

## ALBURY'S NEWSPAPERS

*Edited information from A&DHS Bulletins No 128 (September 1973), 129 (October 1973) and 484 (talk by Howard Jones, October 2008) and reports in the 'Albury Banner.'*

### The Border Post:

The *Border Post* was Albury's first newspaper was established by Mr George Mott with its first issue, October 4, 1856. George Mott, in addition to journalistic work, gave time to municipal affairs and



was Mayor for a term in 1868. A hard hitting journalist of the old school, he did not spare criticism of public men and institutions when he felt it was for the good of the community. The last proprietor of the paper was Mr. Thomas Affleck, and the paper ceased publication in 1902. George Mott's obituary appeared in the *Albury Banner* of January 12, 1906:

Death of an Old Resident of Albury.—Many old residents of Albury will regret to hear of the death of Mr George Mott, a well-known journalist and founder of several district newspapers. He will, however, be best remembered as conductor for many years of the 'Border Post,' which during his editorship exercised considerable influence, and did much for the advancement of local public interests. Mr. Mott also personally took an active part in the public life of Albury, was for some years Mayor of the borough .... The first office of the paper was at the back of the Criterion Hotel, where the proprietor and editor for some time resided ....

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/100672557/10850438>

### The Albury Banner:

The *Albury Banner* first appeared on July 4, 1860, launched by Mr Samuel Fry Blackmore, who practised as a solicitor in Albury at that time. Placed on the market for sale, in April 1862 Mr George Adams



acquired the plant and business and he guided its destinies for over 50 years. He died in 1918, aged 83. Mr Foster Cooper was the editor for about 50 years and is said to have held the same editorial office for longer than any other editor in Australia! The *Banner* had a wide circulation in country districts and was sometimes referred to as 'The Farmer's Bible!' Its children's pages, under 'Uncle Jeff,' a source of interest and delight to many children, who wrote enthusiastic and affectionate letters to their editor. In some cases, the first encouragement to the art of writing for publication began here. Finally when a local weekly found no place in changing times, to the regret of so many regular readers, publication of the *Banner* was discontinued after 90 years and ceased on May 26, 1950.

### The *Albury Banner* reported on July 1, 1910:

This week's issue completing the fiftieth year of the paper's existence, it may not be out of place to devote a few lines to an account of the origin and progress of the "Albury Banner." The paper was established in 1860, and with the present number is presented a facsimile reproduction of the first issue bearing date 4th July of that year. The proprietor was Mr. Samuel Fry Blackmore, who at that period practised in Albury as a solicitor, and who still survives, though he long since left the Border country and took up his residence in the metropolis. The imprint shows the publisher to have been Robert Henry Phillips, who, however, was superseded six months later by Alfred Banfield. The paper at that time was published in broad-sheet form of four pages, on Wednesdays and Saturdays .... The publishing and printing office was in Dean street in premises now occupied by Mr James Day as a tobacconist's shop .... The introductory leading article announces:— "No party bias or sectarian influence shall prevent us from giving a fair field to every scheme which has for its object the common weal of this community." .... in April, 1873, the "Banner" was published as a weekly of eight pages .... on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 1886, the size of the paper was increased to 40 pages — the largest provincial weekly in the Commonwealth .... The editorial conduct of the "Banner" at first was undertaken by a number of different gentlemen, but the

only ones to hold office for any lengthened term were: — Mr. Brooks, from 1862 to 1867; Mr. W. T. Deverell, from 1867 to 1872; and the present editor, [Foster Cooper] who succeeded Mr. Deverell in 1872, and still fills the chair. The present proprietors are Messrs. George Adams, F. Cooper, G. S. Adams, and W.B. Adams ....

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/100698581>

### **Albury Daily News:**

The third of the best known and long lasting papers of Albury was the *Albury Daily News*, established in 1888. In the publication of Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> October, 1919, it called itself 'The



Pioneer Daily Paper.' Its price was four pence. Publishers then were W J Mangan & Co, Dean Street. The *Daily News* held a distinguished position in journalism, and its influence on the town and district was felt far and wide. It ceased publication in 1924, when acquired by the *Border Morning Mail*. Mr Duncan McDonald was for 20 years associated with the *Daily News*, as a partner, and Mr W W Darby was also a partner for over 20 years. The *Albury Banner* of January 16, 1925 reported:

ONE of the most popular institutions, the "Albury Daily News," has permanently closed its doors. For 36 years it served the people of the town honestly and well, and it will be quite a time ere the residents become reconciled to the absence of a daily evening paper. The "Daily News" was always conducted on clean and sober lines, it stood four square for progress, and its accuracy could never be questioned. The paper played a highly creditable part in promoting the civic and business advancement of Albury, and it is unfortunate that there should have been such a heavy increase in the cost of newspaper production at a time when it might have been hoped that the "Daily News" would have been placed in a position to share in the new local prosperity, in the creation of which it had played a conspicuous part.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/102149994>

Other editors of Albury papers through the early years were Mr W M Sherrie of the *Daily News*, who occupied the editorial chair for 15 years; Mr E P Kelly of the *Border Post*, and other journalists were James Mangan and Mr Bert Mudge and Mr V C Thompson of the *Daily News*.

### **Border Morning Mail:**

The *Border Morning Mail* established in 1903 by the brothers Hamilton and Decimus Mott, carried on by succeeding members of the family and now [1973] published in the name of the 'Border Morning Mail Proprietors Ltd.'



### **Snapshots of the Border Mail (Howard Jones, Bulletin 484)**

The Border Mail is our best source for local history. Its files go back to 1903 when the first copy was printed by brothers Hamilton and Decimus Mott.

Prior to 1924, there were two other Albury papers, the *Albury Banner & Wodonga Express* and the *Albury Daily News*. The *Mail* bought and closed the *Daily News* in 1924 and the *Banner* ceased publication in 1950.

In the early days, newspapers were the only source of news, beside word of mouth. Radio became another source of news in 1930 and TV followed in the 1960s. But the newspaper files are still the best written record for most events and happenings in Albury.

Let's look at how the Border Mail has changed in our lifetimes.

1950: I'll give a picture of the paper in the 1950s, when the office was in Dean Street. The paper cost three pence, and was *The Border Morning Mail*. Circulation grew from 12,000 to 15,000 by 1959. Hamilton Mott was owner, publisher and editor, and his son Milton Mott was general manager. Gordon Dowling was advertising manager and John Barton handled sales.

There is a bronze bust of Hamilton Mott in the entrance foyer to the Albury LibraryMuseum. Printing was by hot metal. When the office was rebuilt, the sub-editors went upstairs and proofs were passed between them and the printers in a bucket with a bicycle chain contraption.

Some of the young cadets became famous. Desmond Zwar became a Fleet Street journalist and author. Jim Eames became chief public relations man for Qantas. John Wilczek became a Family Court judge.

In the office, June Buchhorn started at the counter in 1953. She stayed until 1989. Our longest serving staff member now [2008] is Billy Everett, who started in 1963.

2008: Let's now jump to 2008. The paper is no longer owned by the Motts but is part of Fairfax Media. We have two companies, the 'Border Mail' and 'BM Printing.' Between them we have 185 staff, having lost a few through automation of the press room operation. We produce about 8 million *Border Mail* papers each year. The average for six days a week is 25,571 copies, but 34,878 on Saturday, which gives us 87,000 readers.

That's not all, because 'BP Printing,' prints 24 hours a day six days a week. Every week we print 90 newspaper titles, including the *Domain* real estate titles. That adds up to three million papers a week.

We use 350 tonnes of newsprint a week, costing about \$1000 per tonne. Much is sourced from 'Norske Skog' at Ettamogah, but some comes from Singapore. No printer operator of this size can rely on a single supplier. Thirty semi-trailers a week deliver newspapers from the press in Wodonga to Melbourne and across Victoria.

Website: News is no longer kept for the next morning, but breaking news is published as soon as possible on our website.