

# ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN

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## REPORT ON MARCH MEETING (13.3.2013)

There was a smaller than usual crowd at our March meeting. Many of our regulars tendered their apologies. The meeting began with the screening of a DVD of “a reason to celebrate a 100th Birthday albury town hall & art gallery”. This was pertinent following the announcement that AlburyCity will proceed immediately with a \$10.5 million extension and refurbishment of the Regional Art Gallery.

The DVD was made in 2007 to mark the centenary of the imposing building fronting Dean Street and featured speakers Dr Bruce Pennay, Councillor Stuart Baker, Audray Banfield, Les Tomich and others who spoke on the history of the building. Former city general manager made the point that council cannot build a cultural centre. It can build the facilities and provide resources, but only the community can create the cultural centre.

A series of short talks by our members on a variety of topics followed. Ray Gear spoke on Albury street trees; Michael Brown showed construction plans for the replica Robbins & Porter 1913 aircraft; Chris McQuellin showed an early photograph of the Hovell Tree recently obtained from the State Library of Victoria; Bruce Pennay spoke of the need for artifacts for use in an exhibition planned for October this year about living in the Growth Centre during the seventies and eighties; and Joe Wooding spoke about confusion on the name of a lane in central Albury.

Chairman Chris McQuellin reminded members of the busy program for April with a visit to Holbrook on Sunday 7 April

## NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY

10 APRIL 2013

7.30pm at Library Museum Albury

Speaker: Noel Jackling  
“Recent *Uiver* acquisitions, the Waughs in Holland and a visit to Aviodrome.”

## Holbrook

Postponed-See notices.

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ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Subscriptions are due 31 May

*Bulletins* will not be sent to members who have subs outstanding as at 31 July.

Single: \$25

Family: \$33

Corporate: \$50

Research undertaken \$25 first hour.

Enquiries in writing with \$25

**Meetings:** 2nd Wednesday of the month 7.30pm at Commercial Club Albury.

Committee meets 3rd Wednesday of the month 5.15pm at Albury LibraryMuseum.

A&DHS website:

[www.alburyhistory.org.au](http://www.alburyhistory.org.au)

[now postponed], a heritage meeting at the LibraryMuseum on Wednesday 10 April and a coach excursion to Lake Hume on Sunday 14 April. (Full details on page 4.)

Chris also spoke of the Society's collaboration with AlburyCity in the installation of a city tourist walk using smart-phone technology to provide information.

#### **EARLY STREET PLANTING IN ALBURY: POSTCARD VIEWS**

By Ray Gear

Street tree planting in Albury commenced in 1875 following calls in earlier years for such planting.

On a visit to Albury in July 1868, Lord and Lady Belmore, after planting English elms in front of the Dean Street Court House, expressed a hope that 'such planting of trees, might, be taken as a growing precedent for a systematic planting of shade trees in the streets of the town.' Local newspapers reported in 1870, 1872, 1873 and 1875 on the need for, and the range of benefits that street trees provided. Benefits seen included atmosphere purification, promoting the comfort and health of residents, providing shade, shelter and ornament, town beautification and render innocuous the sewerage and other deleterious matters allowed to stagnate in the towns channels.

Albury Council's response to these calls was to adopt on the 18 August 1875, a Street Tree Planting Specification. Ten days later, Samuel Mudge planted a two year old elm in front of his residence at 618 Olive Street. The tree, according to the *Border Post* was christened 'Albury' and the soil washed down with a bottle of fine old Annefield wine.

In late August 1879 Council planted a line of street trees in Dean Street. Commencing with an elm tree outside the Post Office corner, planted by Mayor Alfred Emerson, the north side of Dean Street to Olive Street was planted at a cost of one pound, twelve shillings, six pence per tree. In the same month Council, recognising the future opening of Smollett Street

through the Botanical Reserve to Howlong Road, planted elm trees within the reserve.

Lines and/or avenues of street trees were planted in Kiewa Street, Wodonga Place and, Smollett Street from Townsend Street westwards in 1880. In July the following year, Council accepted a tender by Brougham & Co for planting trees in each side of Smollett Street between Townsend and the railway reserve, completing street planting in the whole of the street.

Planting in Dean Street was extended in 1884 and, according to the *Border Post* in December, the plantings in Dean and Smollett Streets 'form an important feature in the general aspect of the town.' In the following year, Albury's waterworks was opened and seen as 'greatly enhancing the town's already park-like appearance, brought about by its street tree planting'.

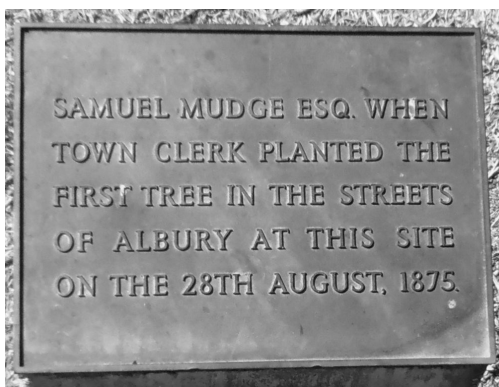
Between 1881 and 1893 fourteen hundred trees were reported planted. Streets planted included parts of Kiewa, David, Swift, Olive, Guinea and Dean Street to the railway yards. This scheme of tree planting was, according to the *Albury Banner* of May 1907, what made Albury, 'one of the prettiest towns in the State'. The Smollett Street avenue of trees was seen as the most important in the town.

By 1909 there were twenty-five miles of street tree planting. According to a report submitted to Council on June 23, plantings

included English and Golden Elms, Silky Oaks, Plane Trees, the Box Elder, the Nettle Tree, English and Gall Oaks, White Cedar, the Peppercorn Tree, White Poplar, the Express Tree, English Hawthorn and the Claret and Desert Ash.

In the second decade of the twentieth century newspaper articles frequently alluded to the contribution street trees made to Albury being a scene of beauty.

Evidence of the benefit of pursuing street tree planting can be seen in articles published in the *Albury Banner* in November 1912, January 1914, October 1915, July 1917 and, No-



**Plaque on footpath in Olive Street outside Samuel Mudge's former residence, more recently part of CSU city campus.**

vember 1917. In a review of the progress of the Council from 1917 to 1920 by ex-Mayor Alf Waugh, one of the statements made in that review, was that the 'citizens of Albury may well take a pride in the town's beautiful street trees which are so often favourably commented upon by visitors.'

References: *Albury Banner & Wodonga Express*, *Albury Border Post* and *Wodonga Advertiser*, *Albury Daily News* and *Wodonga Chronicle*, *Border Morning Mail*.

### **ROBBINS & PORTER PROJECT**

Michael Browne exhibited a plan for the construction of the monoplane. It is an unsophisticated airframe; the fuselage is a long open-framed box, square in section, and the wings are wide, shallow, square-ended frames. The wings will be covered with fabric, but the fuselage will remain uncovered. The flexible timber elements are stiffened by a network of wire cabling radiating from a steel mast structure positioned between the cockpit and the nose of the fuselage where the engine and propeller is located. The structure is carried on a steel undercarriage with landing wheels.

The team has had success in locating suitable wheels, some steel piping and long lengths of seasoned timber.

Construction expertise has been sourced from cabinetmakers and model aircraft builders. A suitable construction space has been obtained in Central Albury and work on the framing is expected to commence almost immediately.

Museum Victoria has kindly allowed Michael and an engineer from AlburyCity to examine the original engine closely and to take measurements and photographs so a 'mock' engine can be made resembling the original in every detail.

Incidentally, the original engine is to be exhibited at the Albury LibraryMuseum to coincide with the completion of the project and the suspension of the finished monoplane from the ceiling of the Library Foyer.

While there might be a temptation to describe it as a box kite mounted on a pram, it must also be admitted the Robbins & Porter monoplane has a certain elegance with its straight clean lines, simplicity and functionality. Young engineers, Azor Robbins and Alex Porter built the original monoplane in a garage on the site of the LibraryMuseum in 1913 and flew it at Bungowannah. Can we build it

and give it flight by suspending it from the ceiling of the LibraryMuseum in 2013?

### **ANSWER TO QUESTION OF THE MONTH**

*Why was the former Regional Museum in Wodonga Place called the Turks Head Hotel? Who named it and when?*

In 1874, Charles Edward Cass obtained a licence for the hotel previously known as the Travellers' Rest and renamed it the Turk's Head Hotel.

But, while the who and when is straight forward, the why is not nearly so.

The Turk's Head Hotel on the island of Grand Turk in the West Indies claims the name is derived from a small rather rare cactus (which grows on the Turks and Caicos Islands and almost nowhere else in the world) called the Turk's Cap or Turk's Head Cactus. The Turk's Head was and still is a not uncommon name for a hotel or inn in the United Kingdom.

In Leeds, England, there is an alley near the water front called the Turk's Head Yard. It would appear to be a popular hotel and dining area. A Turk's Head is also a decorative knot known to sailors (and Boy Scouts).

So was Charles Edward Cass from Leeds, or had he been a sailor, perhaps in the West Indies? Why the Turk's Head, remains an open question.

### **HOVELL TREE PHOTOGRAPH**

By Chris McQuellin

Marion Taylor found an image of the Hovell Tree c.1880-89 in the State Library of Victoria collection on the internet and suggested we buy a copy for the Albury LibraryMuseum which we duly did. We obtained a high quality digital copy that you see here (page 4).

To see if there was any further information in the image I manipulated the foggy image with an enhancement Photoshop-like computer program. It showed the Albury wharf and the hill with the forerunner of Padman Drive crossing it.

Some of you will know the story of the wharf and the challenges that faced the steam boats loading and unloading cargo at Albury.

River boats had been visiting Albury since 1855, but it was not until 1870 that

the NSW Government voted a £1000 allocation for the construction of a wharf. The first pile was driven just upstream from the crossing place on Thursday 26 January 1871 by the contractors Hamlin and Simpson and the wharf was completed by mid-May that year.

It had no crane or landing stage which, depending upon river height, made it difficult to use. A crane was eventually installed in November 1871 after much protest to the NSW Government. Because there were no landing stairs, and the arrival of the train service to nearby Wodonga and eventually Albury, the steamer service was doomed. The wharf was demolished in the late 1890s.

The State Library of Victoria image gives us the best photograph we have of the wharf and the area of Padman Drive for this period.

**ALBURY HISTORIC TOUR SMART PHONE APP**

By Chris McQuellin

The research team from A&DHS have recently provided AlburyCity with a brief on the Central Business District (CBD) historic sites. The information required was researched and a formal short history document on the locations chosen by AlburyCity Tourism for a walking tour of the of Albury CBD. This information was then converted into a smart phone application to be used in conjunction with the strategically placed numbered street bollards that can be found in central Albury.

A map is now available from the Albury Tourist Bureau at the Albury Railway precinct or from your smart phone at [www.visitalburywodonga.com](http://www.visitalburywodonga.com)

The work by the research team at the Society for this project will be for the benefit of all those visitors who can now see historic photographs showing how the original sites looked and hear a commentary at the same



**Photograph of the Hovell Tree and Albury wharf c.1880-89. Digital copy obtained from State Library of Victoria 2013. Computer enhancement shows the cranes on the wharf to the right of the Hovell Tree and a fenced roadway (Padman Drive) running from the right edge of the image across the flank of Western Hill.**

time on their mobile phones.

Thank you to those A&DHS members who helped make the project a success

**YOUR STORY IS OUR HISTORY**

By Bruce Pennay

Albury LibraryMuseum is preparing an exhibition on ‘The Wodonga-Albury Growth Centre Experiment’.

- It is looking to immigrants to the area since 1973 and those already resident for their stories of what it was like to move to, or to live with a growth centre.
- It wants to establish what people thought of the experiment. What went right? What went wrong?
- It is particularly interested in gathering objects related to living in Albury-Wodonga in the heyday of the National Growth Centre.

Those with stories to share or assessments to make should contact Bruce Pennay 60519857, or on email at [bpennay@csu.edu.au](mailto:bpennay@csu.edu.au)

Those with objects they think may be of interest and which they are prepared to lend or give should contact Karlie Hawking at Albury LibraryMuseum 60238333, or [khawking@alburycity.nsw.gov.au](mailto:khawking@alburycity.nsw.gov.au)

**THE DINKUMS**

Last meeting Jan Hunter asked for help in identifying a photo of a group of men and women in white costumes decorated with



**The Dinkums, a concert party formed at Brocklesby during the 1914-18 War to raise money for patriotic purposes. The group continued to perform for some years following the war.**

black pom poms. No-one was more surprised than Jan when Mrs Margaret Nicholson said she was familiar with the photo which included her mother! A bit of sleuthing between Margaret, her cousin and some luck in other quarters resulted in the following: A paragraph from *Brocklesby District History*, (compiled by Lee Howard assisted by Brocklesby History Group p.136), reads, 'During WWI he [James Hunter] organized a concert party to raise funds called "The Dinkums".'

They performed in many district towns, wearing white Pierrot costumes with frills around the neck and black pom-poms on their caps. This group continued during the 1920s to raise money for local causes such as a billiard table and electric light for the School of Arts. Members included Otto Schulz, Bert Kruse, Iris Denning, Gladys Ritchie, [Margaret Nicholson's mother], Clarice and Viola Prosser and Clara Stockman. The photo came from the collection of Mrs Clarice Lindner (nee Prossor) formerly of David Street, and three of the young ladies are Gladys Ritchie, and Gladys and Clara Stockman.

### **JOURNEYING THROUGH THE JOURNALS**

By June Shanahan

*Insites: Historic Houses Trust Magazine Autumn 2013.*

- Historic Houses Trust Autumn Events booklet for 2013;
- During April School Holidays - Talks and Tours for Children and Adults;
- Sydney Writers Festival;
- A convict in the Family?
- The Force: 150 years of NSW Police;
- Convicts in 'Solitary' at Hyde Park Barracks.

*The Argyle Bulletin: Goulburn HS Journal No 55*

February 2013

- The Origin of the township of Goulburn;
- The end of the Old Township of Goulburn. *Murrumbidgee Ancestor: Wagga Wagga FHS Journal* No 108 February 2013.

- A Rail Journey - Round and About Scotland and Days gone by;

- Commemorating the First World War - France Day, 14th July 2017.

*Placenames Australia: Newsletter of the Australian National Placenames Survey* March 2013.

- Thredbo and Bredbo;
- Khancoban Update.

*History: Royal Australian Historical Society Magazine* No 115 March 2013.

- The Quay to the Past;
- Tempe House and the fate of Sydney's Historic Houses in the context of development pressures;
- Lecture April- The Snowy Scheme - overseas aid, engineers and Australian ingenuity;
- Lecture May - Historical Societies getting the balance right.

*Inside History Magazine* Issue 14 January – February 2013.

- Criminals and Legends;
- Ned Kelly's secret love ?
- The Australian gold rush of the 1870s comes alive in the Holtermann photographic collection.

### **TREES SUFFER FROM HEAT WATERING A FULL TIME JOB TOWN'S HUGE WATER CONSUMPTION**

*The abnormality of the dry weather is having a serious effect on street trees in Albury, many of them retaining hardly any foliage and none bearing the thick, leafy appearance of a normal summer.*

*The garden's curator, (Mr W Fellowes) indicated this to the Municipal Council ...when he reported that during the past four weeks the staff had a most strenuous time trying to combat the weather, practically the whole time being devoted to watering. ...Several large trees in one section of the saleyards were in a bad state and required water. Owing to the fact that more than 900 trees in streets and reserves were being watered each week there was no time during the working week to go to the saleyards. If Council desired these trees watered, Saturday afternoon and Sunday would have to be taken advantage of. This would cost 7 pounds for one watering of the worst trees. Aldermen generally agreed that it was vital to save the trees but that it should be possible to do the work for less than 7 pounds.*

*Border Morning Mail* January 13, 1939 (edited)

### **A LONG WAIT FOR PARENTS**

Research being undertaken by A&DHS members in preparation for the Centenary of Anzac has revealed an understandable error in Albury's WWI history. It has long been thought that the first Albury man to die in the Great War was Private Leonard Smiles. Private Smiles, 2nd Battalion AIF, died on 2 May 1915 of wounds sustained in action at Gallipoli. Word of his death was conveyed to his father, Mr Thomas Smiles, of Wilson Street several days later.

Two weeks later, Mr & Mrs Donald S Potter of Wyse Street received word that their son Private Arthur Potter was posted as missing in action at Gallipoli.

Then began a period of waiting for news. The Potters continued to write letters to their son and always these were returned marked "Missing". They pursued the possibility of their son having been taken prisoner-of-war through the American Consul General in Constantinople, but no trace was found. They wrote to AIF Base Records in Melbourne saying they had all but given up hope and asked if there were any of their son's personal effects which they might have returned to them.

Finally on 2 July 1916, the Potters were advised that their son, Private Arthur Potter, 6th Battalion, had been killed in action on 25 April 1915, the day of the Gallipoli landing. Thus Private Potter appears to have been the first of many Albury men who died in the Great War.

In 1920, the Potters were advised that their son's remains had been exhumed from a recently discovered Turkish burial site and re-interred in the Lone Pine Cemetery.

Private Leonard Smiles was however, sadly the first of the three Smiles brothers to die in the war. The Smiles brothers are remembered on the Memorial Pillars at St Patricks Roman Catholic Church and Arthur Potter, on the cenotaph at St Davids Uniting Church.

### **40° CELSIUS**

40° C is now the benchmark of a very hot day replacing the 100° Fahrenheit. Australia officially adopted the Celsius scale under the Metric Act of 12 June 1970. Beginning on 1 September 1972, temperatures used for official purposes were changed and by May 1979 all weather forecasts and other public uses were given only in Celsius

degrees.

Helpful charts appeared in newspapers explaining how one might convert the forecast Celsius to Fahrenheit and thus get a real idea of how hot or cold it was going to be. It was simple: multiply the temperature by 9 then divide by 5 and add 32 to the answer. Forty years on, we know exactly how hot 40° is going to be and Fahrenheit is a distant memory.

### **NOTICES**

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#### **Holbrook excursion scheduled for Sunday 7 April, postponed to a date to be fixed.**

Following advice that there will be an interruption to the power supply at Holbrook on Sunday 7 April the planned joint excursion of the Albury & District and Wagga Wagga & District Historical Societies to Holbrook museums has been postponed to a date to be fixed.

This is disappointing, but a prudent decision in the circumstances and our thanks to John Lynch of the Woolpack Inn Museum for keeping us apprised of the situation.

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#### **Hume Dam Exhibition: Excursion & Light Show Sunday 14 April**

3.00 p.m. Hume Dam Exhibition opening at the Albury LibraryMuseum.

3.30 Excursion coach departs LibraryMuseum for the Hume Dam. There will be short presentations on the way at points of interest including the Bethanga Bridge.

5.00 One River official ceremony at the Hume Dam followed by light refreshments and an opportunity to walk along the Dam wall.

6.40 Coach departs Hume Dam and returns to LibraryMuseum arriving 7.00 p.m.

A folding chair or picnic rug and a torch might be useful.

Cost \$10 pp. Members are encouraged to travel by bus please.

Bookings at Library Museum 60238333, confirmation by payment no later than 6 April.

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#### **Floral Festival Dress**

Do you have, or do you know anyone who still has a dress worn on a Floral Festival float? Victoria, at the Albury LibraryMuseum, would love to borrow one for an upcoming exhibition, but they seem scarcer than hen's teeth.

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#### **May Meeting of the Society**

Wednesday 8 May 2013 at the Commercial Club Albury commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Speakers: Victoria Cooper: "Albury Floral Festivals" and Joe Wooding: "Thomas Scott Townsend's letters."