

THE AGE

Impact Report 2021



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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION



Victorians breathed a sigh of relief when 2020 was behind us. The long winter lockdown was over, coronavirus cases were tiny, summer and holidays were here. We had no idea what 2021 would serve up, and at times, the year seemed to crush our spirit. Melbourne has had six lockdowns since March last year, including the last one of 77 days. We know our children have suffered through months of learning from home. We know small businesses have struggled. We know Melbourne will take many years to recover, but we are confident that it will.

The Age's mission throughout this pandemic has been to report on our community as part of our community, not from on high or with a sense of detachment. We strove to be the most reliable source of information, the fairest in our assessments, the deepest in our explanations. We would hold state and federal governments accountable for decisions, but we would not fearmonger or nitpick.

I am proud of our health team, Aisha Dow and Melissa Cunningham, for their expertise and commitment. And of our science reporter, Liam Mannix, whose evidence-based reporting has set new standards in Australia for science journalism. Our brilliant photographers captured historic images from eerie streets to violent protests. Our daily coronavirus and national blogs became must-reads for up-to-date news and analysis. Our coronavirus and vaccine data trackers have been the go-to for discovering the statistics behind the headlines.

Covering the pandemic has brought into focus lessons that can be applied to other kinds of journalism. Our readers seek high-quality, non-ideological reporting in a time of angry noise and easy opinions. They are interested in substance more than confected outrage. They want us to tell the human stories behind the statistics, the good as well as the sad. And they want relief from grim news, things they can do to help, and just escapist fun.

If the pandemic dominated this year – again – there were other stories that mattered, too. *Age* investigative journalist Nick McKenzie was named the Graham Perkin Journalist of the Year in March, and this year, his *Nazis Next Door* investigation with *60 Minutes* exposed the rise of the far-right in Australia in a way that has never been done before. The royal commission into Crown would not have happened without *Age* journalism. We have investigated deep problems with the regulation of cosmetic surgery, the finances of Scientology and the politicisation of the Victorian public service. Our environment reporters have dug in to report and explain the threat and opportunity of climate change, with outstanding coverage of the Glasgow COP26 summit.

We have boosted our state political team to reflect the growing significance of state governments. We have a new city editor who will focus on how Melbourne will need to reinvent itself post-lockdowns. We have added new journalists to our investigative team, the finest in the country. We have strengthened our coverage of Indigenous issues, including hiring Jack Latimore as Indigenous affairs journalist. Next year, we will hire five trainees, an investment in the future.

Melbourne is not just about news; it's about ideas and debate and conversation. I was proud to revive *The Age* Book of the Year, won by Robbie Arnott for *The Rain Heron*. And we partnered with the Melbourne Writers Festival after an absence of several years.

Age journalism has had a huge impact this year across politics, investigations, sport, arts and culture and international affairs. We want to do more journalism that matters, in areas that you care about. With your continued support, we will.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'GA', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Gay Alcorn
Editor

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

#1

VICTORIA'S MOST-READ
MASTHEAD ACROSS PRINT
AND ONLINE

490



STAFF MEMBERS
NATIONALLY

53,810

ARTICLES PUBLISHED

24

NEW POSITIONS
NATIONALLY,
INCLUDING:

- + 10 X TRAINEES
- + 5 X DIGITAL PRESENTATION STAFF
- + 3 X SOCIAL MEDIA PRODUCERS
- + 2 X AUDIO PRODUCERS
- + 2 X NEWSLETTER STAFF
- + 2 X INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS REPORTERS

5448

OPINIONS SHARED
FROM 1500 VOICES

866

LIVE BLOGS
STAFFED



 12 PODCASTS DOWNLOADED
10MILLION TIMES

39,299,762

NEWSLETTERS DELIVERED

8 COMMENT
MODERATORS
PUBLISHED

1,326,076

COMMENTS
IN 2021

OUR JOURNALISM LED TO...

MORE OF FRAUDSTER **MELISSA CADDICK'S**

victims coming forward with crucial information, including her earlier financial crimes.

It was our reporting that revealed Caddick had forged CommSec accounts showing astonishing returns.

The Finkelstein Royal Commission in Victoria as well as the Bergin inquiry in NSW. Both found

CROWN UNFIT TO HOLD A LICENCE

and called for new laws and new casino regulatory agencies.

THE RESIGNATION OF NUIX CEO AND CFO.

A criminal investigation launched by the Australian Federal Police into Nuix co-founder, Tony Castagna.

An ASIC investigation into the share trading of Nuix by CFO Stephen Doyle, his brother and father, which culminated in them facing a **criminal investigation into insider trading.**

A PETITION AND **\$67.7 MILLION**

of federal government funding to save the most at-risk documents in the **National Archives.**

AN INVESTIGATION LAUNCHED

by the Victorian government into cosmetic surgeon

DR LANZER

who, within a week of our investigation being published, said he would **no longer work as a medical practitioner**, in any form, in Australia. A month later the national health regulator announced a **sweeping review** of the multibillion-dollar cosmetic surgery industry.

THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

MOVING TO LEGISLATE

so that religious schools could no longer sack or refuse work to teachers due to their sexuality or gender identity.

TWO FRESH FEDERAL POLICE INVESTIGATIONS

into **Ben Roberts-Smith**, in addition to two existing war-crimes probes.

Fresh probes by counter-terror police into the rise of

RIGHT-WING

EXTREMISM

IN AUSTRALIA.

Calls from the Coalition and Labor for the **National Socialist Network** to be proscribed as a

terror group.

A JOINT INVESTIGATION

by complaints body the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, the Victorian Public Advocate and the Victorian government regulator.

Three new statues in Canberra to

ADDRESS THE LACK OF DIVERSITY

reported by Rob Harris. His suggestion to honour the first two women and first Indigenous Australian in Federal Parliament - Enid Lyons, Dorothy Tangney and Neville Bonner respectively - was announced by Scott Morrison within months of Harris' reporting.



For months, The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald and 60 Minutes had an infiltrator inside Australia's largest neo-Nazi group, the National Socialist Network. Photo: Supplied

NAZIS NEXT DOOR

Nazis Next Door, which combined eight months of investigative reporting with an undercover operation, was an unprecedented exposé of the rise of right-wing extremism in Australia. Its impact was immediate: counter-terror police launched fresh probes; the Coalition and Labor both called for the National Socialist Network to be proscribed as a terror group and for laws to be changed if the existing proscription regime didn't allow this. Senior members of the network lost their jobs in government agencies and large companies, and the group was evicted from its headquarters.

This ground-breaking investigation was told in two lengthy online features with videos and graphics, various newspaper reports and over two weeks on *60 Minutes*. It has reshaped public understanding of this threat, previously hidden in some of our suburbs.

It has not been an easy reporting task. Since publication, the reporters involved have received threats. My photo has been circulated in extremist chat rooms with a noose above my head, and I have been viciously trolled for my Jewish heritage.

The story involved boots-on-the-ground journalism (on the hiking trails of the Grampians to track the group) and months spent cultivating sources inside neo-Nazi



Nick McKenzie
Age investigative reporter

circles and policing agencies. After months of investigation, we then worked with an infiltrator who, after extensive legal and security advice, made secret recordings of the group that allowed us to penetrate its encryption and vetting protections and expose it from the inside.

The undercover vision we obtained revealed the National Socialist Network's support of other Australians accused of right-wing terrorism, as well as the Christchurch terrorist. We captured evidence of criminal activity, discovered its methods of raising funds and revealed its secret plans to start a rural headquarters.

Piecing together snippets of biographical detail and recordings captured on hidden camera and separately provided by sources, we not only identified the network's core members but their links to bikies and international terror groups, including Combat18, the Base and the Azov Battalion.

This work has resulted in two Walkley Award nominations.

SCIENTOLOGY

This series had global impact, uncovering a decades-old mystery about the extent of the Church of Scientology's wealth, and how it is using Australia as a haven for its money and making large tax-free profits.

While Scientology has become infamous for its mistreatment of adherents, the role of raising money in its operations is central to its purpose. For 70 years the finances of Scientology, which was set up by science fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard, have been shrouded in secrecy.

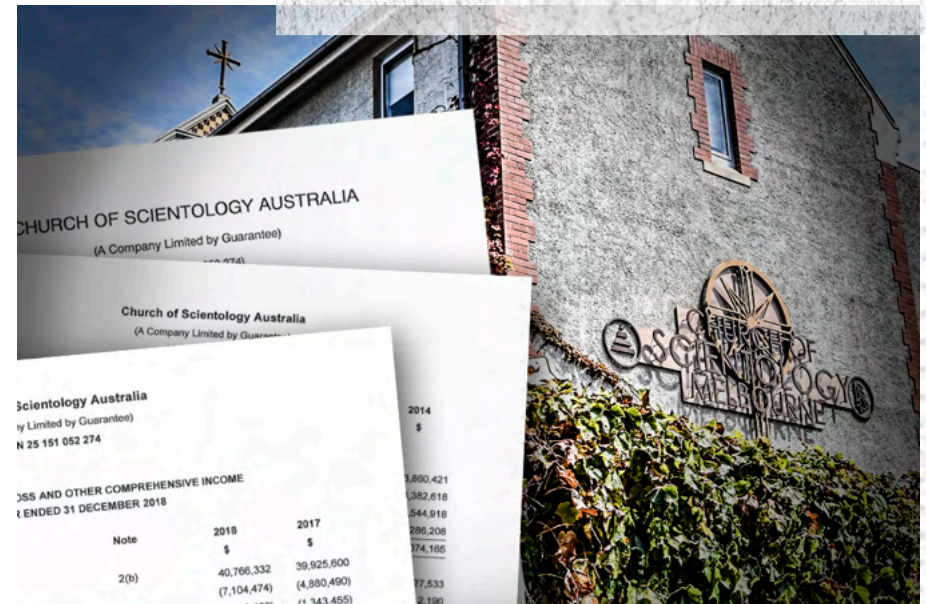
My reporting – based on months of detailed examination of accounts and winning the trust of sources – uncovered details about the church's finances and elaborate corporate structure, and the shifting of tens of millions of dollars from the US to Australia. The exposé raised serious questions about whether Australia's charities laws were too weak.

The investigation, which has been nominated for a Walkley Award, led to a significant political response and the promise of a parliamentary inquiry from Labor and the Greens, pending the outcome of investigative work by the charities regulator. It also drew a ferocious response from Scientology, which used websites, social media, videos and lawyers to target me.

An accompanying feature article revealed the church's abuse of former adherents, its use of surveillance, the organisation's history in Australia, its belief systems and the large financial costs associated with membership. The final piece was a first-person article that drew out a key tactic of Scientology – known as Fair Game – to target critics through abuse, surveillance, legal threats and other means, drawing further attention to the misuse of its tax-free status.



Ben Schneiders
Age investigative reporter



Scientology headquarters in Ascot Vale, Melbourne. Photo: Justin McManus

For Paul Schofield, who worked for the controversial religion and its offshoots for almost 30 years, the process of leaving Scientology was full of loss and grief. Photo: Peter Stoop





Whistleblowers Lauren Hewish (left) and Justin Nixon (right) spoke up about the practices at Dr Daniel Lanzer's cosmetic surgery (centre). Photos: Simon Schluter, Joe Armao

COSMETIC COWBOYS

A joint investigation by *The Age*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *Four Corners* went behind the glitz and glamour of the multibillion-dollar cosmetic surgery industry and exposed alarming practices, including safety and hygiene issues and a regulatory system that is failing to protect Australians.

It examined famous cosmetic surgeon Daniel Lanzer and his network of clinics, uncovering botched surgeries and questionable activities such as staff taking home human fat to store in their fridges to avoid questions from regulators during an audit, nurses using expired medication, nurses filling in blank signed prescriptions, staples used in the front of the ear on facelifts and a dangerous lack of care while performing liposuction. There was also evidence that Google reviews might not be all they seem, with some five-star reviews written by staff and an unhappy patient paid to replace a negative online review.

Cosmetic Cowboys highlighted deficiencies with the regulatory system, which has allowed doctors with basic medical degrees to call themselves cosmetic surgeons and do facelifts, liposuction and abdominoplasty.

This was a story Dr Lanzer tried to stop being told with an urgent interlocutory injunction in the Federal Court days before publication.

The fallout from our investigation was immediate. Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt referred the allegations to the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency for an urgent investigation. The Victorian government launched an investigation into Dr Lanzer and said it would examine changes to cosmetic surgery rules. The Australian Medical Association called on the country's health ministers to close the "loophole" that allows anyone with a basic medical degree to call themselves a "cosmetic surgeon". Dr Lanzer launched an "independent" investigation into his clinics.

By the end of the week the story was published, the regulator said the Medical Board of Australia had accepted an undertaking from Dr Lanzer that he would not practise as a medical practitioner, in any form, in Australia.

It said its inquiries into Dr Lanzer's clinics were ongoing.

A month later the regulator announced a sweeping review of the cosmetic surgery industry.



Adele Ferguson
Investigative reporter



↑ CFMEU Victorian state secretary
John Setka. Photo: Chris Hopkins



↑ Setka, with his wife Emma Walters, outside the Melbourne Magistrates Court in 2019. Photo: Jason South

JOHN SETKA

In this series the definitive story was told of how one of Australia's most powerful unions, a significant force on the left wing of Labor politics, had been left a smouldering ruin following the actions of outspoken leader John Setka.

Through exclusive news reporting, features and analysis over several years, I have detailed the domestic violence allegations against John Setka and how that in turn triggered the CFMEU Victorian leader's campaign of revenge against his opponents, who wanted him to step aside.

In 2019, I first helped reveal the details of charges against Setka, which led to him being convicted of harassment. I also uncovered leaked comments about anti-violence campaigner Rosie Batty from a speech he made to the union's national executive that sparked a national conversation.

I revealed in September that Setka had been accused of assaulting his wife. He has denied the allegations.

Through it all, the focus of the reporting and analysis has been on the seriousness of the domestic violence allegations and how the labour movement has responded.

The culmination was a 5500-word piece published in September based on exhaustive research and sourcing which told in detail about the forces driving the union apart. It relied on insiders speaking for the first time about the tensions unleashed by Setka's behaviour.

In another piece, published after the violent attack on the CFMEU's office during Melbourne's lockdown, I told the backstory of who was there protesting and the complex build-up of grievances and links. With nearly 15 years of reporting on industrial relations, it was the type of deeply sourced journalism no one else was able to produce.



Ben Schneiders
Age investigative reporter

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Mention the word archives and images of dust-covered boxes piled upon each other along rows and rows of shelving come to mind. But those boxes contain histories and stories that without protection literally fade away.

That was the plight facing the National Archives of Australia, and it was *The Age* that revealed the irreversible damage facing the history of this nation. Speeches of John Curtin, the only register of births, deaths and marriages from Pitcairn Island, tapes of the Stolen Generation royal commission and the papers of suffragettes Adela Pankhurst and Celia John were all slowly disintegrating within the Archives' vast holdings.

We revealed the issue facing the Archives which, over a number of years, had suffered funding cuts that had led to a situation where it could no longer protect its holdings.

We were able to show visual examples of the deterioration, giving readers an idea of what this loss of history looked like. From a direct descendant of one of the Bounty mutineers to global historians, the situation facing the Archives gained an international audience.

After our report on the issue was brought to the attention of Prince Charles, Australian historians organised a petition to the federal government to highlight the damage. Cabinet ministers privately confided they would have been unaware of the situation but for our stories.

Without these stories, the groundswell of anger locally and internationally would never have been brought to bear on the federal government. The impact of the stories became evident on July 1 when the federal government committed \$67.7 million towards saving the most at-risk documents. As historians acknowledged after the government's actions, this series of stories saved Australian history.



Shane Wright
Senior economics correspondent



Katina Curtis
Political reporter

*Deteriorated nitrate
negatives, prints and scans
of Italian prisoners of war in
Australia. Photos: Supplied by
National Archives of Australia*



NDIS

Our series exposed the failure to protect some of Victoria's most marginalised and hidden citizens, people living in privately run group homes that have been described as "21st century poorhouses".

A COVID-19 outbreak at Hambleton House – a supported residential service in Albert Park – opened the door on this horror story and raised uncomfortable questions about how we care for people with disabilities and mental illness.

A government report leaked to us revealed that for years the state government regulator had been ignoring notifications that residents at Hambleton House were living in squalor with bed bugs crawling up the walls.

We also revealed how the National Disability Insurance Scheme had made vulnerable people lucrative targets for accommodation and service providers.

Some were being caught up in an ugly turf war between rival groups of disability accommodation and support businesses competing for the right to access their NDIS funding packages.

Our series prompted a joint investigation by complaints body the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, the Victorian Public Advocate and the Victorian government regulator.

Federal opposition NDIS spokesman Bill Shorten also called for independent oversight of NDIS participants living in poorly regulated accommodation in what he described as a "wild west" part of the industry.



Jewel Topsfield
Social affairs editor



Royce Millar
Investigative reporter



Former Hambleton House resident Denise is now living in a nice place in South Melbourne.
Photo: Jason South

Signs outside Hambleton House in Albert Park during a COVID-19 outbreak. Photo: Penny Stephens





↑ Private schools' assets jumped by more than 40 per cent over four years. Photo: Joe Armao

David Patterson spoke out about the treatment of LGBTI teachers and students in Christian schools. Photo: Eddie Jim →



PRIVATE SCHOOLS

We were able to reveal the inequities of Australia's private education system through a combination of investigative work, powerful human stories and carefully crafted news and feature writing.

Senior political figures have noted the influence of these stories at federal and state level including on the Victorian government's plan for new laws to ban discrimination in employment in religious schools.

The reporting detailed for the first time the remarkable and escalating wealth of our richest private schools and that the value of the top 50 schools was \$8.5 billion, up more than 40 per cent since 2015. It sparked public debate about the level of government funding to most of these schools, and drew attention to deepening inequality and diverging educational outcomes according to socio-economic background.

Another part of the series told how religious schools were legally able to sack teachers such as Steph Lentz and Sam Cairns after they had come out as gay. It wove together the personal stories of Lentz, Cairns and school insider David Patterson with the political and legal context that made such discrimination possible.

The research for these stories involved months of digging for documents hidden from public view, including discriminatory employment contracts and values statements that in some cases equated homosexuality with paedophilia.

The reporting resonated with readers, breaking through a wall of COVID-19 coverage to dominate reader feedback, letters pages and comments for days and spark a national debate.

Within two months the Victorian government had announced exclusively to *The Age* that it would legislate so that religious schools could no longer sack or refuse work to teachers due to their sexuality or gender identity. This was a graphic example of the power of well-researched, well-told journalism.



Ben Schneiders
Investigative reporter



Royce Millar
Investigative reporter



↑ Nuix chief executive Rod Vaudrey at the bell ringing ceremony when the company was listed on the ASX in late 2020. Photo: Ben Rushton

→ Nuix founder Tony Castagna arrives at the company's headquarters in April. Photo: Dominic Lorrimer



NUIX

Data analytics company Nuix received glowing coverage when it listed on the ASX as the biggest float of the year, almost tripling in value in the first few weeks of listing.

We went behind the hype and uncovered a prospectus that didn't paint the full picture. We outlined in devastating detail how the regulators failed and how a small group of Nuix insiders walked away with millions of dollars.

So serious were the problems at Nuix, as [revealed in our investigation](#), that \$3 billion was wiped from the value of the company in a matter of months.

Our investigation, alongside *The Australian Financial Review's* Neil Chenoweth, went back almost two decades, trawling through court records, company records, leaked material, financial accounts and contacts, and uncovered serious issues inside the company. Those issues included poor governance, years of missed financial forecasts and a controversial options package that allowed former chairman and founder Tony Castagna to walk away from the initial public offering with \$80 million from just a \$3000 investment, as well as documentation which raised serious questions about when Nuix CFO Stephen Doyle sold shares to his brother in tax-friendly Switzerland.

It delved into the role of Nuix's major shareholder, Macquarie, and how far it would go to protect its own.

The fallout from our investigation into Nuix was profound. The chief financial officer quit, the CEO resigned and the [Australian Federal Police launched a criminal investigation into the co-founder, Mr Castagna](#). Then the regulator ASIC investigated the share trading of Nuix by Stephen Doyle, his brother and father which [culminated in them now facing a criminal investigation into insider trading](#). No charges have been laid to date. Separately, the Macquarie-backed company is facing separate investigations into false and misleading statements in the prospectus.



Adele Ferguson
Investigative reporter



Kate McClymont
Investigative reporter

CROWN UNMASKED

Our investigations into Australian casino companies Crown Resorts and, most recently, Star Entertainment, have led to sweeping changes to Australia's gaming sector.

Our reporting on Crown in 2019 and in 2020 prompted and then informed three commissions of inquiry in three states. But it began with tip-offs from law enforcement insiders and a brave Crown whistleblower, Jenny Jiang. These sources all passed information to us about how Crown prioritised high-roller revenue over good governance, anti-money laundering controls and its social licence.

After the information was corroborated with more sources and internal Crown files, we published a series of stories. Crown went forcefully on the defensive, denying all wrongdoing and attacking our journalists.

We held firm, knowing our information was solid. And we kept publishing, including reports in 2020 and 2021 which revealed more about how Crown had got into bed with organised criminals.

This year our work was vindicated, most notably by the Bergin inquiry in NSW and the Finkelstein royal commission in Victoria. Both found Crown unfit to hold a licence and called for new laws and regulatory agencies. Our investigations into Star Entertainment – owner of The Star Sydney casino and two casinos in Queensland – kicked off earlier this year, and led to a public inquiry that will begin in 2022.

Star's board will face the same searing scrutiny as Crown's directors, given our revelations that Star engaged in near identical behaviour.



Nick McKenzie
Age investigative reporter



↑ Illustration: Matthew Absalom-Wong and Mark Stehle



→ Raymond Finkelstein QC during Victoria's royal commission into Crown Casino in Melbourne.
Illustration: Louie Douvis



Former Special Air Service soldier Ben Roberts-Smith walking into court in Sydney in June. Photo: Edwina Pickles

BEN ROBERTS-SMITH

Our ongoing reporting of the Ben Roberts-Smith scandal this year made fresh headlines around the country. We revealed allegedly buried photographic evidence of potential war crimes and shocking behaviour by SAS soldiers on base in Afghanistan, sparking two fresh federal police investigations into Mr Roberts-Smith (in addition to two existing war-crimes probes).

Australian Federal Police Deputy Commissioner Ian McCartney told a Senate committee after our reporting that his agency had commenced “priority” probes into alleged witness intimidation and the alleged mishandling of classified information. Both those investigations are ongoing.



Nick McKenzie
Age investigative reporter

The exclusive reporting was many months in the making, with investigative journalist Chris Masters and I carefully verifying the evidence, cultivating sources and painstakingly building a compelling story.

This was difficult journalism done despite an ongoing defamation fight in relation to articles we published about Mr Roberts-Smith in 2018. We trust our readers recognise the added difficulty reporting on these matters in the face of these defamation proceedings and recognise we are driven by the public’s right to know.

SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME

For more than 50 years, police globally, backed by forensic experts, have used a medical diagnosis called shaken baby syndrome to mount child-homicide cases and child-protection actions.

But what if shaken baby syndrome was more pseudo-science than scientific fact? What if potentially innocent parents were being sent to jail because the system refused to accept there might be a fundamental flaw in the theory?

The Age's series exposed the high-stakes battle going on inside and between Australia's legal, law enforcement, medical and forensic science communities over shaken baby syndrome, which has been the key piece of evidence in recent child homicide and abuse cases despite mounting concerns worldwide about its validity.

My story was the first time that some of the nation's top forensic scientists had publicly called into question the way the theory was being used by police and prosecutors to secure convictions where no other evidence of abuse existed – a scenario that was labelled “incredibly dangerous” for the integrity of the justice system.

The Age conducted an investigation that canvassed this emotive issue from all sides. We showed how growing challenges to the scientific basis of shaken baby syndrome internationally were being raised in Australia and the push-back that critics were receiving from supporters and some forensic experts.

We also revealed that the fight had become so intense that two expert witnesses had threatened defamation action that forced the nation's top forensic journal to pull down a scientific paper critical of their work. The dispute also led a senior Victorian homicide investigator to allegedly break the law to run a background check on the academic who challenged the accuracy of shaken baby syndrome.

Debate about the theory is occurring within a wider questioning of other forensic sciences, such as bullet, hair, footprint and bite-mark analysis, which are still accepted uncritically in Australian courts. *The Age* revealed the federal government had secretly abandoned a plan to investigate these techniques.

This series was difficult to research and delicate to report, but it launched a debate about an issue that strikes at the heart of the integrity of the justice system.

The Victorian Court of Appeal heard a challenge in late this year against a conviction for child homicide in which the science of shaken baby syndrome was put on trial. Prosecutions based on the science have also been put on hold until the court decides whether the 50-year-old theory should stand.



Chris Vedelago
Investigative reporter

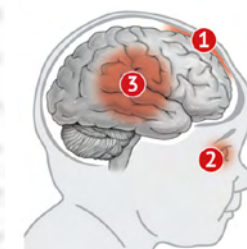


↑ Professor David Ranson is one of two specialists from the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine who raised doubts about the reliability of the syndrome diagnoses. Photo: Eddie Jim

The “triad-only” diagnosis has become controversial internationally but remains widely accepted by Australian law enforcement, forensic specialists and child-abuse experts. Illustration: Jo Gay →

THE TRIAD: These three findings can lead to serious criminal charges

Many forensic medical experts and police say these findings indicate that the baby was violently shaken.



1. Subdural haemorrhage (bleeding under the dural layer of the brain)
2. Retinal haemorrhage (bleeding in the retinas of the eyes)
3. Encephalopathy (swelling in the brain)

ANOTHER BIG YEAR OF NEWS



Police arrest a man and try to put a mask on him at a lockdown protest at Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance in September. Photo: Justin McManus

LIVING WITH COVID

It was meant to be the year we emerged, triumphant and carefree, from the shackles of COVID-19. Instead, Victorians became veterans of the pandemic and Melburnians finished the year holding the unwelcome world record for the longest time in lockdown, some proud, some angry, many weary but hopeful.

Nothing this century has consumed our reporting at *The Age* as much as the COVID-19 pandemic, and this year our journalists have spent thousands of hours devoted to investigating what it means for all of us.

Back in 2014, I wrote an article warning that a pandemic could “shut down Melbourne”. What actually happened is far stranger than any prediction. More than 260 days of lockdown. Playgrounds cordoned off. Families separated by five kilometres or 5000. Schools closed for months.

The key exception from the 2014 article and other forecasts is that we managed to dramatically limit the death toll, after suppressing about five outbreaks, an enormous achievement.

We’ve all had questions, and lots of them. Why has Victoria had so many outbreaks? Will the kids be OK? We have a team dedicated to explaining issues of the day (they write our “explainers”), but like never before there has been a wider newsroom effort to try to get to the heart of questions that often didn’t have clear answers.

The answers were also changing, as the evidence did. Our governments didn’t always keep up. We wrote many articles about the danger of airborne spread of COVID-19, inadequacies in hotel quarantine, and the importance of proper ventilation.

It was easy to make assumptions about Victoria’s outbreaks. We resisted this and instead examined the evidence, revealing for example that Hume, one of the areas hardest hit by the Delta variant, had less than half the number of GPs as richer areas, an example of vaccine inequality.

The health system was strained well before this year. COVID-19 has deepened the cracks, and as *The Age* has revealed, contributed to preventable deaths. I’m proud of the detailed reporting from the health and state politics team on this issue, looking at the impact of a wave of sicker, younger and unvaccinated patients on the health system, and the extraordinary measures being taken to cope with record demand. We have celebrated our dedicated healthcare workers, tired but still fronting up. Melissa Cunningham’s story on her visit to Sunshine Hospital’s intensive care unit, where healthcare workers were battling a never-ending scourge of misinformation, was read hundreds of thousands of times.



↑ Yarraville locals Julie and Lucio Ughetti had a picnic on Ballarat Street to celebrate the end of lockdown number six.
Photo: Paul Jeffers

There have also been so many memorable articles that boiled down to one thing – get vaccinated – such as the story of Reservoir grandfather Leon Stingas, who wasn’t there to pick the veggies he’d planted.

We celebrated our local heroes. We examined the hardships felt by many Victorians, disproportionately affected by shutdowns. At times it has felt like a state divided. As Melburnians struggled to recognise a shuttered city marked by outbreaks of violent protest, captured strikingly by our photographers, our reporters explained what and who was driving the unrest.

We have been reporting the latest developments as they happened, with countless live blogs, sometimes viewed more than a million times a day. When our most recent road maps were announced, our journalists, now experienced at reporting lockdown announcements and exits, delivered sharp analysis as the government walked a tricky tightrope between freedoms and overwhelming the health system. When Melbourne finally reopened, we ventured out at midnight to celebrate with you.

We can now look forward with optimism to a better year ahead, but after two years of covering the twists and turns of the pandemic, it’s also certain that nothing is assured. Life with COVID will be different than before, Melbourne could be forever changed. There will be more questions, and we’ll be there to answer them.



Aisha Dow
Health editor

VACCINE ROLLOUT

If COVID-19 has been the bad-news story of the past two years, the vaccines have been the good news. At the start of the pandemic, many eminent scientists warned that a vaccine was years away. Instead, we move into 2022 with a number of stunningly-good vaccines approved for a wide range of people.

The Age has covered the story each step of the way, charting the optimism and dashed hopes of science, the rollout's successes and failures and what it will mean for us in the long term.

We reported, in depth, the development of the University of Queensland's COVID-19 vaccine - and then broke the news that it had generated false HIV positives. We covered the development of vaccines from Pfizer, Moderna, Novavax and AstraZeneca and then when they were approved in Australia, we delved into how they worked. Our graphics team built a custom Q&A mini-site to answer all your vaccine questions; our data team built a vaccine tracker data site, which is updated daily.

All along, we stayed sceptical and focused on the evidence. We resisted the temptation to be populist or panicked. I'm particularly proud of our coverage of the AstraZeneca blood-clotting issue. We resisted the scaremongering of other outlets, explaining the science, how tiny the risks truly were and then revealing the new treatments that had further cut those risks.

In a public health crisis, journalism should do more than just present the facts - it should explain, contextualise and analyse them. I did this with the new science newsletter, *Examine*, first working through the psychology of why we were worried about AstraZeneca's side-effects, and then writing a guide for people to do the maths on their own personal risk. We received dozens of notes from doctors telling us they had patients coming in to get jabbed on the basis of these articles. That is journalism that makes a difference.

When it became clear Australia's vaccine rollout was stuttering, we focused on what was going wrong, led by our federal health reporter Rachel Clun. We revealed the problems besetting the slow rollout, the limited supply and the anger from doctors. We investigated whether Australia should have ordered more vaccines, or from different brands. We revealed Australia took vaccines from a stockpile meant for poor countries - one of the most heartbreaking developments of the pandemic, in my view.

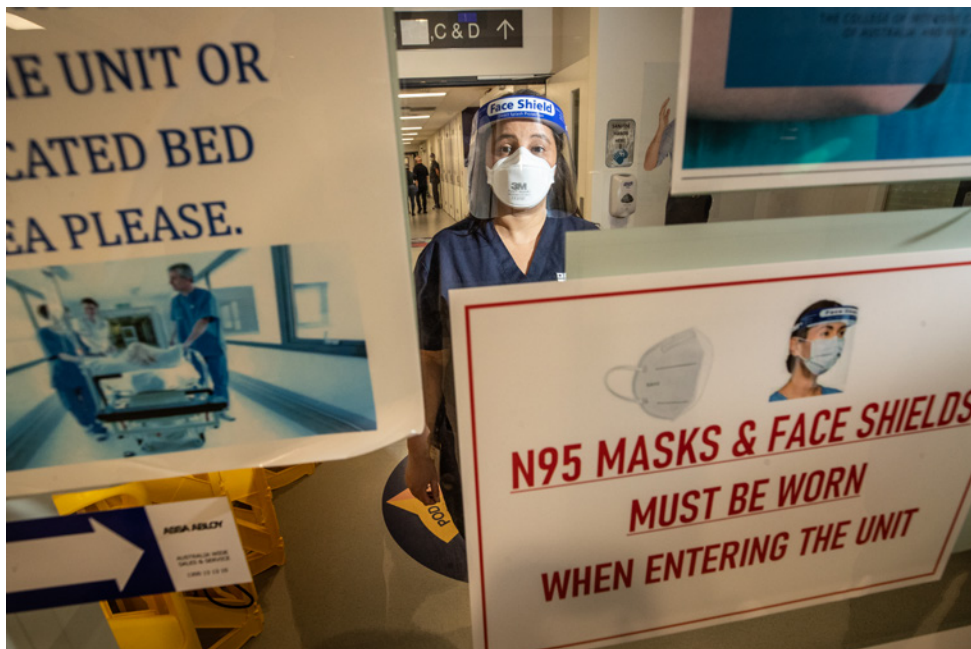
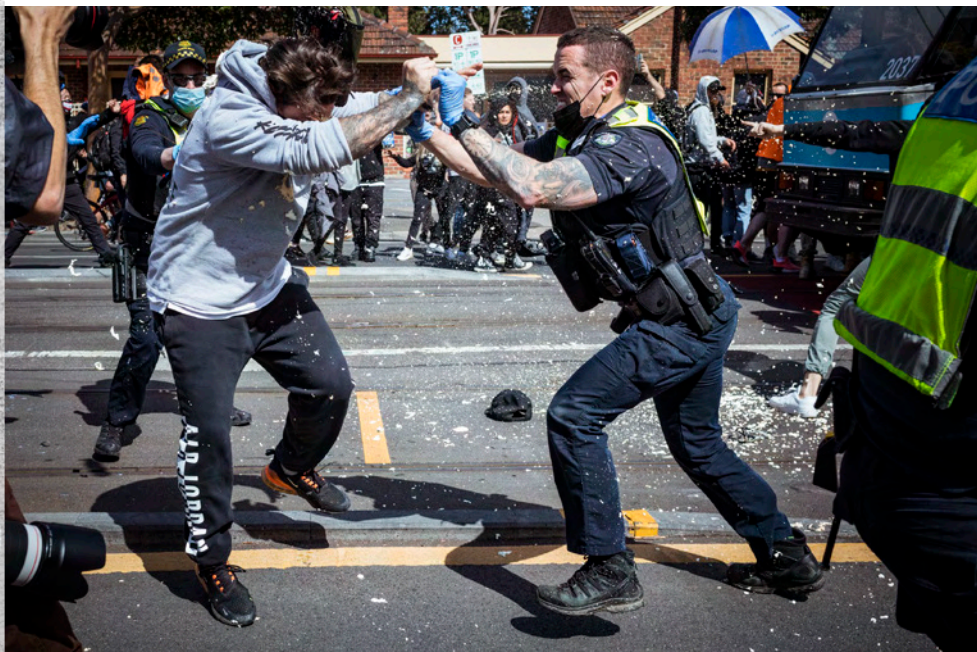
And now, we report on the success story: despite the bumps along the road, Australia looks set to exceed 90 per cent of people fully vaccinated. An incredible achievement.



Liam Mannix
National science reporter



↑ Simon was one of the first to receive a vaccine at this pop-up vaccination clinic for the homeless and disadvantaged in Melbourne. Photo: Chris Hopkins



Top left: Protesters clash with police at an anti-lockdown rally in Richmond in September. Photo: Chris Hopkins. Top right: Shoppers at the Queen Victoria Market emerge from a snap lockdown in February. Photo: Justin McManus. Bottom left: ICU workers prepare for an expected surge in COVID-19 patients. Photo: Jason South. Bottom right: Manpreet Singh, from the Sikh Volunteers Australia, launched an appeal to fund a permanent commercial kitchen to cook for the disadvantaged. Photo: Scott McNaughton



Top left: A resident support officer at the Four Points by Sheraton quarantine hotel, Melbourne Docklands, in April. Photo: Jason South. Top right: Members of the St Francis Football Club (Ethan, Maxwell, Samuel, Mya and Kyle, 12) looking forward to a return to local footy. Photo: Chris Hopkins. Bottom left: A patient taken away in an ambulance from The View Hotel, Melbourne, where Australian Open tennis players stayed in quarantine. Photo: Joe Armao. Bottom right: Staying up late for that long-awaited hair cut when Melbourne's lockdown number six ended at 11.59pm on Thursday, October 21. Photo: Luis Enrique Ascuí



Neighbours play a mini-golf tournament on nature strips in Preston and Thornbury to combat lockdown blues. Photo: Eddie Jim

STATE POLITICS

With the deadly second wave of the pandemic behind it, the Andrews government was hoping for a quieter start to 2021. But a slip on some wet stairs in March left Premier Daniel Andrews with a serious back injury and he only narrowly avoided permanent spinal damage. The Premier, who had become a fixture in Australian living rooms in 2020 due to his daily press conferences, was off work for more than 100 days as he recovered after fracturing his T7 vertebra and several ribs.

While cases of COVID-19 remained low, the failure of the state's hotel quarantine program, which led to the deaths of more than 800 people in 2020, loomed over the government. The state politics team continued to expose breaches, including allegations nurses and doctors were filling shifts across nine quarantine hotels and offices, contravening government rules. The state government denied the reports but in February, Victoria was sent into a five-day lockdown when more than a dozen returned travellers and hotel quarantine staff linked to the Melbourne Airport Holiday Inn quarantine hotel contracted COVID-19.

That same month the Liberal Party, which had struggled to gain traction in 2020, descended into instability, with relatively unknown MP Brad Battin launching a coup against opposition leader Michael O'Brien, exposed by *The Age*. Battin was defeated as two rival factions united to protect O'Brien, although the result did little to ease tensions or hold off leadership uncertainty.

By May, Victoria was again declared a coronavirus hotspot, triggering fresh restrictions after a cluster of COVID-19 cases emerged in Melbourne's north. With acting Premier James Merlino leading the state, case numbers were eventually brought back down to zero, but it would only be a few weeks before Victoria was plunged back into lockdown and Parliament was suspended.

Having returned to work, Andrews launched a fresh attack, calling on then NSW premier Gladys Berejiklian to implement tighter restrictions in the hope they would stop the virus seeping into Victoria. But in July, an incursion of the virulent Delta strain from NSW triggered heavy restrictions in Victoria that would last months.

The Age's state politics bureau again revealed leadership rumblings within the Liberal Party, reporting that O'Brien's position was once more under threat. Matthew Guy successfully challenged and returned to the top job. But within weeks the political career of one of Guy's strongest supporters, Tim Smith, was in ruins. The outspoken MP had crashed his luxury car into a Melbourne fence while more than 2½ times the legal blood alcohol limit. Smith was forced to resign from the frontbench and ultimately give up his safe seat of Kew, sparking fresh turmoil in the Coalition, which was already fractured after tapes of a heated party room meeting weeks earlier were leaked to *The Age*.



↑ Health Minister Martin Foley, Premier Daniel Andrews and Chief Medical Officer Brett Sutton arrive at the daily press conference in September. Photo: Darrian Traynor

We also highlighted the worrying politicisation of the state's public service, with the August feature "The chosen few: how Victoria is really governed" revealing political operatives in virtually every public service department and a radical centralising of power around the Premier's office. All this challenges the traditional notions of the Westminster system, under which the public service is independent of the government and gives frank and fearless policy advice.

The Adem Somyurek tapes story, which *The Age* broke in 2020, leading to the removal of three state cabinet ministers, claimed a fourth scalp this year. On the first morning of public hearings, which were triggered by our Faceless Man investigation, the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission was told Victorian minister Luke Donnellan had paid for party memberships, forcing him to resign from cabinet.



Annika Smethurst
State political editor



Grace Tame, the 2021 Australian of the Year, during her address to the National Press Club in March. Photo: Alex Ellinghausen

Former Liberal staffer Brittany Higgins speaks at the March 4 Justice rally at Parliament House, Canberra, in March.
Photo: Dominic Lorrimer



WOMEN SPEAK UP

In late January, when many Australians were shaking off the sandy remnants of summer holidays, Grace Tame was talking about swallowing fear and making noise. Freshly crowned Australian of the Year, the child abuse survivor and advocate told the *Herald's* David Crowe she wanted to use her new position to create change.

The noise she wanted fellow survivors to make grew louder in mid February when former Liberal staffer Brittany Higgins went public with allegations that she had been raped in Parliament House. Higgins was inspired by Tame's speech. At Parliament House in Canberra, the atmosphere was brittle and electric as politicians and media pushed for lasting change. Our wrap-up of the movements informed the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet's review of complaint processes in Parliament House.

Outside the "Canberra bubble", women were organising a March 4 Justice to demand change within politics, action on the Respect@Work report about stamping out workplace



Katina Curtis
Political reporter

sexual harassment, and better treatment of women. Jewel Topsfield broke the story that Liberal backbencher Bridget Archer was the first government MP to confirm she would join the march. Veteran feminist Biff Ward told Topsfield the day tens of thousands of women marched felt like "a tidal wave of rage is sweeping the land".

Photographers Alex Ellinghausen and Dominic Lorrimer captured the mood in Canberra, where Higgins made a surprise appearance. They also documented the increase in women in Parliament, in particular the new mothers who pushed for the way Australia does politics to become more family-friendly. In the days after the march I reported exclusively on the push for a cross-party group to support getting more women into politics and the slow moves within the Liberal Party towards implementing quotas for female candidates.



Left: Christian Porter held a press conference in Perth in March about historic rape allegations which he strenuously denied. Photo: Trevor Collens

Right: Former Liberal MP Julia Banks, photographed for Good Weekend in June, wrote about Canberra's boys' club in her book published this year. Photo: Kristoffer Paulsen

One of the most powerful initiatives of the masthead was the letters editor's call for women readers to share their stories. Hundreds of women responded. They wrote of the traumas suffered, of feelings of shame, humiliation and fear they had endured, many for decades. Former Liberal MP Julia Banks shared her experiences from inside the system. *Good Weekend* published an extract of her book *Power Play*, where she revealed numerous sexist run-ins she had had in the corridors of power and recounted a "bullying, short and swift and coldly calculating" phone call from Scott Morrison.

Throughout the year we've also had sustained coverage of the historic rape allegations levelled against then-attorney-general Christian Porter, which he continues to vehemently deny. In an exclusive interview, Jo Dyer, a friend of Porter's accuser Kate, spoke of how Kate had been "assembling her army" and vowed to continue until justice was served. Grace Tame wrote for our opinion pages to highlight the way Morrison's treatment of Porter – at one point returning him to a key parliamentary role – undermined his rhetoric about the standards and treatment of women.

By the end of the year, the newsroom's continued focus on "the women issue" had helped keep it in the public debate and led to concrete commitments from governments across the nation.

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT



↑ Protesters dressed as Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce on the lawns of Parliament House in October. Photo: Alex Ellinghausen

← Bob Brown Foundation campaigner Jenny Weber in a logging coupe in the Huon Valley, Tasmania. Photo: Jason South

For just over a fortnight in November, the climate and environment team backed by expert reporters from the Canberra press gallery as well as newsrooms in Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra, Brisbane and Perth, worked around the clock to cover gruelling [United Nations climate talks in Glasgow](#).

In truth our COP26 coverage was the culmination of nearly two years of work.

Beginning early last year, the climate and energy team began charting the growing international pressure on Australia to raise its climate ambitions, and the struggles of the federal government and opposition to craft a policy response that addressed the serious issues at stake and the competing concerns of the varied constituencies. We visited rural and regional centres to illustrate the competing interests of farming and coal communities, and explain how governments were succeeding – and failing – to help rebuild the energy sector to cope with a flood of new renewable power.

Months before the talks began, the team identified the push by key Australian allies and trading partners to use Glasgow as the moment [to begin to force coal out of the global economy](#), and wrote a series on the environmental, social, economic and policy implications.

In August our reporters worked with our graphics team [to break down the 4000-page Sixth Assessment report of the UN's lead climate body](#) into a series of clear stories and charts, outlining the scientific case for climate change and for urgent action in Glasgow. We also charted the race towards renewables that has broken out in business and the financial sector.

Even as global attention focused on the Glasgow talks, the team also broke news on domestic environmental and conservation issues and efforts. Bolting from city newsrooms as windows appeared in state lockdowns, we travelled to the Great Barrier Reef to investigate efforts to save battered corals by “planting” resilient species and by shifting farming practices to avoid sediment and nutrient run-off. We joined scientists off the coast of Tasmania to see efforts to [save ancient kelp forests](#) and travelled with others into the Victorian high country and NSW highlands to shed light on debates over the impact of logging and of feral horse populations.

We kept a close eye on the federal government's as yet [undelivered promise to devolve federal environment laws to states](#), and the implications for the protection of Australia's growing list of endangered species. We also broke a series of stories on the “koala wars” in the NSW state government and the [terrible danger that species is in](#). Our reports traced the push to end logging in native forests and the growing slate of research showing that [logging spurs bushfires rather than taming them](#).



Nick O'Malley
National climate and environment editor

Giant kelp expert Dr Cayne Layton
conducting field work at Fortescue Bay,
Tasmania. Photo: Jason South



Fireworks illuminate over the National Stadium during the closing ceremony of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics in August, 2021. Photo: Kiichiro Sato/AP



TOKYO OLYMPICS AND PARALYMPICS

A couple of months before the Tokyo Olympics, two of our most experienced sports writers debated the burning question leading up to the Games: was staging an Olympics during a pandemic a morale booster or an indulgence? Phil Lutton, while acknowledging the dangers, argued the former. “What if everyone comes and goes, no infections break loose and the sport provides us with the kind of magical memories only Olympic competition can produce?” he wrote. Greg Baum, while conceding it would be a crushing blow for athletes if the whole thing were called off, felt the Games could endanger the health of the Japanese people. “Can you imagine the outcry if there is even one citizen death attributable to the Olympics?” Baum wrote. “This is far too much to heap on the shoulders of athletes.”

The Olympics and Paralympics went ahead and instead of being derailed by COVID-19 outbreaks, they gave rise to a wave of joy that was palpable among our readers, especially in locked-down Sydney and Melbourne.

The sense of trepidation before the Games also applied to the media’s coverage, which requires a big investment and months of planning. We needed to secure vaccinations for our journalists travelling to Japan, and they had to clear a series of logistical hurdles to be allowed entry. Our team in Tokyo - Lutton, Chip Le Grand, Michael Gleeson, Eryk Bagshaw and Malcolm Knox - covered the sport as well as the political and cultural significance of these unusual Games. Being on the ground has huge benefits; Knox and Le Grand had a close-up view when the world’s greatest gymnast Simone Biles walked away from defending her title in the all-around competition, sparking a fresh conversation about the mental health of elite athletes.

Sensing an appetite for respite from daily COVID press conferences and case numbers, we ran an Olympics blog from 7am until midnight each day. The blogs were a trusted source of news, results and medal updates but also a place for readers to engage with our

experts, pore over graphics that showed, for example, the lap by lap breakdown of Ariarne Titmus's 'race of the century' against Katie Ledecky, and to share the experience.

While readers celebrated the triumphs of athletes such as Titmus (and her coach Dean Boxall whose outpouring of emotion went viral), they lapped up much more than Aussie gold. One of the most popular stories was about Cedric Dubler, the decathlete who slowed down in the men's 1500 race, screaming at his teammate Ash Moloney to go faster and win the bronze medal. Dubler sacrificed his own race but celebrated his mate's achievement as if he'd won gold.

Readers told us they enjoyed the stories of hard work and sacrifice behind the scenes, and this was particularly true of the feedback to our coverage of the Tokyo Paralympics. Again, we ran a daily blog. Our reporter in Tokyo, Tom Decent, unearthed stories of incredible perseverance and introduced athletes such as Grant 'Scooter' Patterson, the swimmer who has diastrophic dysplasia, a form of dwarfism, and powered to medals. Decent's coverage helped bring Paralympic sport, and athletes such as Ellie Cole, who became Australia's most decorated female Paralympian, into the mainstream. There was tangible change, too, with a grass-roots campaign resulting in Australia's Paralympic medal winners earning the same financial bonuses as their Olympic counterparts.

The worst fears of organisers - a large-scale COVID outbreak in the Olympic village - did not materialise, which is not to say the Games were universally popular in Japan. But even those who held doubts felt their glow at an otherwise grim time.

"Perhaps without meaning to, perhaps against its understandably nervous national instincts," wrote Baum in the immediate aftermath, "Tokyo gave the world a gift."

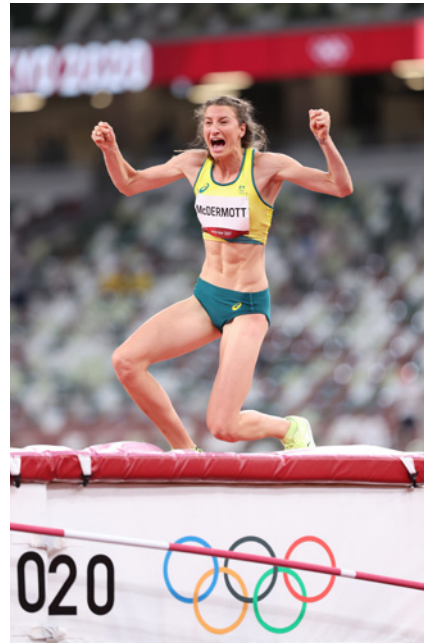


Chloe Saltau
Sports editor

Top left: Australian Nicola McDermott celebrates winning the silver medal in the women's high jump at the Tokyo Olympic Games. Photo: Michael Steele/Getty

Top right: Australian swimmer Ariarne Titmus reacts with her coach Dean Boxall after winning the gold medal in the women's 200m freestyle final at the Tokyo Olympic Games. Photo: Clive Rose/Getty

Bottom: American Natalie Sims (left) and Australian Ellie Cole prepare to compete in the women's 400m freestyle - S9 final at the Tokyo Paralympic Games. Photo: Naomi Baker/Getty

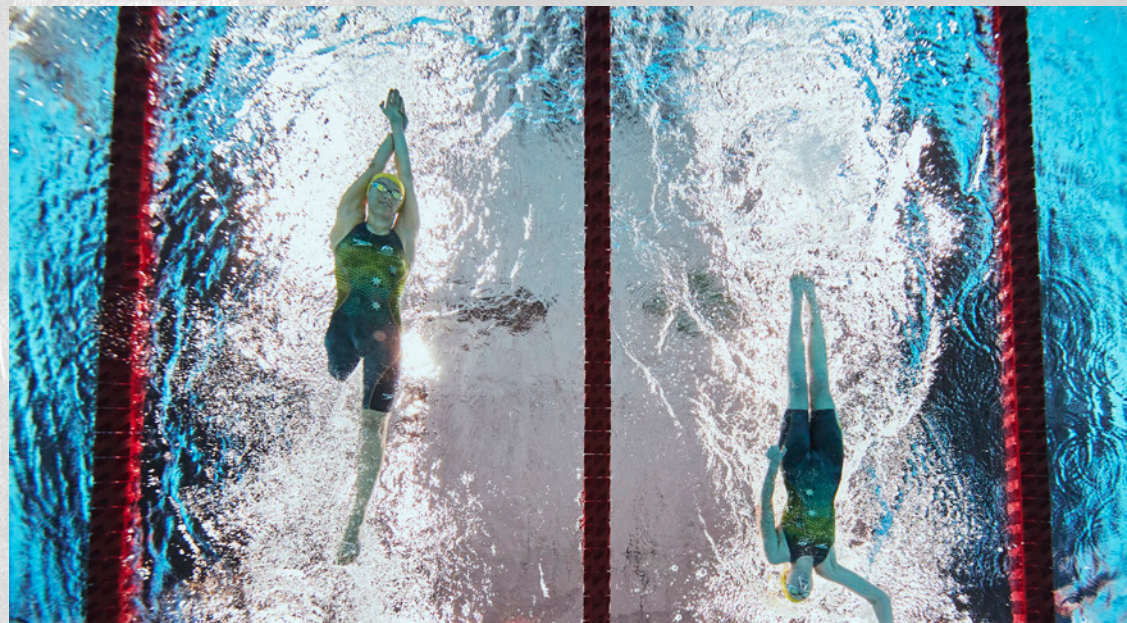




Runners react after they compete in the men's decathlon 1500m on day 13 of the Tokyo Olympic Games. Photo: Richard Heathcote/Getty



Australian Kieran Woolley competes in the men's skateboarding heats at the Tokyo Olympics. Photo: Ezra Shaw/Getty



Australians Ellie Cole (left) and Lakeisha Patterson compete in the women's 400m freestyle - S9 heats at the Tokyo Paralympic Games. Photo: Adam Pretty/Getty

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS



↑ Wergaia and Wamba Wamba elder Professor Eleanor Bourke, chairperson of the Yoo-rrook Justice Commission.
Photo: Justin McManus

For too many years, non-Indigenous journalists have held the power in mainstream media organisations to decide for our audiences what is of importance when reporting on First Nations issues – culture, history, politics and society.

In July, *The Age*, in association with the Judith Neilson Institute for Journalism and Ideas, took a step to change that by appointing the highly regarded Jack Latimore as our Indigenous affairs journalist.

Latimore, a Birpai man with family ties to the Thungutti and Gumbaynggirr nations, and a former editor at NITV, has already made a big difference, both on the page and behind the scenes in what we report and how our (mostly virtual) newsroom reports it.

He has broken significant news stories, such as the fact that the Melbourne City Council and the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria are backing a proposal for a multimillion-dollar development in the heart of Melbourne's CBD that would house the nation's first "Black Parliament" – if it becomes a reality. The building would double as a "keeping place" for repatriated artefacts and a place of reconciliation.

He has written features and spoken on our *Please Explain* podcast about the importance of language in culture and how so many First Nations languages are on the brink of extinction.

And he enlightened us as to the long and proud history of Blak media. Locked out of the mainstream, First Nations people started their own organisations, creating a rich and complex media environment to tell their own stories.

And to those surprised by the spelling above of the word Blak, I commend to you Jack's two delightful, light-hearted but sharp pieces on how to write about, and speak to, mob.

In addition to hiring Jack, *The Age* is determined to take a leading role in our ongoing coverage of the Yoo-rrook Justice Commission, which though delayed like everything else by the pandemic, will be a crucial investigation into the truth of what happened in Victoria as colonisation swept through the state and dispossessed First Nations people of their land.

Senior writer Tony Wright spent months researching the story of how First Nations people lived before white settlement, the impact of contact, and the harrowing story of Kalloongoo, sold as a child to a whaler. For the first time, *The Age* commissioned former editor Michael Gawenda to do our own truth telling. He found that *The Age*, through its 167-year history, too often has told Indigenous stories through white eyes.



Michael Bachelard
Deputy editor



Wurundjeri woman Mandy Nicholson is an expert in the Woivurrung language and is working to revive it. Photo: Justin McManus

THE STORY OF AUKUS

Defence secrets are hard to keep, but this year Prime Minister Scott Morrison managed to keep the details of the game-changing new nuclear submarine deal with the United States and United Kingdom from leaking.

Well, almost. Our national security correspondent Anthony Galloway and national affairs editor Rob Harris knew something was afoot the evening of Thursday, September 15, when they broke the story that cabinet ministers had been granted border exemptions to fly to Canberra for a security briefing and that the Opposition Leader had also been informed. Later that night we knew it was about our multibillion-dollar submarine deal.

North America correspondent Matthew Knott and UK-based reporter Latika Bourke filed from overnight briefings on the astonishing scope of the new alliance, known as AUKUS: Australia was tearing up its \$90 billion French submarine deal to join the elite club of nations with nuclear-powered submarines. The US and Britain would unlock the closely guarded secrets of a fleet that could better face the rising challenge of Chinese military dominance in the Indo-Pacific.

As Knott wrote in his analysis: “a country that takes inordinate pride in ‘punching above its weight’ on the global stage is very much doing so again”.

But the price of our pact was a serious rift with France. Our Europe correspondent, Bevan Shields, swung on immediately to warn that angering the most powerful leader in the European Union would have serious consequences. His predictions proved correct when French President Emmanuel Macron recalled his ambassadors to both Australia and the US, while his most senior ministers and diplomats were very undiplomatic about the Morrison government in interviews given to our journalists.

When asked twice by Shields on the floor of the G20 summit in Rome if he thought Morrison had lied to him, Macron made clear that he had neither forgotten nor forgiven: “I don’t think, I know”. This five-word missile aimed at the credibility of another world leader made headlines around the world.

As our south-east Asia correspondent, Chris Barrett, reported: neighbouring nations from Indonesia to Malaysia were also unhappy about this seismic geopolitical shift.

This is only the beginning of the story of AUKUS: its potential and perils remain ahead. We are yet to even select the new, astronomically expensive submarine to replace the abandoned French models. But our journalists will continue to break the stories that matter on this momentous decision.



Michelle Griffin
World editor



↑
Prime Minister Scott Morrison meets with UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson at a bilateral meeting during the G20 summit in Rome in October. Photo: Alex Ellinghausen



→
French President Emmanuel Macron responds to questions from Australian journalists after his G20 press conference. Photo: Alex Ellinghausen

HOW WE'RE COVERING THE NEWS



Thousands of CFMEU members and other people angry about mandatory vaccinations and lockdowns shutdown parts of the city including the Westgate Bridge. Photo: Jason South

RETURN TO POLITICAL POLLING

Our two main goals in setting up the [Resolve Political Monitor](#) were to bring more competition to political polling and to learn some of the lessons from the last federal election.

First, we talked about finding a new company that could do things differently. We found the answer in Jim Reed, who established Resolve Strategic after many years working in polling in politics and business. Our executive editor, Tory Maguire, [set up a new way for us to probe how voters felt about politics and policies](#).

Second, we chose to drop the element in so much political polling that turns the results into a “horse race” between the two main political parties. We chose not to make it all about the two-party-preferred result, which reduces everything to a number for Labor and a number for the Coalition. These two-party-preferred results have always been simplistic. Mostly the results are within the margin of error. But they have encouraged people to think one party is in front when the race is almost always tighter than it looks. Labor found this out at the last election. So did the media.

The Resolve survey uses a different methodology from others. There is no “undecided” category because Resolve asks voters to nominate their primary votes in the same way they fill in their ballot papers for the lower house at an election. This means the final Resolve tables do not exclude the “uncommitted” group, which can be about 8 per cent of all respondents. There is no “uncommitted” cohort. Respondents have to choose an option.

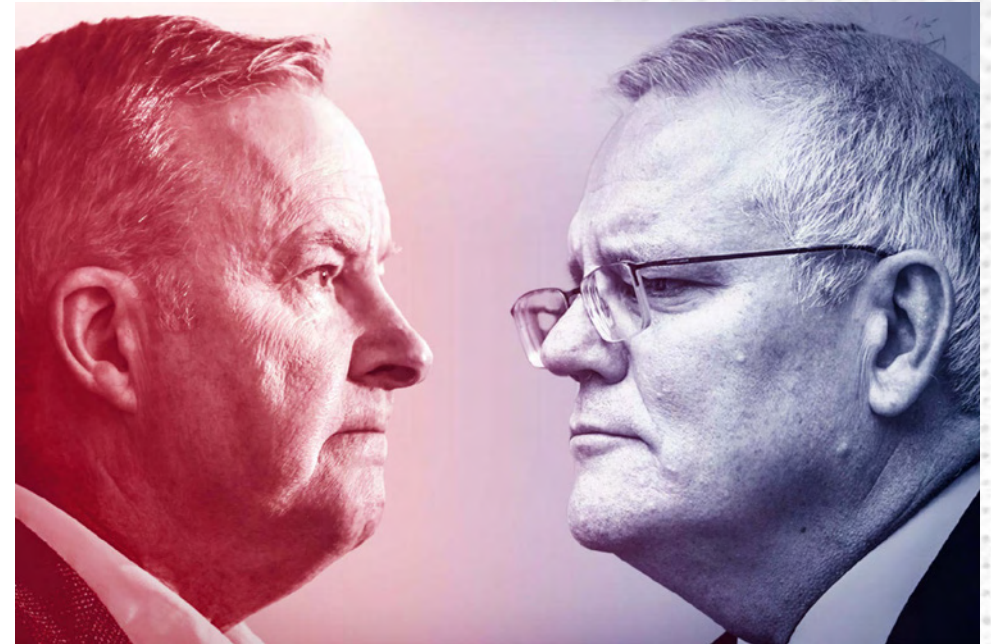
The Resolve Political Monitor also asks voters to state their support for political parties in the same way they would fill out a ballot paper at the election, with the names of the parties rotated to avoid a “donkey vote” in the results.

The outcomes have been tight in each survey we have done [since April](#). Rather than try to portray one party as a clear leader, Reed has been very matter-of-fact about the results being too close to call. They are almost always within the margin of error of 2.5 percentage points.

Political polls capture only a moment in time. The Resolve survey does not predict the next election. What it shows, however, is the shift between the parties over time.



David Crowe
Chief political correspondent



The outcomes have been tight in each survey we have done since April with results too close to call. Photo: The Age

OPINION

Easy access to social media means that almost anyone can express their opinion to the world in real time with a number of simple keystrokes. But as the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, this largely unregulated power to influence can stoke misunderstanding, even fear, when it is used to distort the truth. This has been particularly true in this year's often fiery debates about vaccine efficacy, the purpose of locking down communities and the associated restrictions on movement.

Increased awareness of the causes and impact of climate change has also attracted often wild and misleading claims and counterclaims.

With a plethora of views circulating, *The Age* seeks credible and informed voices to make a meaningful contribution to discussions affecting Victoria and our nation. We don't have to agree with a viewpoint, but articles must be well-written, properly argued and based in fact. We believe that liberal democracies flourish only if debate is free and robust.

As well as seeking different viewpoints, we are focused on including more women, younger Australians and ethnically diverse voices. Not only do these writers better reflect our changing population, but varied life experiences produce more interesting, compelling opinion pieces.

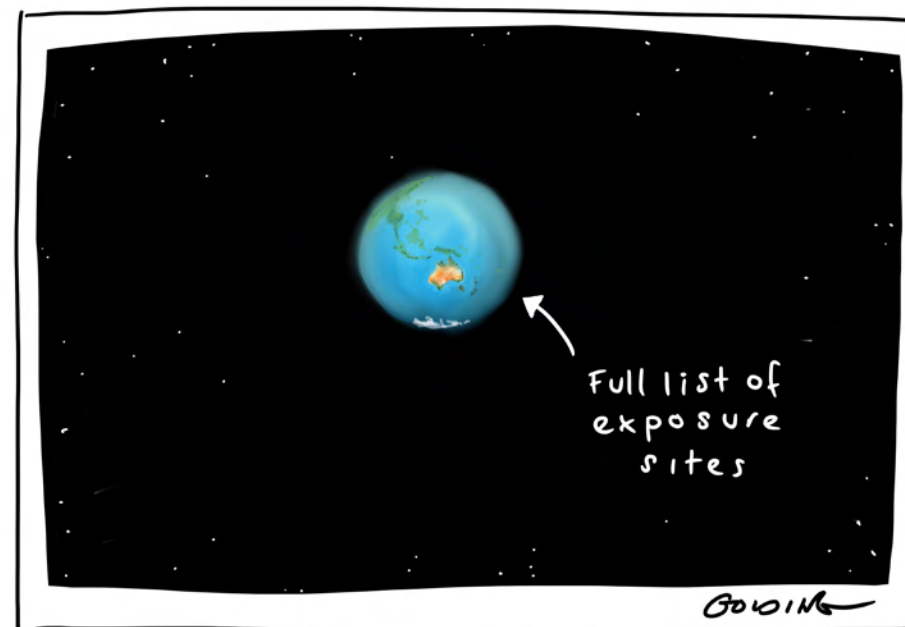
We regularly review our line-up to keep it fresh and varied. As part of this we were proud to have the highly experienced author and journalist Niki Savva join the ranks of our regular columnists earlier this year. Her column appears in print and online every Thursday. The highly versatile and popular lifestyle writer Kate Halfpenny has also joined us. Her Saturday columns provide everything from insights into her personal relationships and family life to her views on the relevance of the royal family in the 21st century.

Other regular columnists providing insightful commentary on national, international, business and local issues include Peter Hartcher, Waleed Aly, George Megalogenis, Julie Szego, Annika Smethurst, David Crowe, John Silvester, Jon Faine, Shaun Carney, Ross Gittins and Jessica Irvine.

Many of our best read pieces this year assessed the government and the Prime Minister's performance in managing the pandemic and the emissions target policy. Among our most popular pieces was Hartcher's "[Even Gladys Berejiklian is fed up with PM, who she privately regards as 'evil' and a 'bully'](#)". The piece examined Scott Morrison's fractious relationship with the state premiers, including fellow Liberal Berejiklian.

Aly's "[Fools Gold: Believing the hype, NSW ignored lockdown lessons](#)" also drew a strong readership as did Savva's "[Prime Minister Scott Morrison a cranky man in need of a](#)

Cartoon: Matt Golding



[plan](#)", about Morrison losing his temper with then NSW treasurer Dominic Perrottet for questioning his employment support package.

At a state level, Faine channelled what many Victorians were thinking after a second long winter of lockdown in "[I can't do this any more': The lockdown lament that must be addressed](#)", as did Szego when she wrote in "[Road map leads us to stark choices](#)" about yet another AFL grand final being played interstate.

While we knew the pandemic was far from over, this time last year we did not expect it to still figure so prominently in the national debate. Hopefully, 12 months from now, we will be writing about it as an event in our recent history.



Margaret Easterbrook
Opinion editor



This year saw the return of popular podcasts *Please Explain*, *Real Footy*, *Good Weekend Talks*, *Naked City* and the launch of audio news bulletin *News with The Age*. ↑

THE SOUND OF *THE AGE*

We've often contemplated the question: What does *The Age* sound like? One of the challenges for us is that we are a publisher not a broadcaster. Primarily, we have words rather than a steady flow of radio or TV content. But that's also very liberating. It affords us an entirely clean slate, and every podcast we make is original and crafted purely for the medium. That's why 2021 was such a rewarding year for *The Age's* audio team.

In August [Nathanael Cooper](#) joined the team as executive producer, and filled the very big boots of [Tory Maguire](#) as host of our flagship news podcast *Please Explain* when Maguire was promoted to executive editor. Cooper was joined by co-hosts [Bianca Hall](#) and [Jess Irvine](#) in a new line-up. Like all good journalism, the podcast is constantly adapting to the world around it. We moved from a weekly to a daily offering last year in response to the pandemic, and it's now in an expanded format, covering the biggest topics across the nation.

One recent favourite was [how preserving First Nations languages forms a key part of preserving culture](#). With many Indigenous languages already lost or dormant as a result of colonisation, the importance of preserving language, and for all Australians to learn it, has come into sharp focus. Cooper was joined by Indigenous affairs journalist [Jack Latimore](#) to discuss the importance of language as part of our [truth-telling series](#).

Our long-running *Real Footy* podcast didn't pack up the day after the grand final this year. We ran special, daily updates on the trade period. Publishing every evening once the day's

dealings were done, it proved a welcome addition for our footy audience. *Naked City*, with veteran crime reporter John Silvester, was a continuing success this year, as was our *Good Weekend Talks* podcast. Look out for more from those two in the new year.

We've also recently launched our [twice-daily audio news bulletins](#), *News with The Age*. Accessible through smart speakers and podcast platforms, they were a natural step for *The Age* to bring up-to-date headlines to a whole new audience. It's another example of trying to make the most of our journalism and making it accessible in the widest possible range of formats to suit the reader or listener.

It's a privilege to create audio journalism for *The Age*, and to work with a team who have such talent and passion for their craft. And that team is expanding – we're hiring new producers and getting more of our best reporters behind the microphone – so stay tuned for more exciting audio offerings in 2022.



Tom McKendrick
Head of audio and video

MONEY WITH JESS



COVID-19 has forced many of our readers to take a closer look at their personal finances. Whether it was saving money during lockdown on their

daily commute and morning coffee or having their incomes severely buffeted, our readers took a great interest in how to best manage their money in 2021.

Since early 2020, I've been writing a weekly column in the *Sun Herald* and *The Sunday Age* Money sections chronicling my own journey to budget, save and invest my money better. In January 2021, we launched a free weekly email newsletter called *Money with Jess*. It hits reader inboxes early each Sunday morning, serving up a fresh "budget tip of the week" and links to all our fantastic Money articles and resources. I've also started hosting our *Please Explain* podcast once a week to delve into a money-related issue.

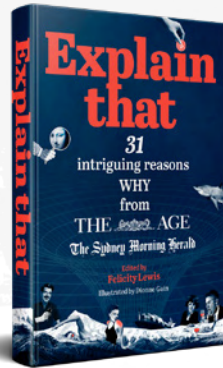
The response from readers, including during a subscriber Q&A earlier this year, has been wonderful, typified by this email I recently received: "Thank you so much for your newsletter and all your articles this year. They have been such a huge help." I've also enjoyed connecting with a new audience of younger readers via my Instagram account @moneywithjess in which I share intimate details of my own financial life. Money talks - and our readers listen with great interest!



Jessica Irvine
Senior writer

EXPLAINERS

With a pivotal climate summit just over, a pandemic in its second year and geopolitical rumblings unabated, there's been a lot to explain in 2021. Our rule of thumb is, if we're curious about something, there's every chance you will be too. This year we've provided in-depth context on everything from bitcoin and COP26 to hypersonic weapons and rapid antigen tests - in essence, users' guides to the news. And we've delved into some of life's big questions: Is time travel possible? Where did the Australian accent come from? and What is love at first sight?



Three years after their relaunch at *The Age* and the *Herald*, explainers have become a popular go-to for inquisitive readers. In a series on future energy we unpacked "green hydrogen", "just transitions" and more; a series on science-fiction ideas-turned-reality explored gene editing, cyborgs and the "de-extinction" of animal species.

Our new Sunday newsletter features Q&As with writers (and illustrators) from across our newsrooms who bring their expertise to our explainer journalism - not least dedicated explainer reporter Sherryn Groch. Meanwhile, after the success of our first book anthology, *What's It Like to Be Chased by a Cassowary* in 2020, Penguin Books has published a second, *Explain That: 31 Intriguing Reasons Why*. Along the way, we've enjoyed corresponding with our readers about the questions that have piqued their curiosity, and the perplexing yet fascinating matters they want explained.



Felicity Lewis
National explainer editor

LAUNCH OF NATIONAL NEWS BLOG



↑ A damaged building on Chapel Street, South Yarra, caused by a 5.9 magnitude earthquake on September 22. Photo: Eddie Jim

Our national news blog launched on Wednesday, May 12, in time for the federal budget washup. Since then, the national blog - which grew out of our rolling coronavirus coverage - has been running for more than 25 consecutive weeks. We have covered the beginning and end of lockdowns, the return of Barnaby Joyce, the rise and fall of state opposition leaders, a premier's resignation, and even an earthquake. The blog kicks off about 6.30am with a summary of the morning's top headlines, and our rolling coverage finishes about 6pm. Every day, without fail, it is the No. 1 asset on both *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald* websites. It also attracts thousands of comments a day from a community of news-hungry, policy-savvy subscribers.



Broede Carmody
National news blogger



Michaela Whitbourn
National news blogger

LIFE AND CULTURE



*Moulin Rouge actor Andy Cook at the Regent Theatre in Melbourne in July.
Photo: Luis Enrique Ascui*



↑ Riot girls: Janelle Johnstone, Linda Johnston, Sarah Blaby, Zec Zechner and Laura MacFarlane.
Photo: Simon Schluter

CULTURE

The Age is passionate about shining a spotlight on Melbourne and Victoria's vibrant cultural scene, from performing and visual arts to live music and musicals.

This year marked the return of the highly respected *Age* Book of the Year award, first launched in 1974, as well as *The Age's* partnership with the Melbourne Writers Festival. The award celebrates the best Australian fiction, and this year's winner, Robbie Arnott, received \$10,000 prize money from the Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund.

The Age's vital role in telling compelling stories about artists and arts companies was especially important in 2021 when so many were pushed to breaking point by COVID restrictions and closures.

Arts editor Nick Miller wrote extensively about the plight of arts companies during lockdown – from financial pressure to the challenge of not being able to rehearse. Miller's coverage resulted in the Victorian government changing its policies around allowing rehearsals and the announcement of a grant to the creative industries of \$15 million.

It wasn't all serious news – *The Age* broke the story that Broadway hit musical *Hamilton* was coming to Melbourne in 2022, and we took an in-depth look at the making of the movie *Chopper* to mark its 20th anniversary.

In longform journalism, we secured an exclusive interview with Sir Paul McCartney about his late wife Linda's photo exhibition in Ballarat, and commissioned author and Melbourne Writers Festival guest Tony Birch to write a moving essay about his childhood that was among our best-read culture stories of the year.

This year we built an even bigger readership for our TV and book reviews through weekly newsletters *The Booklist* and *The Watchlist*. By the end of the year we will launch a weekly guide to the best Melbourne events, called *Culture Fix*.

Here's hoping that 2022 is a time of renewal for Melbourne's arts. *The Age's* Culture team will be in the front row bringing you every newsworthy moment.



Matthew Burgess
Culture editor



LIFE

For the past two years, the Lifestyle team at *The Age* has been fine-tuning its coverage to provide journalism that offers guidance, insight and authority in the areas of personal health, relationships and fashion.

Publishing content that is relevant to the lives of our readers was a top priority in 2020, and only became more urgent in 2021 as the Delta variant of COVID-19 forced the country into further lockdowns.

Our readers were hungry for practical, actionable advice around managing stress, staying fit and achieving balance as our work and home lives continued to collide. Deputy lifestyle editor Sophie Aubrey and I wrote a weekly newsletter called *Live Well* which became a vehicle for articles covering these topics, as well as nuanced, in-depth reporting that moved away from the “quick-hit” journalism synonymous with the wellness space.

Articles such as “[What happens to your body and mind when you reduce your drinking](#)”, “[How to navigate common conversations about vaccination](#)” and our “[Comprehensive guide to running](#)” became essential to the lifestyle offering for existing readers and also served to attract new readers.



Left: Trent Knox, Rachel Stanley and Todd Liubinskas, who are helping runners improve their strength and technique, pictured in June. Photo: Jamie Barrett. Right: Right: Fiorina Golotta, pictured with her daughter Roma, shared her story about becoming a first-time mother at 50. Photo: Eddie Jim

Original video, illustrations and graphics were incorporated into our running guide, giving it a life beyond digital and print. Our expert-led training program was [rolled out on Instagram](#) over a five-week period offering tips and prompting interest from an entirely new audience.

With red carpets having returned in the northern hemisphere, our fashion coverage got a welcome injection of couture courtesy of the Met Gala, which our reporters and editors [live blogged](#) with huge success. A record number of *Age* readers tuned in for the thoughtful and wildly entertaining commentary of the New York City event on a September morning in lockdown.

Also resonating with readers was executive coach [Dr Kirstin Ferguson's weekly *Got a Minute?* career column](#) tackling issues such as leading in a crisis and returning to the office. After almost two years WFH, readers want informed coverage on the future of work and what that may look like. *Got a Minute?* aims to offer clarity and drive meaningful discussions in this space.



Julia Naughton
Lifestyle editor

GOOD WEEKEND

Good Weekend's shoot-the-lights-out readership wins for 2021 were a tale of two cities – two stories that were quintessentially of those cities but of equal interest beyond them. I speak of Kate McClymont's incredible [April cover story on Sydney fraudster Melissa Caddick](#), who ripped millions off her family and friends through a bogus financial advisory scheme and then went missing – only her foot was found. And there was Melissa Fyfe's [devastating July piece on Ashleigh Petrie](#), the 23-year-old Victorian court clerk whose relationship with a magistrate more than 40 years her senior, and tragic death only weeks after they became engaged, had Melbourne agog.

These two stories attracted massive readership and strong social media engagement in both Sydney and Melbourne, a reminder that a story need not come from your own backyard to be gripping. It just needs to be rigorously researched and compellingly well told, something both McClymont and Fyfe pulled off. McClymont's story led to more people coming forward with new information on Caddick, while after Fyfe's story the magistrate's judicial career finished and he started negotiating with Petrie's mother about sharing her daughter's superannuation, something he had not done before.

Two other cover stories that sparked Saturday dinner party chatter were Tim Elliott's August piece on celebrity chef Jock Zonfrillo, which as many observed, underlined the importance of writers digging below what's served up by the spin industry to find the real story about a subject; and James Button's definitive piece on cancel culture, which featured incredible photos of actor Hugh Sheridan on the cover. Both Elliott's piece and Fyfe's Ashleigh Petrie story have been shortlisted for the feature writing long (over 4000 words) category at this year's Walkley Awards, accounting for two of the three finalists in that category. The winner will be announced in February.

Other stories to garner strong reader reactions were David Leser and Natassia Chrysanthos' [deep dive into schoolchildren and sex](#); Stuart Rintoul's exclusive on a controversial new book that sets out to [debunk Bruce Pascoe's publishing bestseller *Dark Emu*](#); Gabriella Coslovich's [look at the Tasmanian salmon industry](#); and at the start of the year, Jacqueline Maley and Nigel Gladstone's [exposé of all that's wrong with the Australian honours system](#), backed up not just by opinion but by hard data. Anne Hyland's [story on the tiny town of Biloela](#), meanwhile, attracted dozens of long, considered letters, highlighting how deeply our readers feel about the issue of immigration; while another piece by Fyfe, this time on [former Victorian politician Tim Holding and the French chateau he's renovating](#), had everyone conjuring up their own French fantasy. Readers responded, too, to complex profiles on [Attorney-General Michaelia Cash](#), [Virgin CEO Jane Hrdlicka](#) and [runner Stuart McSweyn](#). Easy to read; fiendishly hard to do.

Our weekly newsletter sign-ups grew by 37 per cent this year, our *Good Weekend Talks* podcast continued to pick up listeners and our deputy editor, Greg Callaghan, launched a new true crime podcast, *Bondi Badlands*, that shot straight to the top of the Apple podcasts charts. *Good Weekend* merchandise continued to sell well, too, with more than 1400 The Quiz t-shirts and more than 600 tea towels walking out the door. Our plans to roll out our successful Quiz dinners nationwide in 2021 hit a COVID-sized snag, but fear not – they'll be back next year.



Katrina Strickland
Good Weekend editor





TRAVELLER AND GOOD FOOD

In a year in which tourism and hospitality were two of the industries most affected by COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions, the content published on *Traveller* and *Good Food* altered dramatically.

With international borders closed and travel between states a constantly changing scenario, *Traveller's* usual focus on inspirational, destination-driven stories shifted to giving readers the up-to-date advice they were seeking. Longstanding contributor Michael Gebicki penned many of the most-read pieces, including "Want to be allowed out of Australia? Here's what you have to do" and "Will AstraZeneca mean some Australians are unable to travel overseas?", distilling highly complex information into straightforward and indispensable analysis.

Opinion pieces such as "The international border isn't really closed and we're all paying a price" and "Latest lockdown is the last straw for domestic tourism", by highly experienced national Traveller editor Anthony Dennis, and – on a more positive note – "Here are the first international routes Qantas plans to restart", by Traveller.com.au editor Craig Platt, also rated extremely well.

Contributor Ben Groundwater brought some levity to the situation with columns such as "No respect!': Why should I have to clean an Airbnb before I leave?" and "Why the new Qantas ad has all of Australia talking (and crying)" while quirky stories such as "Louis Vuitton plane bag ridiculed for costing more than an actual plane" and "Crossing Japan's 'insane' bridge into the sky" allowed readers some mental (if not physical) escapism.

Meanwhile *Good Food* pivoted from restaurant reviews to stories about the best takeaway, home delivery, chef-prepped meal kits, bakeries and bottled cocktails. As readers comforted themselves through extended lockdowns by baking sourdough, cakes and banana bread and making lasagne and chicken parmigiana, our recipe-driven content attracted the highest audience ever.

Myffy Rigby reported on "Why making pasta is the new yoga", Adam Liaw guided us through combatting cooking fatigue and Gemima Cody put the most popular kitchen gadget of 2021 through its paces.

Callan Boys kept readers entertained with taste tests and, as we looked towards a return to dressing up and dining out, nutritionist Susie Burrell offered tips for losing those COVID kilos while Emma Breheny revealed new openings to get excited about.

We also collaborated with Adam Liaw on a brand new television series, *Good Food Kitchen*. This eight-episode series aired on Channel Nine and 9Now, featuring a host of Good Food talent and guest chefs including Danielle Alvarez, Jill Dupleix and Katrina Meynink sharing easy and delicious recipes. A cross-platform approach included a hub on goodfood.com.au featuring recipes and videos from the show, and a strong social-media presence.

Finally, once both Victoria and NSW were open for business, we published the *Good Food Guide* magazine as part of our Summer of Good Food campaign. A glossy magazine inserted free with *The Age* and also available at supermarkets and newsagents, this gave readers an invaluable expert guide to more than 350 of the best restaurants, bars and cafes in Victoria and NSW so they could enjoy summer in true *Good Food* style.

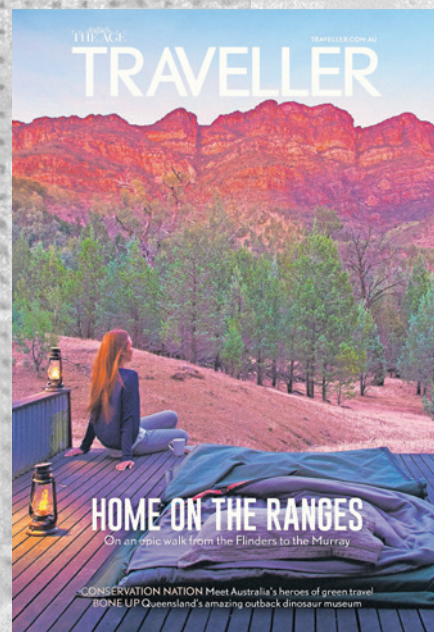
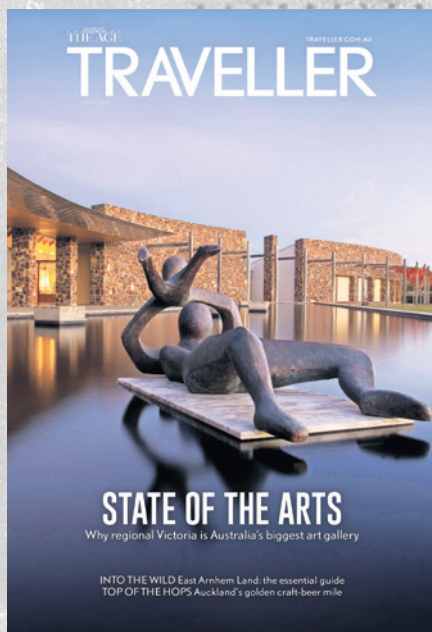


Trudi Jenkins

Publishing director, *Traveller* and *Good Food*



↑ Emerging talent:
Self-taught chef star
Ellie Bouhadana is now
cooking at Hope St
Radio in Collingwood.
Photo: Joe Armao



AWARDS

11 QUILLS FOR...

- + **2020 Graham Perkin Australian Journalist of the Year:** Nick McKenzie.
- + **Young Journalist of the Year:** Paul Sakkal.
- + **Feature Writing:** Nick McKenzie, *Good Weekend*, "One Last Mission".
- + **Coverage of an Issue or Event:** *The Age* online team, for its coronavirus pandemic coverage.
- + **The Grant Hattam Quill for Investigative Journalism:** Nick McKenzie and Chris Masters, *Good Weekend* and *60 Minutes*, for their investigation into alleged war crimes by Australian forces.
- + **Innovation in Journalism:** Rachael Dexter and Justin McManus, stories of life in isolation and lockdown.
- + **Features Photograph:** Chris Hopkins, "I want to hold her hand".
- + **Keith Dunstan Quill for Commentary:** John Silvester, *Naked City* column.
- + **Sports News:** Sam McClure, "Inside the camp that brought down the Adelaide Crows".
- + **Best Business Story in Any Medium:** Sarah Danckert, for her series on crime gangs posing as financial dealers.
- + **Cartoon:** Matt Golding, *The Sunday Age*, "Daddy, what did YOU do in the Great War?"

WALKLEYS

- + **Young Australian Journalist of the Year for Shortform Journalism:** Paul Sakkal, for his reporting on Victoria's hotel quarantine system.
- + **June Andrews Award for Industrial Relations Reporting:** Ben Schneiders, Royce Millar and Liam Mannix for their series on the social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The announcement of other 2021 Walkley winners has been postponed until early 2022. Finalists include:

Headline, Caption or Hook

- + **Duska Sulicich**, "Michael rolled, the vote assured, Hallelujah!", "It's all a bit cray-cray" and "The Art of the Steal".

Feature Writing Long (over 4000 words)

- + **Tim Elliott**, "Knives Out", *Good Weekend*.
- + **Melissa Fyfe**, "The death of Ashleigh Petrie", *Good Weekend*.

Production

- + **Aimee Amiga, Matthew Absalom-Wong and Cormac Lally**, Instagram, Facebook and theage.com.au, "Nazis Next Door: Social and Digital Delivery".

News Photography

- + **Justin McManus**, "Anti-Lockdown Protest".

Nikon-Walkley Press Photographer of the Year

- + **Christopher Hopkins**, *The Age*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Guardian* and *Al Jazeera*.

Television/video Current Affairs Long (more than 20 minutes)

- + **Nick McKenzie and Joel Tozer**, for "Nazis Next Door", *60 Minutes*, *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

Investigative Journalism

- + **Nick McKenzie and Joel Tozer**, "Nazis Next Door", "Inside Racism HQ: How home-grown neo-Nazis are plotting a white revolution" and "From kickboxing to Adolf Hitler: the neo-Nazi plan to recruit angry young men", *The Age*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, and *60 Minutes*.

- + **Ben Schneiders**, “Scientology stashes millions in Australia”, “Scientology is shrinking fast and getting richer. How is this possible?” and “The peculiar experience of being targeted by Scientology”, *The Age* and *The Sunday Age*.

Commentary, Analysis, Opinion and Critique

- + **Waleed Aly**, for “Woke Politics and Power”, “Get to root of Mess” and “It makes no sense to ask ‘why Melbourne?’”, *The Age*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Monthly*.

OTHER AGE AWARDS IN 2021

- + **Rod Allen Racing Writer of the Year, Kennedy Awards for Excellence in Journalism:** Damien Ractliffe.
- + **Alf Brown award, the Australian Football Media Association Awards:** Caroline Wilson and Sam McClure (tie).
- + **Best print/online news reporting by an individual, the Australian Football Media Association Awards:** Sam McClure.
- + **Markets and Investment journalism category, 2021 Citi Journalism Awards for Excellence:** Sarah Danckert, “Bigger than the Wolf of Wall Street” series.
- + **Young business journalist of the year, 2021 Citi Journalism Awards for Excellence:** Charlotte Grieve for “Operation Atlantis”, her series in collaboration with Nick McKenzie and Joel Tozer.

- + **Broadcast media category, 2021 Citi Journalism Awards for Excellence:** Adele Ferguson and the ABC’s Chris Gillett for their investigation “Alinta Energy accused of putting customer data at risk”.
- + **Australian Council for Educational Leaders’ Victorian media award:** Adam Carey.
- + **Story Page Design (Environment and Science), Society of News Design – Best of Digital Design:** Jamie Brown, Richard Lama, Cormac Lally, Nicole Precel, Mark Stehle, Mex Cooper, Rachel Eddie, “Buzz off: Why mosquitoes are biting you”.
- + **Story Page Design (Business/Finance, Technology & Transportation), Society of News Design – Best of Digital Design:** Richard Lama, Mark Stehle, Nick Toscano and Hamish Hastie, “All that glitters – might just be gold”.
- + **Story Page Design (Health/coronavirus), Society of News Design – Best of Digital Design:** Craig Butt, Richard Lama, Wolter Peeters, Joe Armao, Jason South, Mags King, Mark Stehle, “Silent Skies: how a pandemic grounded the aviation industry”.
- + **Story Page Design (Business/Finance, Technology & Transportation), Society of News Design – Best of Digital Design:** Craig Butt, Richard Lama, Wolter Peeters, Joe Armao, Jason South, Mags King, Mark Stehle, “Silent Skies: how a pandemic grounded the aviation industry”.
- + **Use of Photography or Photo Story, Society of News Design – Best of Digital Design:** Nick Moir, Tom Compagnoni, Yuji Shimada, Daniel Adams, Richard Lama, Mark Stehle, Laura Chung, “Like a bad dream”: Bilpin’s day of reckoning”.
- + **Features Cover, Society of News Design – Best of Print Design:** Richard Giliberto, “State of chaos” Insight cover.



↑ Cartoon: Matt Golding

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