

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Illawarra Mercury Celebrates 170 Years As The Trusted Voice Of The Illawarra**

**8 October 2025** - The Illawarra Mercury, one of Australia's longest standing regional newspapers, is celebrating its 170th anniversary with a campaign that honours its legacy, strengthens community connections, and drives continued growth in both digital and print readership.

Launching on Wednesday 8 October, the centrepiece of the celebrations will be a 170th Anniversary Souvenir Edition, a 24-page wrap available online and in print. The publication highlights the Mercury's proud history of trusted journalism, iconic photography, and community storytelling that has been central to life in the Illawarra for nearly two centuries.

Editor Kathy Sharpe said the milestone was both a celebration of the past and a statement of intent for the future:

*"For 170 years, the Illawarra Mercury has been at the heart of this community reporting its stories, championing its people, and recording its history.*

*From covering the rise of the steelworks and mining industry, to reporting on the tragedies of bushfires and floods, and celebrating the triumphs of the Illawarra Hawks and our region's everyday heroes, the Mercury has been there with the community for it all.*

*Today, our coverage reflects not only the industries that shaped the Illawarra, but also the issues shaping its future. Our readers engage with us in print and across multiple digital platforms, ensuring our journalism remains accessible, relevant and impactful in a changing media landscape."*

Since its first issue in 1855, the Mercury has been a powerful and influential voice in the Illawarra - chronicling the region's transformation, amplifying its stories, and holding decision-makers to account.

The paper has also been a launchpad for some of the country's leading journalists, with notable former staff including Bevan Shields (Editor, Sydney Morning Herald), Linton Besser (ABC Media Watch) and Andrew Drummond (AAP).

A 10-week anniversary campaign from now until 14 December will run blending retail, editorial, and community engagement initiatives, including:

#### **Souvenir Anniversary Edition – Wednesday 8 October**

- 24-page wrap in print, digital and in-store celebration at Corrimal Lotto & Gifts with cupcakes, balloons, junior basketball players from the Hawks, and mascot *Mercury Max*.

## Community Engagement

- 170 Faces of the Illawarra editorial feature (ongoing)
- Reader Giveaway – share in \$4,000+ in prizes (Wednesday 8 October – Wednesday 22 October)
- University of Wollongong Student Journalism Competition – spotlight on emerging reporters (Monday 27 October)

## Photo Exhibition – Wednesday 3 December

- Wollongong Library showcase of Mercury photography.

The Illawarra Mercury is a passionate supporter of the local economy, helping to connect businesses with the community it serves. Through a mix of print, digital, social and event platforms, the Mercury delivers cross-platform advertising solutions that reach more than 467,000 readers across the Illawarra and beyond. By partnering with both local businesses and national brands, the Mercury plays a vital role in driving economic growth while keeping audiences informed, engaged and connected.

[Please find here](#) a collection of the paper's notable front pages over time.

Ends

## For further information or interview requests, please contact:

Anna Zakaras

AZPR - Anna Zakaras Public Relations

Email: [anna@azpr.com.au](mailto:anna@azpr.com.au)

MB: 0451 832 863

## About Australian Community Media (ACM)

ACM is Australia's largest independent media company, collectively reaching over 5.2\* million people each month. The ACM network comprises close to 100 brands, including leading regional news mastheads The Newcastle Herald, The Canberra Times, Illawarra Mercury, The Examiner, The Border Mail and The Courier.

The agricultural division, ACM Agri, reaches 85%^ of Australian farmers each month with a national footprint of agricultural specialist brands (The Land and Queensland Country Life), marketplaces (Farmbuy and Ag Trader), and events (AgQuip and FarmFest).

We are passionate about keeping our communities strong, informed, and connected. ConnectNow with ACM.

Source: ^QARS, (Heartbeat of Australia), May 2025. \*Roy Morgan Single Source, June 2025, P14+, Roy Morgan iris, ACM Cross Platform Audience.