale through words and pix of how Sydney trainer Jason Coyle had pinched the cup via his horse Scream Machine edging out the local hope Devised by a nose. The Advertiser's Cup carnival stretched over many pages through the days of the carnival, representing a fine example of colour, thoroughness and hard work in capturing the excitement of an annual racing milestone.

GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

- **YOU LITTLE RIPPERS**

The punch-line to the big bowling event at Nambucca Heads Club was a fairy-tale with news of the local team beating some of the best in the business in a desperate finish to claim the Ken Howard Memorial Men's Fours trophy. It was an event whose finish would surely have warmed the heart of the old Sydney race-caller Ken Howard. His famous declaration in a close finish was to declare "you can bet London to a brick on,"...and name the nag he believed had won. Well, it was close alright at Nambucca and Allison Worrall's lead to the back page story of June 13 this year captured the excitement: "The Nambucca Heads Bowling Club was a wash of colour, chants and even a few tears on Monday afternoon as a raggle taggle team of hometown heroes bagged the golden prize at the Ken Howard Memorial carnival." The news was that the local quartet had won 16-15 over Kempsey in a neck and neck finale. The boys beamed out of the back page pic and Allison's story did justice to the moment.

SOUTH COAST REGISTER, NOWRA

- *SAFE HANDS:*

A nice yarn about a football (soccer) player becoming a hero for an afternoon in what may have been the big moment of his career. Chris Dobie's photo illustrates Scott Merivale's match-winning achievement very well. The story – even if this was a front page write-off – would have benefitted significantly from the use of a quote from the man of the hour. (Perhaps that was inside?)

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS

- *THE RYLEY FILES*

A fine story by Chris Ward taking readers inside the world of local hero Ryley Batt a tough and admirable Australian sportsman, who was born without legs, but who got on with his life, found his sport (wheelchair rugby) and became a star. The News ran the story over three days - and the decision was thoroughly justified. Hard-hitting Ryley told it all as you would expect – i.e. straight up the middle – revealing the trials, tribulations and triumphs of his life. Journalist Chris Ward dug deep and there are plaintive moments. At one stage responding to the journalist's query as to what might be next for 'The Battman', who was not long back from winning Paralympic gold in London. Ryler considers and replies poignantly: "It's really hard coming back from the massive hype at the Paralympics to waking up every day going, "what am I going to do today?" I have some media commitments but eventually they will die off, so I need to figure out what I want to do with my life." An extensive interview; at the end all readers would be left hoping that Ryley Batt can indeed find a deserved answer to his question.

JOURNALISM

The Media Super Limited Award for Sports Journalism



WINNER:

THE MAITLAND MERCURY

- MEDAL MAN

It was the way to go – a big front page splash for the Maitland Mercury after local boy Simon Orchard became the first Olympic medallist from Maitland for more than a decade. Simon picked up a bronze in London when Australia beat Great Britain 3-1 in the medal playoff. Not since Matt Ryan won an equestrian gold medal in Sydney in 2000 had the district won Olympic honours. The story rode with spectacular pictorial accompaniment - with only a fumble on the front page (a lower case 'm' in Maitland) to let it down. The Page 1 pic of Simon with the flag was a beauty – and the opener to sport on page 9, capturing the moment that he scored an Olympic goal was perhaps even better. Josh Callinan captured the excitement – for the player and the district – in the story he told.

- TAKING SUCCESS IN HER STRIDE

Three months after the Olympics, Josh Callinan's profile of Australia's youngest Paralympic medallist Maddi Elliott, a local from Gillieston Heights, proved the perfect companion piece to the Simon Orchard story. Maddi won one gold, two silver and one bronze medal in the pool at the London Games and tied for first in the Australian Paralympic Committee's Awards as Junior Athlete of the Year. In her interview with the Mercury, Maddi proved herself a typically bubbly 14 year old, indicating in a lengthy interview that she was more interested in her next mobile phone case than the re-election of Barack Obama. Callinan's feature captured both the spirit of the teenager and the quality of her achievements.

COMMENT:

For the Maitland district Olympic year 2012 brought rare sporting serendipity in faraway London – a hockey bronze medal for local boy Simon Orchard and no less than three Paralympic medals for local girl Maddi Elliott. In a front page splash and a lively feature story published three months apart the Mercury did full justice, via content and presentation, to the sort of 'double' that country places can generally only dream of.

The Media Super Limited Award for

Sports Journalism

2012-2013

is awarded to



JUDGE: Ian Heads



General Comments

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

The overall photography was just not strong enough. The sport/cricket shots were taken from the wrong angles, and had messy backgrounds. They need to be cleaner. The News shots weren't bad - burning home and war zone, however, they need some people in the frame, either a fireman, rescue worker, someone walking past, or ideally the home owner bawling his eyes out.

SOUTHERN HIGHLAND NEWS, BOWRAL

Shot of burning home not bad. Shot of Malcolm Fraser isn't clean enough. The car and fence in background is messy and ugly. Also, Malcolm shouldn't be looking towards camera. The action shot of soccer players is way too messy. You need clean backgrounds; the telegraph pole is distracting and ugly. Also, need to shoot on a faster shutter speed - 1000th of a second. Also, guy heading ball needs to be facing camera.

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS

The Sport photographs were simply outstanding, and on their own are award worthy. The water-skier on the back page was an absolute cracker. And the Ironman Australia pictures were awesome. The photographer has done bloody excellent work, great variety, and really captured the mood of the day. However, what has let this entry down, is that there was no real hard News.

COMMENDED:

THE MAITLAND MERCURY

Solid work from the Maitland Mercury. The photograph of John and Daphne Partridge by photographer Marina Nell is outstanding. Beautiful exposure, great composition and setting. Although the shot is set up, Marina has still managed to capture a moment. Daphne's expression is priceless. Also Marina's shot of 13 year old Michael Phillips is moving. Cath Bowen's action shot of 14 year old swimmer Kyle Marsh is well timed.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

THE HAWESBURY GAZETTE

The Hawesbury Gazette are very lucky to have Kylie Pitt and Geoff Jones working for them as photographers. Kylie Pitt's news series "Young keep tradition alive" is a nice little series of shots. Great variety and the exposures are good, despite the lack of light. And also the series on Policeman Bryson Anderson was solid and gutsy. Geoff Jones Photographic Study of the firefighter is gritty yet surreal at the same time. The sport photography is eye catching. Great shot of the karate kid, the exposure is really punchy and makes the subject leap right off the page.

JOURNALISM

The Canon Award for Photography



WINNER:

NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

Right across news, photographic study, and sport, the Namoi Valley Independent's photography was very strong from start to finish. Their photographers are clearly working hard, chasing events, and capturing key moments. The News photographs are technically well produced, great composition and full of drama. They demand your attention. For the Photographic study, the dog leaping out of the bath-tub - great photo by Peter Lorimer. The dog, water and the stick is frozen perfectly. The shallow depth of field makes the dog leap off the page, but there is also enough depth to give it a setting. Also, I particularly liked the shot of Gunnedah Swimmer Teigan Myers - it's an absolute cracker.

The Canon Award for

Photography

2012-2013

is awarded to the

Namoi Valley
Independent

Gunnedah

JUDGE: Jonathan Carroll



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>	2004	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>	2010	<i>The Northern Daily Leader</i>
1999	<i>The Northern Star, Lismore</i>	2005	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>	2010-11	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>
2000	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2006	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2011-12	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>
2001	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah, & Port Macquarie News</i>	2007	<i>Manning River Times</i>	2012-13	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>
2002	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2008	-		
2003	<i>The Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2009	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>		

JOURNALISM

The Media Super Limited Award for Feature Supplements



General Comments

GOULBURN POST

- *Renewable Energy*

Environmentally well researched and written. Informative and well presented.

THE MAITLAND MERCURY

- *Tocal Field Days*

This feature showed the power of editorial and advertising working together for a great event.

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

- *Narrabri Shire Autumn 2013*

This is an informative guide for a targeted audience.

THE SOUTH COAST REGISTER, NOWRA

- *Weddings*

Good demonstration of diversity of culture in this very informative feature. Good advertising support.

- *Shoalhaven Unlimited*

Clear and concise journalism with good showcase of history of the "then" and "now".

WESTERN ADVOCATE, BATHURST

- *50 Years of the Great Race*

Good editorial coverage of a great sporting event. Great display of research.

- *Country and Regional Living Expo*

Great research, diverse content and well structured.

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

- *CNPS Reunion*

Good use of photos and a strong sense of community shows through the supplement.

- *Merino Week*

Well written and very informative.

- *Cooma Public School*

The editorial was very informative and well researched. Great use of old photos.

- *Cooma Rugby Union*

Great use of colour and the editorial had good history.

DENILQUIN PASTORAL TIMES

- *Easter Entertainment Guide*

History, action, fun.....a great guide.

- *Peppin Heritage Centre*

This is a good sound historical feature that had strong editorial, front page was great & good use of photographs.

THE ADVERTISER, CESSNOCK

- *Our School Leaders of Tomorrow*

Good journalism showing history and pride in local area schools. Good use of school photos.

Nostalgia Festival

- *Fun, fun, fun*

The feature definitely shows the fun aspect of the festival both editorially and pictorially.

JOURNALISM

The Media Super Limited Award for Feature Supplements



THE INVERELL TIMES

- *The Fossickers Way Tourist Guide*

Great size for ease of reference, with good information about tourism for the entire region. It was overall a fun, colourful and informative supplement.

- *Celebrating 60 years of Lions in Inverell*

Very good feature showcasing what a great contribution the Lions association makes to the area both in past times and present day.

SOUTHERN HIGHLAND NEWS, BOWRAL

- *Local Government Elections*

Very informative, small type was difficult to read.

- *Bowral Cricket Club*

Good combination of history and present day.

GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

- *Bellingen Visitor Guide*

Very informative, easy to read maps.

- *Nambucca Visitor Guide*

Sound editorially, very descriptive and newsworthy. It had great use of maps and good advertising guide content.

MACLEAY ARGUS, KEMPSEY

- *Kempsey Bypass Feature and Kempsey Bypass Open Day's*

Great local features, well executed from an editorial point of view. Great pictorial showcase and keepsakes with good advertising support.

SPECIAL MENTION:

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

- *Your Farm*

These were wonderful reader features, informative, well-structured and a great insight into this industry sector.

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

- *Annual Review 2012*

This was well presented and well displayed informative feature. Good research. The diversity of the subject matter, the great use of photos and good headline choices made up a great supplement.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

THE MAITLAND MERCURY

- *Maitland Mercury 170th Anniversary*

A great feature showing clearly how the Maitland Mercury has played a leading role in Maitland's history. The reproduction of the past front pages gave a great insight into Maitland's past. Good strong editorial, well researched.

JOURNALISM

The Media Super Limited Award for Feature Supplements



WINNER:

GOULBURN POST

- *The Light of the Party.....celebrating Goulburn's 150th Year as a City*

This feature was a celebration in itself with a well written, well researched, well-structured editorial account of the past 150 years in Goulburn's history. Great use of photos, and good all round advertising support. This was a feature that engaged with its audience. A great effort in a tough print climate. Well Done!

The Media Super Limited Award

for

Feature Supplements

2012-2013

is awarded to



JUDGE: Julie Ainsworth



JOURNALISM

The Media Super Limited Award for Feature Supplements



FORMER WINNERS

1970	<i>Windsor & Richmond Gazette</i>	1986	<i>Tumut & Adelong Times</i>	2001-02	<i>Bega District News</i>
1971	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	1987	<i>The Riverine Grazier, Hay</i>	2002-03	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>
1972	<i>Tumut & Adelong Times</i>	1988	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2003-04	<i>South Coast Register, Nowra</i>
1973	<i>The Courier, Narrabri</i>	1989	<i>The Inverell Times</i>	2004-05	<i>The Northern Daily Leader, Tamworth</i>
1974	<i>Glen Innes Examiner</i>	1990	<i>Mudgee Guardian and Gulgong Advertiser</i>	2005-06	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>
1975	<i>Shoalhaven & Nowra News</i>	1991	<i>Tumut and Adelong Times, & The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	2006-07	<i>South Coast Register, Nowra</i>
1976	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	1992	<i>Deniliquin Pastoral Times</i>	2007-08	<i>Namoi Valley Independent</i>
1977	<i>The North Western Courier, Narrabri</i>	1993	<i>Port Stephens Examiner</i>	2008-09	<i>Muswellbrook Chronicle</i>
1978	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	1994	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, Richmond</i>	2009-10	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
1979	<i>Tumut & Adelong Times</i>	1995	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	2010-11	<i>The Maitland Mercury</i>
1980	<i>Port Stephens Examiner</i>	1996	<i>Namoi Valley Independent, Gunnedah</i>	2011-12	<i>The Inverell Times</i>
1981	<i>The Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga</i>	1997	<i>The Area News, Griffith</i>	2012-13	<i>Goulburn Post</i>
1982	<i>Port Macquarie News</i>	1998	<i>South Coast Register, Nowra</i>		
1983	<i>Kiama Independent</i>	1999	<i>The Border Mail, Albury</i>		
1984	<i>Hawkesbury Gazette, North Richmond</i>	2000-01	<i>Kiama Independent</i>		
1985	<i>The Macleay Argus, Kempsey</i>				



JOURNALISM

The iSentia Award for Special Publications

General Comments

Only three entries, but all in my opinion achieved their goal of widening their readership appeal, and increasing circulation.

The overall winner was one of outstanding quality and one I am sure both its publishers and its local community are justly proud of.

I really do encourage more newspapers to enter into this category. The production of good quality products that are relevant to their local readers is one of the easiest ways of attracting new readers and extra advertising revenue, while at the same time value adding to its parent publication.

The editorial content in all 3 entries was I am sure well read and appreciated by all readers in their particular market areas.

But there was one product, which really stood out from the rest, and one I personally could not put down until I had read it from cover to cover.

The advertising content was extremely strong and varied. Page layout was exceptional, this coupled with well-designed adverts and great use of colour, created pages that were interesting and very easy to read.

Photographs were of extremely high quality, well cropped to suit layout and content, and at times very cleverly composed.

The editorial content was an ideal mix for this type of publication, extremely well written, and just the right length to suit this magazine format.

The publication was one I am certain would be kept from one edition till the next, recycled from reader to reader, and kept on one's coffee table for easy reading at any time. This extended shelf life of a quality magazine ensures a better response for advertisers, and guarantees repeat business for the newspaper in the next edition.

The winning entry is one I feel could easily and quite rightly carry a cover price.

Big congratulations to the entire team, editorial, advertising, and production, it is quite obvious from judging the entrant that all involved have truly taken ownership of this product, and do truly treat it as a very special publication.

WINNER:

SOUTHERN HIGHLAND NEWS, BOWRAL

The iSentia Award for

Special Publications

2012-2013

is awarded to

Southern
Highland News

Bowral

JUDGE: Mark Hodgson



JOURNALISM

The Goss International Award for Newspaper Presentation

GOSS | INTERNATIONAL

General Comments

This past year has been another tough one for the newspaper industry in Australia, with continuing redundancies in the major capital city papers and big regional dailies. Yet papers servicing regional centres and rural communities in NSW are demonstrating great resilience in the face of the digital revolution because they are able to connect with their communities in ways that on-line formats can't match.

The key to their success is unmatched coverage of local issues and local people in an attractive and appealing format. Good presentation has never been more important, and the entries for this category understand this important point. The standard of this year's entries was outstanding, and selecting the eventual winners in both sections was difficult.

DAILY AND TRI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS

The editorial staff at the Port Macquarie News obviously put a lot of thought and flair into their presentation, with forceful front and back pages and strong headlines and excellent use of colour and graphics throughout. The paper's features section is particularly impressive.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS NEWS, BOWRAL

The Southern Highlands News is a bright, colourful paper with interesting front pages. However, the one-deck headlines in the inside pages lack punch.

THE AREA NEWS, GRIFFITH

The Area News is a well presented paper, with busy, interesting front pages. Strong, punchy headlines on the page leads and good use of pictures throughout the paper round off a very presentable product.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

THE DAILY ADVERTISER, WAGGA WAGGA

The Daily Advertiser has long been a benchmark of quality presentation among the state's regional dailies. It is a big, confident publication with powerful front pages and strong page leads throughout the general news section. The Advertiser's features and sports pages maintain the high standard set by the early news pages.

WINNER:

WESTERN ADVOCATE, BATHURST

The Western Advocate demonstrates that you don't have to be the biggest to be among the best. The Advocate doesn't seem to have the editorial space of some of the other contenders in this section, but uses what space it does have exceptionally well. The Advocate shows impressive consistency and attention to detail from the front page to the sports section, with a feature being with its strong, clean typography and excellent use of pictures.

**The Goss International Award for
Newspaper Presentation**

(Daily and Tri-Weekly category)

2012-2013

is awarded to

Western Advocate

Bathurst

JUDGE: Nick Hartgerink

GOSS | INTERNATIONAL

JOURNALISM

The Goss International Award for Newspaper Presentation

GOSS | INTERNATIONAL

WEEKLY AND BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

I have always admired the Monaro Post's approach to presentation, which is quite different from most other country newspapers. This year's entries once again had interesting front pages, but I was disappointed with the standard of presentation on the inside pages, which suffered from inadequate one-line headlines that were simply too small.

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

The Courier takes a fairly conventional approach to newspaper design, and manages to pack a lot of content on to its pages while avoiding the trap of looking too cluttered. The result is a busy, interesting and very readable paper.

GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

The Guardian News is a generally attractive paper, with a bright, cheerful style that demonstrates flair and imagination.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

MILTON ULLADULLA TIMES

The Milton Ulladulla Times took out this award in 2012, and has maintained its consistent quality over the past year. It is bright and attractive, with clean layouts, strong page leads and good use of pictures. A feature of the paper is its large and well-designed sports section – regularly extending to 10-12 pages.

WINNER:

THE IRRIGATOR, LEETON

The Irrigator is another consistently strong performer in the Presentation section of these awards. Its most impressive features include imaginative, powerful front pages and smart, well-designed inside pages that leave the reader in no doubt as to what the lead story is. The Irrigator's intelligent use of colour screens also adds flair and style to an overall presentation which is extremely readable.

**The Goss International Award for
Newspaper Presentation**

(Bi-weekly and Weekly category)

2012-2013

is awarded to

The Irrigator

Leeton

JUDGE: Nick Hartgerink

GOSS | INTERNATIONAL

PRINTING

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



COMMENDED:

NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

Thursday May 9th 2013

This paper and edition was Judged as the fourth best technical example from all the other entries submitted. Colour was of a good as was density. Registration was also good as were the cut offs. This edition also displayed good ribbon alignment and pins as did the other editions submitted.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

Tuesday September 18th 2012

This paper and edition was Judged as the third best technical example from all the other entries submitted. Colour was of a good density and consistent throughout the edition however registration was out. This edition also displayed good ribbon alignment and pins as did the other editions submitted.

RUNNER UP:

GUARDIAN NEWS, NAMBUCCA

Thursday January 31st 2013

This paper and edition was Judged as the second best technical example from all the other entries submitted. Colour was in an acceptable range and consistent throughout the edition. Registration was also good as were the cut offs and pins. This edition also displayed good ribbon alignment as did the other editions submitted.

WINNER:

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

Wednesday September 19th 2012

This paper and edition was Judged as the best technical example from all the other entries submitted. Colour was of a good as was density and consistent throughout the edition. Contrast was good and there was no marking. Registration was also good as were the cut offs. This edition also displayed good ribbon alignment and pins as did the other Monaro Post editions submitted

**The WO Richards award for
Technical Excellence in Newspaper Production
2012-2013
is awarded to**

The logo for "the MONARO post" with "the" in a small, lowercase, grey font, "MONARO" in a large, bold, red serif font, and "post" in a large, lowercase, grey sans-serif font. Below "MONARO" is the tagline "the independent paper of the Monaro and surrounding regions" in a small, lowercase, grey font.

Cooma

JUDGE: Warwick Moore



ADVERTISING & MARKETING

The DIC Award for Locally Produced Advertising



NEWSPAPER CIRCULATION UP TO 5000

General Comments

I observed last year that entries in this section were uniformly of a high standard; this year I was astonished by the sheer number of outstanding entries – they demonstrate that creativity, energy and courage are all alive and well among our smaller community newspapers and I encourage members to view the entire range of entries. Note the range of excellent headlines and illustrations on even very small ads as well as the adroit use of copy to engage readers on things that interest them.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

MUDGE GUARDIAN

- Time To Plant Your Bare-Root Trees

THE MONARO POST, COOMA

- High Country Automotive

THE SINGLETON ARGUS

- Singleton Auto-Electrical

RUNNER-UP:

BEGA DISTRICT NEWS

Although the two excellent entries submitted by this member are more like campaigns than single advertisements, they clearly demonstrate how revenues can be generated with innovative ideas in even the toughest market conditions and provide us therefore with a valuable lesson. I commend The News for “We Support The Community” for its clever connecting of community engagement values and supportive local businesses; and for “Sustainable Living” as another idea that can work in most of our markets.

WINNER:

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

The Courier’s “End of the World Sale” has the ultimate powerful headline, backed up by an equally arresting image – all founded on a timely and inspired idea. That the client was delighted with his response is not surprising.

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

2012-2013

is awarded to



JUDGE: Ross McPherson



ADVERTISING & MARKETING

The DIC Award for Locally Produced Advertising



NEWSPAPER CIRCULATION OVER 5000

General Comments

Again the category was outshone by its small-circulation cousins. There number of entries was very small and a majority had no material addressing the client's objectives and/or the paper's response.

WINNER:

MANNING GREAT LAKES EXTRA, TAREE

The Great Lakes Extra built on a successful campaign for school enrolments run the previous year for Taree Christian College by following up with a more comprehensive campaign, including an outdoor event and ads with relevant and thoughtful copy.

The campaign attracted a substantially higher spend by the client than the previous year.

**The DIC Award for
Locally Produced Advertising
(circulation over 5000)
2012-2013
is awarded to**



Taree

JUDGE: Ross McPherson



ADVERTISING & MARKETING

The DIC Award for Commercial Supplement



General Comments

Some excellent examples of quality supplements, but the winner really stood out from the crowd.

Unfortunately some entrants failed to comply with the conditions of entry, and some excellent examples of quality supplements had to be disqualified because of this.

The products were judged on an advertising standpoint of visual appeal, page presentation, attention drawing and overall impact on readers.

Although the journalistic quality was not an important criteria, except for the general impression of the pages, I must compliment the editorial team behind the winning entry. The research and editorial quality was outstanding, and in my opinion would have attracted many new readers to the supplements parent publication.

The concept of running the supplement over 4 editions instead of one massive publication was a brilliant piece of marketing and needs to commend.

I am certain locals, after reading the first edition, and no doubt the promotional editorials in the newspaper before the first print would have been lining up at the local newspaper office to ensure they received the other 3 editions that were to carry the supplement.

It doesn't matter if your newspaper is free or carries a cover price this is a great way to engage with your local community.

This would have generated great response from the newspapers readers and generated a very positive response to advertisers both in the supplement and the carrying newspaper.

The layout was both eye-catching and easy to read with great use of white space, unjustified text and tory length.

The regular 'TIMELINE' column captured the reader's attention, was a great read, and tied in well with the overall concept of the supplement.

The mix of black and white with colour pictures throughout the product was well done, as was the continuation of the same overall layout throughout all 4 editions.

The concept of producing a commemorative folder to store the 4 supplements and making readers come to the newspaper office to pick up their copy was another great marketing idea. This encouraged the newspapers readers to engage one on one with the friendly team at the newspaper office (well done)

This product is a fine example of what marketing is all about and I congratulate all those involved in producing this outstanding supplement, they should all be extremely proud of their efforts.

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

The DIC Award for Commercial Supplement



WINNER:

THE IRRIGATOR, LEETON

- Celebrating 100 Years of Leeton

The DIC Award for
Commercial Supplement

2012-2013

is awarded to

The Irrigator

Leeton

JUDGE: Mark Hodgson



ADVERTISING & MARKETING

The DIC Award for Advertising Ideas



General Comments

NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

- *Meet the 2012 Gunnedah Shire Council Candidates*

The 'Meet the 2012 Gunnedah Shire Council Candidates' feature shows great initiative. It provided the community with a chance to easily compare the candidates' platforms and therefore make informed voting decisions. It provided the candidates with a great opportunity for exposure in a well-read feature. And it provided the paper with extra advertising revenue.

SHOALHAVEN & NOWRA NEWS

- *26 Things you Definitely Must Do*

The '26 things you definitely must do' idea shows initiative and insight into a consumer mindset. Allocating a letter of the alphabet to each activity is a challenge that was well met. This was an effective way of generating extra advertising income through a focused idea.

- *Saddle Up*

Saddle Up Sunday Wrap Around, the gloss wrap around added a tactile element of glamour and quality to attract the attention of the female target market. The heavy fashion skew shows the targeting worked, resulting in increased revenue.

SOUTH COAST REGISTER, NOWRA

- *Administrative Professionals Day 2013*

'Administrative Professionals Day 2013' this put a fresh spin on the existing feature it was a great way to revive interest. Integrating the Shoalhaven Schools Industry Alliance gave the feature an increased relevance and an emotive hook that resulted in better uptake of advertising space. The inclusion of a thank you to the paper's own admin staff was a nice touch.

- *Aussie Car Loans*

Searching beyond the usual suspects to increase advertising prospects for a feature is a good strategy. Landing Aussie Car Loans for an Amazing Homes publication is a great example. Providing a creative link to the home feature makes the message relevant. And it stands out amongst the predominantly building industry ads in the feature.

WINGHAM CHRONICLE

- *Scottish Festival 2013*

Seeing an opportunity to make more of the annual Scottish Festival paid dividends for the Wingham Chronicle. By doubling the size of the feature to a double page spread, adding features in affiliated publications and creating a window display, the Chronicle was able to make the event more successful for the local community and increase advertising revenue at the same time.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

MANNING RIVER TIMES, TAREE

- *Mayo Integrated Campaign*

This campaign is a great example of clear, consistent messaging that really reinforces the positive and professional image that the client required. Of all entries it was the standout in terms of layout, typography, imagery and brand consistency. The clean layouts reflect the cleanliness and professionalism one would expect from a modern health facility. Incorporating the digital medium in the campaign supported the client's claim to modernity and 'better health technology'.

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

The DIC Award for Advertising Ideas



WINNER:

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

- Money-Go-Round

The Money-Go-Round promotion demonstrates the power of a good idea. This concept was well thought through and delivered benefits to multiple stakeholders including local businesses, the community, local charities and the publication itself. It gave locals a compelling reason to shop locally and keep money in the local economy. The long time frame meant the promotion was able to gain momentum as well as delivering advertising opportunities. The culmination in a major community event initiated by The Courier is testimony to the importance of local press to the community it serves. Well done.

**The DIC Award for
Advertising Ideas
2012-2013
is awarded to**



Narrabri

JUDGE: Brian Daly



ADVERTISING & MARKETING

The Norske Skog Award for Newspaper Marketing & Promotion



General Comments

THE COURIER, NARRABRI

- Digital Subscriptions

The Courier's comprehensive campaign to promote digital subscriptions was admirably creative with some excellent promotional ad ideas.

NAMOI VALLEY INDEPENDENT, GUNNEDAH

- Life on the Land

A variation on regular campaigns that generated reader participation by soliciting photos for a competition. I wondered if it would have more success these days if there was a category for readers to email in images from their smartphones.

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS

- Where Do You Read Yours?

Not a new idea in this category but a nicely-executed version of a competition inviting readers to submit photos of themselves reading the paper in strange and interesting places, assisted by some judicious staff photography for the promo ads.

THE AREA NEWS, GRIFFITH

- Wedding Fair and Magazine

Again not a new idea but a reliable revenue generator; The Area News does it well.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

SOUTH COAST REGISTER, NOWRA

- Zero2Nine Bubs and Kids Expo

The paper took over an expo previously run privately and turned it into a highly visible and successful event – one that could also be replicated in most markets and attract advertiser/stall-holder attention.

RUNNER UP:

MACLEAY ARGUS, KEMPSEY

- Colouring Book

The Argus used a well-produced colouring book – replete with ads – to reinvigorate the younger readers' friendship club. It proved a handy revenue raiser as well as having the desired effect on club membership.

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

The Norske Skog Award for Newspaper Marketing & Promotion



WINNER:

SOUTH COAST REGISTER, NOWRA

- Don't Count Your Chickens

A well-designed campaign with a dual purpose – first to distract readers from a forthcoming price increase and secondly to encourage greater interaction with the website. Readers were invited to go online and count how many chickens had hatched this week, then send in their answers on an in-paper coupon for a chance at a prize. This is an interesting mechanic that could work well for paid titles and increase readership of frees.

**The Norske Skog Award for
Newspaper Marketing and Promotion
2012-2013
is awarded to**



JUDGE: Ross McPherson



General Comments

Most publishers are creating a 'push-pull' environment which means allowing users to consume information in an environment they feel comfortable with, in both tone and time. We now understand web users have choices for absorbing news and may not frequent traditional web sites for daily information.

It's up to us as media owners to acknowledge social platforms are used in its format intended i.e. for thoughts and statements to be shared.

WESTERN ADVOCATE, BATHURST

The Race: A look at the Bathurst 12 Hour (FEATURE)

- Interesting coverage of the 12 Hour race in rolling blog news format with the cross tie up with Twitter from known personalities.
- A good use of images to increase page views to the web destination.
- A tie up with Facebook and Twitter partners would've been a good addition to promote the upcoming rolling news feature and image coverage on the site.
- Good uplift in traffic to the website for the event.

NAROOMA NEWS

Various Pieces (NEWS AND FEATURE)

- Firstly, 'Hat Off' to Stan Gorton – obviously has a passion for the news and the way he's adopted the digital/social tools and essentially on the job training probably with a little bit of trial and error.
- Reading through the submissions it's apparent Narooma News understand the fundamentals of digital reporting. It needs to be consistent, informative and as 'it happens'.
- As mentioned previously, digital media should always contain a mechanism which allows the user to contribute. It gains more eyeballs and will increase share rates.
- The biggest growth area of digital media is quality shot video, media owners love it and users can't view enough of it – Good luck with the Go Pro!

MUDGEES GUARDIAN

Eels V's Titans Coverage (FEATURE)

- This submission has gone the extra mile when creating additional exposure for the NRL fixture.
- It appears the Guardian understands its limitations when it comes to content assets i.e. but also socially. I like the ways they've created a story/blog for users to contribute to the story/event pre, during and post with Storify.
- Also knowing to leverage the strength of @SportsOutWest Twitter account – 626 followers in addition to the Guardians 669.
- Interesting use of audio due to the limitations of video footage. (Would be interested to know how many streams occurred)
- And finally creating a destination for the match, an area where users could become involved in quiz, check out images of the game or even to spot themselves in the crowd.
- Mudgee Guardian has achieved what it set out to – give the coverage a more local feel.

MUSWELLBROOK CHRONICLE

Wine and Food Affair (FEATURE)

- Good traffic spike from web image galleries and video. However, all the activity online seems to be post event i.e. a wrap up. Would have been good to understand the pre-promotion coverage. The print component seems fairly comprehensive focussing on the talent 'Andy Allen'.
- Event organisers have indicated a closer partnership with the Chronicle in future years – Therefore digital thoughts for next year should be around real time social media updates via Facebook and Twitter via the creation of a Chronicle #tag.
- This creates user generated content which can be shared (more event exposure) and also reformatted and pulled into a Chronicle web destination.
- It's a good way to acquire users to 'follow' and 'like' the Chronicle. This creates another relationship between the paper and the website.

DIGITAL

The Country Press New South Wales Award for Online Editorial Coverage



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

- Engage with readers/users at the actual event and allow submission of comments and photos (moderation will be required).
- Create a destination for users to upload their comments and images. Somewhere to access Andy's recipes. (This destination will interest advertisers)
- It seems like it's a very well visited event and the paper has covered it well in the print and web formats and opportunities for the social extension should be integrated for next year.

THE ARMIDALE EXPRESS

North Tablelands Bi-Election Coverage (NEWS STORY)

- The Express certainly exploited digital technology to cover the Bi-Election
- They've understood who they are trying to engage with – the younger demographic via social and web channels.
- Good use of rolling content via blog type mechanic which was uploaded into the website and constantly refreshed until polling closed. Great to see Twitter and Facebook being used a platform springboard to push stories to 'followers' and 'friends', to push them back to the website.
- Good pre-promotion in print and online, and good integration of social feeds from handheld devices resulting with the website breaking news first on the winner of the seat, the creation of 'on the ground' images and what we all like to see, an overall increase in web traffic and social engagement.

COMMENDED:

GREAT LAKES ADVOCATE

Various Submissions (Chosen: Tuncurry House Explosion) (BREAKING NEWS)

- An event occurred that sent the community into a state of 'I need to know more'.
- The editorial teams captured this by combining the strengths of their website, Twitter and Facebook accounts.
- All platforms deliver different levels of content feeds. Web to set the story, to investigate and social to update the community on developments after the event - road closures, schools affected etc.
- Their Facebook and Twitter platforms certainly acted as a focal point for non-web browsers. A platform that users obviously use as an important reference point, evident from the doubling of their social audience in the space of a few hours.
- The social component allowed user to upload their own comments to further flesh out the new story but also to help others within their community

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS

Various Submissions (Chosen: Flood Coverage)

- Port News has used their website well to continuously cover the floods and their impending impact.
- Reading through the submission notes and the attached screen grabs of the coverage on the social pages, it's good to see that important updates were confined to the platform they were published on – i.e. not taken to another destination. They understand social platforms – handheld devices require snack'able content feeds. Comment sharing is evident therefore friends and followers who may not be linked to Port News social pages could also be informed.
- The social pages allowed users to upload their own comments and advice.
- The community obviously used the website as their go to media for developments and the updates we're constant, meaning users would frequent more than once or twice a day. The increase in web traffic to over a million page view justifies this point.
- Congratulations to the Port News team on the winning submission.

DIGITAL

The Country Press New South Wales Award for Online Editorial Coverage



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

WINNER:

THE ADVERTISER, CESSNOCK

Breaking News Story

- I particularly like the way this story has been supported on social platforms
- As well as reporting the story, the editorial team have used both Facebook and Twitter to keep readers/community up to date with breaking news.
- Social is a two way street and user generated content has been readily accepted in the form of images and stories.
- Media owners and Journalists quickly understand the 'push-pull' strategy for editorial with Websites being where the story breaks and updates happen constantly throughout the event. Using social platforms engage and inform on another level, 'alert updates' being set.
- Great to see social was kept separately for 'FIRE UPDATES' and other important events i.e. users weren't being pushed back to a website to find information.

The Country Press New South Wales Award for Online Editorial Coverage

2012-2013

is awarded to

**THE
Advertiser**

Cessnock

JUDGE: Andrew Brain



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

DIGITAL

The Country Press New South Wales Award for Online Advertising



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

General Comments

COMMENDED:

BELLINGEN COURIER SUN

Kombu Wholefoods

- Good placement secured on the BCS Home Page with the medium rectangle.
- Animation for frame rotation should be used and a message told. However in this case there is probably a little too much for a user to take in. Get the user interested and get them to click to a dedicated web page or Facebook Page. It's an easy way to increase 'likes'.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

GREAT LAKES ADVOCATE

Fitness 2428

- Have used the Billboard and most premium of display advertising on the Home Page.
- A lot of information has been pasted into the ad unit and as a result it looks and reads like a print ad.
- Animation would've has users waiting for the story to unfold... like this
 - o Frame 1. Interested in dropping 2 jeans sizes in 8 weeks?
 - o Frame 2. Take the Rock Your Jeans Challenge
 - o Frame 3. Starts June 3 – Contact Details: web links etc

RUNNER-UP:

MACLEAY ARGUS, KEMPSEY

One Agency

- Not many businesses are brave enough to solely use a Skyscraper ad unit as they generally have the smallest Click Thru Rate (CTR) after and Medium Rectangle and Top Leaderboard.
- Good usage of animation rates to sell their story of being #1

WINNER:

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS

Port City Bowling Club

- A significant mile stone for the Bowling Club and they've maximised the impact with the Billboard ad unit and having an engaging hook to the ad call.
- I particularly like their clever use of animation – Firstly, to engage the user via the 'how many candles are there?' and then to quickly to deliver the core message.
- An effective use of digital advertising and rich media to interest, engage and inform.

The Country Press New South Wales Award for

Online Advertising

2012-2013

is awarded to

portmacquarie
news

JUDGE: Andrew Brain



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