Shady characters like Tilly Devine, or bushranger Ned Kelly, are among the most popular search terms on the Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB) and Obituaries Australia (OA) websites. Rounding out the top ten searches are a diverse cast of familiar characters, including Edmund Barton, Caroline Chisholm, Peter Lalor, and Saint Mary MacKillop. The ADB and OA are just two of the many texts – written, visual, aural, digital or physical – that have collected and told the stories of influential, significant, famous or iconic figures from Australia’s past. This paper is drawn from an emerging project exploring the history of fame in Australia. It examines a range of such texts, from the earliest biographical dictionary produced in Australia, J. H. Heaton’s Australian Dictionary of Dates and Men of the Time, to the largest and longest-running, the ADB. It discusses changes in the nature of these texts over the past 130 years, and in the group of individuals identified as famous or significant Australians during that period, making particular use of graphical representations of the ADB’s contents developed by the National Centre of Biography’s (NCB) programmer, Scott Yeadon. At the end of the paper, NCB staff Christine Fernon and Scott Yeadon will introduce the digital tools being developed by the NCB to display and analyse demographic data across the Centre’s websites.