NEW PERSPECTIVES ON **TROVE NEWSPAPERS**

The milestones keep coming in Trove's digitised newspapers zone. In December, Trove added their 15 millionth page, and soon they will have articles from 1,000 different newspapers — including much-requested titles such as The Age *and* The Sporting Globe.

It's difficult to overestimate the impact of Trove's digitised newspapers. Free and easy access to 160 million newspaper articles, documenting more than 150 years of Australian history, is not only changing research practice, it's changing our relationship with the past. Newspapers are full of the vivid, turbulent detail of everyday life. With small country and community papers as well as the metropolitan dailies, Trove offers researchers fresh clues and insights.

Earlier this year, Trove added to its storehouse of surprises by digitising three Chinese-language newspapers: the *Chinese Advertiser / English and Chinese Advertiser,* the *Chinese Australian Herald*, and the *Chinese Times*.

As Kate Bagnall, a historian of Chinese Australia noted on the Trove blog: 'It's exciting to think of the… possibilities that access to these newspapers holds, both for historians in Australia and those overseas.'

Only 10 issues from 1856 to 1858 are known to remain of Australia's earliest Chinese language newspaper, the *Chinese Advertiser* (later the *English and Chinese Advertiser*), published on the Ballarat goldfields. All the surviving issues are now available on Trove.

The *Chinese Australian Herald* was published in Sydney from 1894 to 1923 and was the first major Chinese language newspaper in Australia. In 1902, the *Chinese Times* began publication in Melbourne, continuing until 1922 when it shifted to Sydney. Across all three titles, more than 2,000 issues, or 130,000 articles, can now be explored on Trove.

Adding these newspapers brought some new technical challenges. Trove's databases had to be upgraded to handle the full range of Chinese characters. Close liaison was necessary with OCR contractors to deal with variations

Top Left: *Chinese Times*, 3 October 1914.

Top Right: Front page of the last known copy of the English and *Chinese Advertiser*, 7 August 1858.

Bottom Right: *Chinese Australian Herald*, 10 February 1899.

in text direction and layout. As with all other newspaper articles, the Chinese language text generated by OCR can be corrected by users — a tricky test for Trove's army of dedicated correctors!

The Chinese additions are not Trove's first non-English newspapers — there is already French, German, Italian and Estonian content, with more languages to come. While there's no dedicated translation tool, Troveites with language skills can make articles easier to find and use by adding translations in comments.

Behind the scenes, the technology powering Trove's newspaper zone is also being overhauled. Last year, major changes to the search indexes were introduced to support the ever-growing volume of content. This year, the web interface will receive a facelift, with better support for mobile devices, new browse options, and a range of other improvements and fixes.

But the website is only one way to access Trove's newspaper data. Increasingly, our API (Application Programming Interface) is being used to integrate Trove content with other services. Have a look in the Building with Trove section of the Trove help system for examples of the tools and interfaces that are being created using our API.

As Trove's collection of digitised newspapers continues to grow, new uses will be found, new questions will be asked, and new perspectives will be gained. You can explore Trove at trove.nla.gov.au/ and keep up to date with developments at the Trove blog, www.nla.gov.au/blogs/trove.

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