

PC-based financial service launched

AAP has taken two significant steps to consolidate its position as leader in the Australian market place for the provision of real time financial services.

It has launched its first PC-based real time financial service, and purchased 40 per cent of the company which developed it. The service is AMQ (AAP Market Quotes), which provides quotes from all Australian stock exchanges and the futures exchange, together with financial and company news.

It can be delivered to subscribers in areas outside the capital cities using satellite, and will also be available through MDS (microwave) and terrestrial links.

The company is C.A.Read and Associates, which specialises in the production of PC-based specialist services for the market.

"The two moves are very significant for

Company buys 40pc of Read

us," said AAP assistant general manager John Lowing.

"C.A.Read has an excellent reputation in the market, and our investment will provide the base for us to develop a wide range of PC-based products for the market.

"We complement each other.

"C.A.Read's expertise adds value to our information, and the benefit of the AAP infrastructure will enable us jointly to make new products more marketable and get them to the markets that much quicker.

"The AAP Data Network (ADN) also can be used to deliver the data feeds to new applications developed by C.A.Read."

He said the AMQ service would serve as the platform for future add-on services, and would become the vehicle for tailoring

AAP data to suit specialist roles in the financial industry.

AMQ originally was aimed at subscribers in non-metropolitan areas where communication costs were an inhibiting factor in selling services, but is also being sold in metropolitan areas because of a strong demand there for a lower-tier service than Multiquote.

Financial services product manager Craig McIvor said the entire database was stored locally in the subscriber's PC.

"We broadcast data to the PC which holds the information and is continually updated, meaning retrieval time is instantaneous.

"It's also extremely easy to use. It would take about five or ten minutes to learn, and on-screen help instructions make a user manual obsolete."

Assistant general manager David Jensen said: "AMQ provides an exciting new dimension to the range of financial services marketed by AAP."

IT'S ALL IN INSIDE YOUR MAGAZINE THIS MONTH

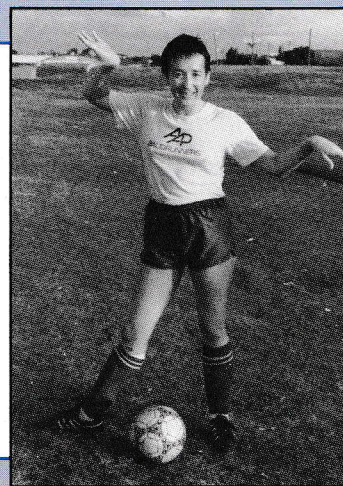
'Crocodile' Koslowski goes bush

Report and pictures: p6



Football's femme fatale

Report and pictures: p8



ANNUAL REPORT: STRONG GROWTH FORECAST - PAGE 2

AAP group turnover in 1988 rose by 26 per cent to \$110 million despite difficult market conditions resulting from the October 1987 stock market crash, the company's annual report shows.

Operating profit before taking into account losses from subsidiaries was \$3.19 million, an increase of 58 per cent over 1987.

The communications subsidiary, AAP Reuters Communications Pty Ltd (COMCO), returned an operating loss of \$3.6 million for the year.

Chief executive Lee Casey said this reflected the company's continuing investment in establishing its national satellite and microwave telecommunications network, the largest privately owned and operated network of its type in Australia.

The company's range of AAP Reuters financial services, which produce more than 70 per cent of gross revenue, achieved a growth rate of 29 per cent.

Mr Casey said this was creditable in a year of rationalisation in Australian financial markets with mergers, closures and a resulting high level of cancellations, reflecting trends worldwide.

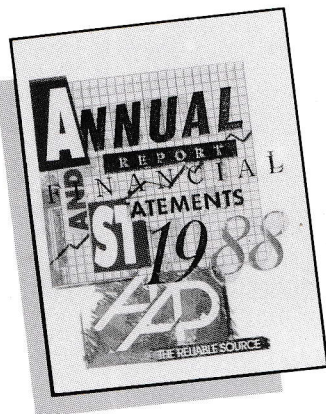
"However, these cancellations were offset to a large degree by cost reductions and the flow of business from new sales in the corporate sector and the continuing healthy growth of our larger clients," he said.

"A degree of rationalisation is expected to continue in 1989 but gross sales are expected to remain at a high level."

He said COMCO was providing an increasing range of private network services and facilities to corporations, and had established itself as the market leader in the provision of voice messaging equipment and services.

"The group is looking to further solid growth in 1989, with new services planned for the financial services and advertising industries, while continuing to expand its activities in a changing regulatory environment for telecommunications."

Strong growth is forecast



1988 HIGHLIGHTS:

Editorial: The Editorial Division focused its major news resources for the year on the Seoul Olympics.

A team of 19 correspondents and support staff was based in the South Korean capital for five weeks sending news coverage directly into subscriber offices throughout Australia.

The Olympics were a sporting interlude in an otherwise marathon coverage of Australia's bicentennial celebrations.

Markets Association (AFMA).

In the securities and futures markets, the company launched MultiQuote, delivered on AAP's own Australian Data Network (ADN), which is expected to lead to an increase in market share. MultiQuote provides financial information on equities, futures and money rates.

A Gold Bulletin was under development to carry news on all gold mining stocks in Australia. The service has since come into operation.

The first of the Reuters Integrated Data Network (IDN) based product range, Equities 2000 and Commodities 2000, were released to the market.

Thoroughbred Racing Services: A major development was the amalgamation of Thoroughbred Information Services (TIS), the Formguide data base of Australian and New Zealand racing results, and the Editorial racing operations.

Work commenced on the integration of various data bases

The service provides secure electronic trading support for the booking, placement and payment of advertising space or time.

Initial implementation has been taking place in 1989.

ASN is designed to speed up the flow and accuracy of business transactions and make possible major savings in time and costs.

The first phase is targeted at major advertising agencies, and television, newspaper, radio and magazine organisations.

Commercial Services: There was strong overall growth, with NewsTrack and MediaNet both showing marked increase in sales.

NewsTrack was introduced in the new parliament house in Canberra, making available the full AAP news service on 300 terminals used by MPs.

MediaNet, the national news release service, again grew strongly increasing subscriber numbers and individual usage. A number of specialist national distribution circuits introduced during the year proved popular.

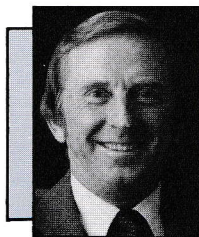
COMCO: A significant revenue growth of 54 per cent maintained the subsidiary company as leader in the provision and management of communications networks and facilities to the media industry, corporations and other users.

COMCO expanded its satellite network to some 70 earth stations, carrying data and picture services to metropolitan and regional newspapers and providing telephone networks for remote mining camps.

It also added further inter-capital city voice and data networks for corporate clients.

The company remains the market leader in the sale and operation of voice messaging systems with more than 50 of its ASPEN units now installed.

Voice transaction processing systems were also developed and installed enabling companies to transact business, such as the ordering of supplies and products, 24 hours a day by using their telephone keypads.



A degree of rationalisation is expected to continue in 1989 but gross sales are expected to remain at a high level

— Lee Casey

Development work on the historical data base was completed and the service is now being marketed to clients in the financial industry, libraries, corporate researchers and government departments.

AAP Reuters Economic Services: Despite the difficult market conditions, AAP RES experienced revenue growth of 29 per cent during 1988.

In the domestic money market, AAP RES successfully tendered to carry domestic instrument trading for members of the Australian Financial

onto a single system using the latest fourth generation computer language, SQL, to produce even faster and more efficient services.

A comprehensive pedigree service was incorporated to provide up to the minute stud book details for breeders, owners and trainers with the facility to automatically research and typeset sales catalogues.

Advertising Services Network: A major project under development, ASN is a communications network to serve the media advertising industry.

Test your brain-power... and win champagne

1 - CURRENT AFFAIRS.

The so-called "Hitler diaries" were sold in 1983 to an unwitting Stern magazine for 9.3 million marks (then \$A3.85 million). Who forged them?

2 - HISTORY. Sir John Hunt led which 1953 expedition?

3 - AUSTRALIANA. Translate the following into Australian: "I have an amorous appetite for avian gelatin."

4 - SPORT. On a muggy summer day in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1977, a tall, slender golfer birdied the 18th hole from about 8 - 10 feet to shoot a 59 - to this day the only sub-60 score in US PGA tour history. Who was he?

The winner of the third quiz was Linda Martin of the Sydney Economic Support Unit (ESU), closely followed by Hazel Sproule of Media Marketing and Fiona McDonald of Pitt Street. The correct answers were:

1. Chile. 2. Montague and Capulet. 3. Oboe. 4. 4pm - 6pm, or 6pm - 8pm. 5. 221B Baker Street. 6. Harriet Beecher Stowe (Uncle Tom's Cabin). 7. Rosebud. 8. Gerald Ford. 9. A railway carriage. 10. She'll be right.

5 - HORSES IN HISTORY.

Who were the famous riders of horses Marengo and Copenhagen?

6 - HORSES IN LITERATURE. Which English monarch, according to Shakespeare, would have given his kingdom for a horse?

7 - ENTERTAINMENT.

Which judge of the Arbitration Commission co-wrote songs for Australian Crawl?

8 - GEOGRAPHY. What do the following have in common: Bimbri, Zell, Bartle Frere, Woodroffe, Ossa, Bogong, Meharry and Kosciusko?

9 - ART. In which city is the Hermitage art museum?

10 - GUESS WHO? His parents and one brother are dead. Of his two living brothers, one is a professor in Bloomington, Indiana, and the other a businessman in Hong Kong. His sister runs a children's village. He lives in the particularly cold hamlet of McLeod Ganj. His name is Tenzin Gyatso, but how is this famous refugee better known?

Two bottles of champagne await the winner. Entries to Champagne Quiz, AAP Today, 2nd floor, 364 Sussex Street, Sydney.

THREE NEW SENIOR APPOINTMENTS



Terence Nickolls

Selling the bottom line

THE quest for new projects and new business is high on the list of priorities for Terence Nickolls, COMCO's new assistant general manager

"It's all about recognising opportunities, creating needs and building

markets for them," said Terence, a marketing specialist with a background in fashion and communications.

"We've got to get out into the market, get people thinking positively and get people moving.

"And the bottom line is that we must sell. We've got to make it work."

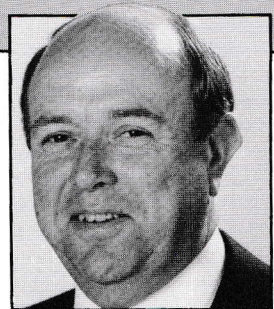
Terence, said it was possible COMCO could take on more products on an agency basis, as is the case with the ASPEN voice messaging system.

ASPEN is manufactured in the US but marketed exclusively by COMCO in Australia and New Zealand.

He started in England with retailer Marks and Spencer, moved on to Littlewoods women's fashions, then came to Australia with David Jones to run the company's Miss Jones shops.

Later he was the entrepreneur behind the video disc station, 85 square feet of outdoor TV entertainment in Sydney's Pitt Street mall.

He used AAP's Newscan and Newstrack services as news and information components, and remembers shoppers queueing up to find out results during the Olympic Games.



Ross Whowell

Corporate affairs manager

ROSS Whowell has been appointed group corporate affairs manager.

Assistant general manager David Jensen said Ross in his new role would be available to support all departments in AAP and COMCO and regional managers in:

- Co-ordinating the preparation and dissemination of news releases for all departments;
- Reviewing group product advertising and sales promotion campaigns with business unit managers, and preparing advertising copy designed for the promotion and goodwill of the group;
- Assisting business unit managers with the preparation and presentation of product shows, displays and exhibits.

Ross will also be preparing recommendations for the development of a group public/corporate relations strategy.

Canberra group manager



Greg (right) with, from left, sales executive Julie Ginns, secretary Viv Rolfe, and COMCO technician John Millar.

GREG Holland has been appointed to the new position of group manager in Canberra.

Formerly commercial services sales co-ordinator in the capital, his expanded role makes him responsible in Canberra for the AAP group of companies, excluding editorial operations.

He will promote the sales of all services and products, and will represent the company in negotiations with federal government departments. He will also represent COMCO as required.

A history lesson for business

SUBSCRIBER numbers have grown speedily following the launch of the NewsReview service, a dial-up historical database of financial news.

NewsReview is aimed primarily at business analysts, portfolio managers and researchers needing to identify and collect business profiles and track economic performances.

It currently consists of four information services: AAP's own financial news, Australian Stock Exchange company news announcements, New Zealand Stock Exchange company news announcements, and AAP's China news service.

All are updated nightly, meaning users can search NewsReview for the previous day's company, financial and China news.

The time span covered by the database extends back to January 1988 for the Australian company news and AAP financial news, to January 1989 for the China service, and to March 20 this year for New Zealand company news.

The Australian and New Zealand company news material contains announcements and reports lodged with the stock exchanges.

NewsReview stores the full text of these announcements,

as well as prepared abstracts of the documents.

These cover acquisitions, annual reports, top management moves, suspensions, delistings and reinstatement of listings to the exchanges, full and partial takeovers, sale of assets, and capital reconstructions.

David Lindley's product development group got the service off the ground last year, and all the spade work started to pay dividends this year.

"We started marketing NewsReview last October," said Tino Fenech of product development, "but the Christmas break didn't do us any favours.

"Early this year we only had a couple of customers, but then we acquired about 20 new subscribers within a few months.

"The stock exchange announcements are one of our big selling points.

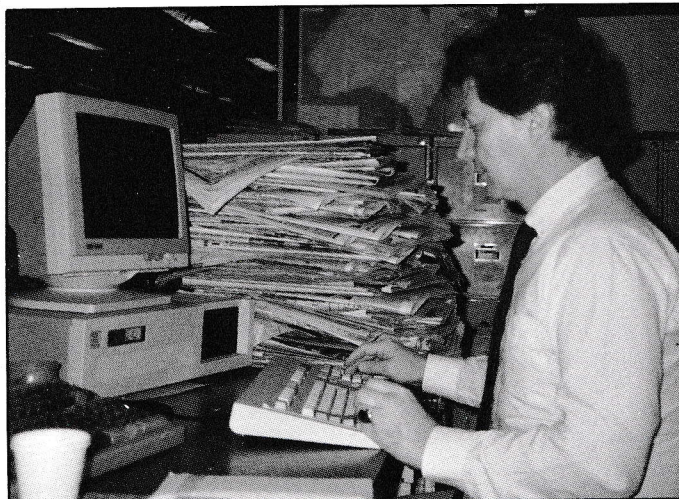
"We're the only company offering such a service which is able to include such company news in our database."

Users can opt to pay a casual or a frequent rate, depending on how often they expect to make use of the service.

A NewsReview terminal has been installed on the Finance desk in AAP's Sydney newsroom, giving access to the database for the company's own journalists.



Tino Fenech



Leigh Mackay of financial services uses the NewsReview terminal in the main news room.

WALLY LOOKS BACK O

WALLY Parr has retired after an AAP career in journalism, economic services and marketing which spanned three decades, although he will retain his ties with the company as a consultant.

Wally, a native of Victoria, joined AAP as a journalist in March, 1958, after eight years on newspapers in England.

During the 1960s he had three-year postings to New York and London, and was busy as a sports correspondent.

He covered Australia's first three challenges for the America's Cup as well as Australia's first full cricket tour of India and Pakistan led by Richie Benaud in 1959-60.

He reported the 1964 Tokyo Olympics and the 1966 Commonwealth Games in Jamaica, and spent three months in South Australia covering Donald Campbell's assault on the world land speed record at Lake Eyre.

He evidently did so with great distinction. On file at AAP is a letter from the late speed king praising Wally's performance - clipped to a claim for 40 hours overtime.

Wally was manager of AAP Reuters Economic Services for 13 years, before being appointed marketing manager in 1981.

We all know what the company is like now, so here Wally dusts off some memories of the early days...

A penny fo

MY retirement closes the lid not only on 31 years with AAP but on a journalistic career which began ten years earlier.

If the News Chronicle had not been closed down while I was in Australia on extended leave I would have been back in Fleet Street in 1958 instead of joining AAP in Melbourne.

The newsroom at that time was in Collins Gate, off Little Collins Street.

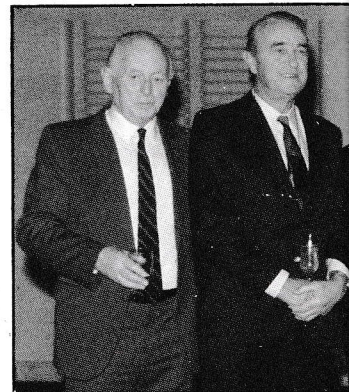
AAP was upstairs at the back of a jeweller's shop.

I believe I can recall all of the permanent editorial staff at that time - Duncan Hooper was managing editor, Lyall Rowe news editor, and there was Terry Downey, Graham Brookes, Colin Sinclair, Peter Smark, Ron Ford, Rex Scanbury, Gerry Lyons and Alan Tye, while Bruce Hewitt was the New Zealand Press Association representative.

David Weir and Trevor Root were among the teleprinter operators and Brian Carr was company secretary/accountant/wages officer.

Gerry Zucker was in charge of the AAP Reuters office which was in the old stock exchange building.

Monty Parrott, John Dunn, John Fitzgerald and Norman MacSwan were in the London



Wally, third from left, with coll NZPA and AAP veteran Bruce Sproule of media marketing, and Lee Casey, former editor Lyall.

office and Roy Collins, Tony Syme and others were in New York.

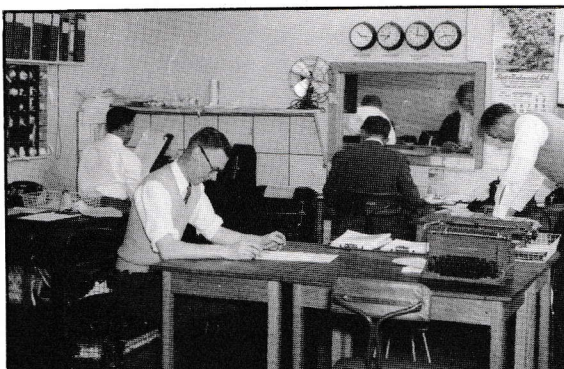
Richard Myerscough and Jim Flannery were among the correspondents in Asia.

Jim Shrimpton had married Val, AAP's best-looking teleprinter operator, and left for America shortly before I arrived.

And before I was posted to New York in September, 1960, to join Jim, Norman, Jim Flannery and Don Handsley, staff changes had added Alan Ramsey, John Heath and Greg Taylor.

Mick Connolly, Graeme Eggins and Brian McKibbin caught up with me during my three years in New York.

An ace for 'King Wally'!



Left: On the job at Lake Eyre in 1964. Wally (wearing hat) joins Donald Campbell and his wife Tonia as they feel the heat radiating from "Bluebird".

Above: This picture of the original Collins Gate news room is sure to blow the cobwebs off a few memories. Filing clerk Trevor Root is at centre, and editor Lyall Rowe at right.

or your thoughts



Colleagues who played a prominent role in his working life, from left, Wally, former AAP Reuter correspondent Dr Warren White, Hazel, former general manager Duncan Hooper, current chief executive Rowe, and former company secretary Brian Carr.

The main task of the AAP staff was to check the incoming RTT (radio teletype) messages from the company's London, New York and Singapore offices, decipher the cable-ese of messages from other centres and combine all into a service of overseas news for AAP member newspapers, AUP, Taspress, Vicpress and the ABC.

It was distributed on a single 50 baud (60 words a minute) cable which went full-time to Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra, Adelaide, Perth and Melbourne papers, and part-time to Tasmania and New Zealand.

News was also sent to ships at sea in morse code.

The London and New York services had two sessions daily of four hours each and Singapore was on the air for a shorter time to send news gathered from around Asia.

We moved about 300 messages totalling around 40,000 words a day. (AAP now handles that many words an hour - Ed).

Press telegrams at one penny a word were not allowed to be sent in cryptic cable-ese but money was saved by leaving out all unessential words such as conjunctions and the first names of prominent people.

Cable-ese was much more of a puzzle. A three-word cable such as "RAHMAN LONDON-

WARDING URGENTEST" could be turned into a usable story saying: "The Malaysian Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, today announced that he would fly to London without delay to talk to the British Government about..."

Cables were sent and received via an air-blown tube from the OTC office in the next street.

The desk man could hear them hissing down the tube before the container clattered into the basket by the slot in the wall between the newsroom and the teleprinter operators' room.

When AAP moved from Collins Gate to the Electrolytic Zinc building in Lonsdale Street, the OTC office was next door and cables were put through a hole in the wall.

But I left for New York soon after for three years which spanned the Kennedy era... and, more importantly for AAP, the laying of the Compac cable which linked Britain with Canada, New Zealand and Australia for the first time, and brought AAP from Melbourne to the Sydney cable-head.

This changed the whole pattern of AAP's world news gathering and I was sent to London in 1965 as chief representative with the task of implementing the new way.

RIVERSIDE Oaks, home of the Australian Professional Golfers Association and playground for the likes of Greg Norman, now is notable also as the site of the AAP Sydney social golf club's first hole in one.

The ace was finally played after more than 15 years of staffers and their guests hacking once a month at dawn around courses all over Sydney.

And it was one of those guests who showed us how.

Wally Rothwell, executive director of the Australian Telecommunications Users Group (ATUG), pulled a seven-iron from his bag at the downhill eighth hole (shortened to about 140 metres for visitors) and sent the ball high, straight and true.

For Wally, a 22 handicapper who was playing as a guest of COMCO general manager and ATUG director Barney Blundell, it was the first ace after 30 years' trying.

"The pro told me there had only been three holes in one previously at Riverside Oaks, one of them by Greg Norman, so I'm in good company," he said later.

Wally's rewards: a bottle of Scotch from the AAP club and a new glove from Riverside Oaks, which also promised to mount the ball for him.

Blooper briefs

PET PHRASES: An old-time favourite from a feature that landed on the Sydney news desk: "He looked back with nostalgia to the past."

FROM a fashion magazine sent to the Sydney newsroom: "He dipped his toe in the water and got his fingers burnt."

FROM an anonymous softball reporter: "Australia evenly divided its 32-strong squad into two equal teams and there is little between them."

FROM our Reporter's Casebook: "A Foreign Affairs spokesman said the two-hour flight to Shanghai, China's largest city, would take two hours."

IN TOUCH

THE AAP staff "bulletin board"

Players wanted:

Soccer: Teams fielded for matches against other media organisations. Contact Ted Simmons, Sydney sports desk, on 236 8740.

Indoor Soccer: Inter-departmental competitions within the AAP group in Sydney. Contact Vince Dichiaro, technical development, Glebe, 692 1991.

Table Soccer (Subbuteo): Contact Steve Dettre, Sydney newsdesk, 236 8719.

Squash: For AAP team competing in Sydney financial houses tournament, contact Paul Spencer, Pitt Street sales, 236 8158.

Golf: The Sydney social golf club holds regular monthly tournaments at a variety of courses. Guests welcome. Contact David Eskill, Sydney newsdesk, on 236 8716, or Bill Aylmer, accounts, on 236 8776.

For Sale:

Exocet: Not a British missile, but a sailing boat. 14 feet long. Has wings, bow sprit spinnaker pole with asymmetrical spinnaker. Light grey and white hull with grey deck. Comes ready to race with all the go fast gadgets. On registered trailer. Quick to rig and easy to sail. Only six months old. \$7800, \$2000 off new price. Call Matt Cowley, Sport, Sussex Street, 969 9666.

Cottage Craft: Attractively made to order at below Berrima prices. Photo frames, photo albums, tissue boxes, trinket boxes, jewellery totes, etc. Contact Pam Conway, Sydney copy-takers, 528 6208.

Staff wishing to submit items for this column should send them to **In Touch**, AAP Today, 364 Sussex Street, Sydney. Include your name, department and contact number.

GREAT Corrections Of Our Time: From The Guardian, London: "Under the section on encephalopathy we said the patient should be nursed at 30 - 40 degrees. This referred to the angle in bed, not the temperature."

Suburban boy's outback odyssey

By Mike "Crocodile"
Koslowski

MY directions were simple: jump in a four wheel drive and belt around over 6,000 kilometres in the outback for 12 days covering some car race called the Bourke to Broome Bash.

Trouble was it wasn't a race, it was a BASH with only one rule - there weren't any.

The Bash philosophy was simple. Competitors had to cheat, bribe, fine, auction, bump and bounce their way to West Australia's far north, raising money along the way for the Variety Club and its main beneficiary, handicapped and underprivileged children.

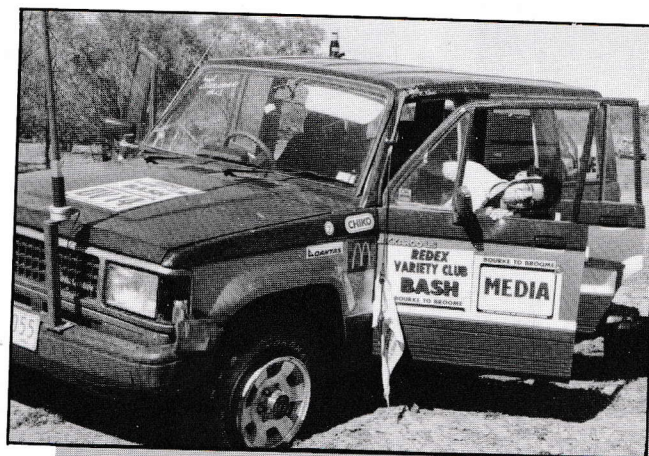
This year they raised more than \$2 million.

The winner is not important. In fact the Basher's most prestigious award is Best Cheat Of The Year.

For most towns along the route the Bash is the biggest event on the social calendar, with the visiting mob in most cases several times larger than the host population.

The Bash is renowned for attracting celebrity entrants. Pop star John Farnham held centre stage as he punched his 1964 Peugeot 404 through the outback with co-driver and manager Glenn Wheatley.

Other entrants included America's Cup yachtsman Iain Murray, Bathurst king Peter



Mike pulls his head in ... through the window that smashed when the vehicle he was in overturned "somewhere in the Northern Territory".

Brock and Carol Thatcher, daughter of Britain's Prime Minister.

All cars must be built before 1966 and the event aims to recreate the pioneering days of Jack Murray's original Redex rally trials of the 1950s.

As a result, much of the route was on rarely used, dusty, rocky paths.

But how do you file a story in a hurry if you have to travel hundreds of kilometres along a track worth a really bad cliché in the hope of finding a phone?

Each night the local camping ground which was home for the 1,000 strong Bash entourage usually only had one phone, and the hot, tired and grumpy Bashers were all in a rush to use it to tell their loved ones they were still alive.

They didn't always take kindly to some media junkie jumping the queue, muttering "deadlines" and "Bill will kill me".

At the halfway mark a media colleague and co-driver apparently decided to try to imitate Nigel Mansell and managed to roll our brand new four-wheel drive - one of the few modern vehicles in the 220 strong field.

So with media pride battered and bruised, we spent the last six days hitching rides in some of the competitors' old buckets.

Finally with our arrival in Broome came a bed, shower and a swim.

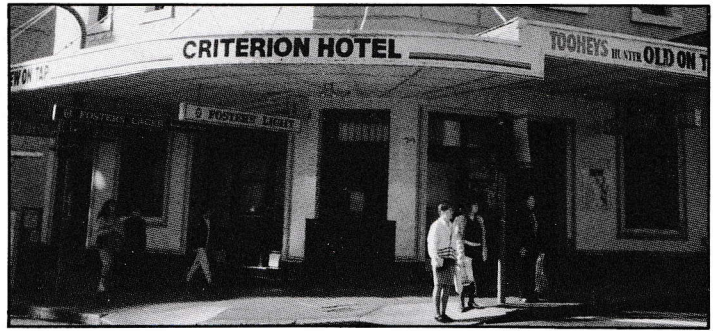
And I hadn't GDKed for two weeks.

Not a bad junket for a suburban boy.

Where's a phone when you need one? Mike contemplates the difficulties of filing copy from the Queensland-NT border.



A last weep as the Cri falls silent



A once familiar view ... the Cri from AAP headquarters.

HARDENED reporters wore mournful expressions and seasoned sub-editors wept into their beers as they raised their glasses for the last time at an AAP institution – the Criterion Hotel.

The occasion was a “wake” before the last of inner Sydney’s old-style hotels was reduced to rubble by the developers’ jackhammers.

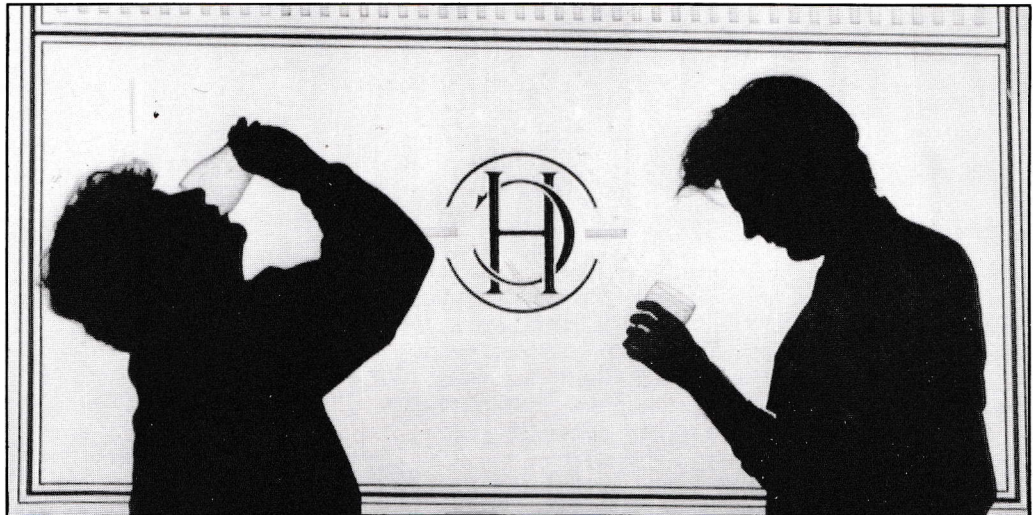
During the 16 years that it served as AAP’s “local” the Criterion was admired for many things – perhaps none more so than its proximity.

Staff working at the Sussex Street head office in Sydney could, if they chose, order a midday by phone and be there to drink it before the froth settled.

It was more than a pub, it was another newsroom.

It was a place to celebrate, it was a place to commiserate, it was a place to meet, it was a place to part.

And wasn’t parting such frequent sorrow. Many a long farewell was held within its tiled walls – and on the pavement outside, come to that – and many a brain cell perished



Yes, the silhouette at right in this artistic Sydney Morning Herald picture is that of a Sydney AAP staffer. The picture was taken during a rare visit to the hotel of journalist Craig Knowles.

in salute to vanishing colleagues.

For some it was a home away from home. For others it **WAS** home. Several staff down the years lived in the rented rooms upstairs while between lodgings.

It was a place where many startling statements were made, and many provocative opinions expressed, but thankfully to many people who

would forget all about them in the morning.

It was also a place that was difficult to leave.

Some overstayers left involuntarily, courtesy of the management.

Others would arrive and just forget to leave.

Its patrons were a varied lot. You could become embroiled in any range of political and social debates, but if you

played Spot The Yuppie you’d have rotted in a corner with one foot on the cigarette-singed carpet and an elbow on the red vinyl bar top.

In its heyday its regulars included the likes of Mick Young, Bill Hayden, Germaine Greer, Thomas Keneally, Lionel Murphy and Jack Munday.

As *The Australian* said in an obituary:

“Writers, journalists, academics, judges, lawyers, feminists, politicians, bureaucrats, unionists, communists... if they were in Sydney and after an argument, all knew they need go no further than the pleasantly decaying bars of the Criterion Hotel.”

So important was patronage by AAP staff that the hotel held a special closing night just for us.

The “Cri” was a place to unwind, to unravel, to relax enthusiastically.

“If you threw up,” said one staffer, “at least you knew you wouldn’t be ruining the carpet.”

The Cri had many pluses, but let’s face it. Its biggest asset was its clientele.

How we lost the ashes...

AAP’s head office newsroom in Sydney has joined the no-smoking movement.

The company issued a memo asking staff to make the second floor newsroom at Sussex Street a smoke-free zone from July 1.

This followed a survey of all staff working in the newsroom including journalists, copytakers, system controllers, picture operators, switchboard operators and office staff.

Overwhelming support was given to the proposal that “In the interest of our health, we request that AAP makes the second floor at Sussex Street a smoking-free zone.”

Of the 131 staff, 101 were in favour of the move and 30 against.

Sydney follows the lead of the Melbourne newsroom, which instituted a smoking ban in January.

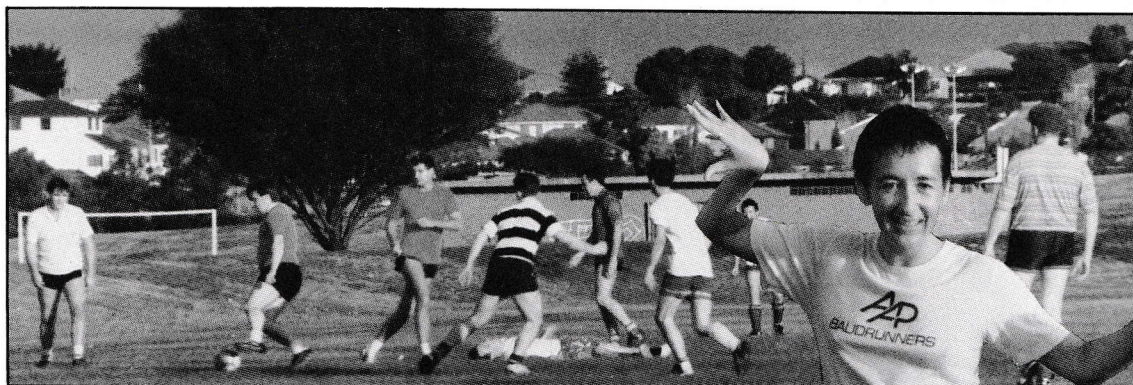
The Melbourne voting was done on a preferential system under the rules used by the Electoral Commission.

The three propositions were: a total ban on smoking anywhere in the newsroom, a partial ban with two smoking rooms, or maintaining the status quo.

The partial ban was the winner on preferences.

Bureau chief Jane Eyre said: “To date it has worked well because there are two immediately accessible locations for the gaspers.”

FOOTBALL'S FEMME FATALE SHINES FOR ALL-STARS



Down but not out... a prostrate Jon Walter after a desperate lunge at the ball.

Jan Martin poised for battle.

Jan's day of destiny

WAS she brave, or foolish, or both? No-one was sure when Jan Martin made history by becoming the first female to turn out for the much-maligned All-Stars soccer team.

Brisbane-based Jan happened to be in Sydney on secondment to the finance desk at the time of the match.

She also happens to be a regular soccer player, turning out for University of Queensland in Brisbane's women's first division.

And the All-Stars happened to be a star short for their match against the Daily Telegraph. Here is her report:

THE day of the match opened with pouring rain, with the skies clearing just in time for a late sun to beat down on the All-Stars' bowed heads.

It was best described as an open match with a scoreline that had the experts poring

over the record books.

Said one: "It's the only soccer match to my knowledge, amateur or professional, ever to finish 8 - 5".

The All-Stars, alas, were on the losing end of the 13-goal thriller.

And now that the ignominy of defeat has been successfully



Goalkeeper Giles Parkinson was impressive in the air. After all, who is going to get in front of a flying Giles with one fist raised and a determined look in his eye?

Rob Woodward of Reuters managed to get under Giles' defence and score. Unfortunately, Woodward was playing for us.

Down 5 - 1 at the break, captain Reg Gratton rallied the battered troops and made the strategic decision he is noted for - enlisting a perfect stranger off the sideline.

Our anonymous saviour was just the ticket, adding sting to a front line chiefly noted for Jon Walter's shorts. The All-Stars rallied and narrowed the gap to 5 - 7.

But as the sun dipped under the crossbar, so did another Telegraph shot at goal.

The All-Stars goalie commented: "The worse part of the ordeal was when I went home and told my wife the score. She laughed."

Winning pitch for Sales team

FOUR separate AAP indoor soccer teams battled out a brief but intense inter-company competition in Sydney before a squad from Pitt Street Sales triumphed.

The competition was organised by COMCO engineer Vince Diciara, who captained a team from Technical Development.

Vince's team was one of three based at Glebe. The others were Computer Operations captained by Brendan O'Connor and Field Services led by Michael Link.

Technical Development made it to the final but went down gallantly 5-4 to the Pitt

Street outfit led by Paul Spencer.

"It was mainly for fun," Vince said, "but also so that different groups in the company could meet each other."

"It only took four weeks but we enjoyed it so much we're thinking about having another competition."

And few had much previous soccer experience, so anyone interested in playing should contact Vince at COMCO on extension 1991.



The winning team from Pitt Street Sales - Top row: Paul Spencer (capt.), Nick Earl, Les Bonnett. Middle row: Brett Higgins, Roger Manu, Billy Aylmer, Craig McIvor. Front row: Dave Stewart, Michael Tarlinton. Absent: Michael Gooch.