

ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN

Registered by Australia Post PP 225170/0019

JULY 2013

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REPORT ON JUNE MEETING (12.6.2013)

The Wattle Room at the Dean Street entrance to the Commercial Club was the venue for the Annual General Meeting of the Society. Vice-president Joe Wooding chaired the meeting in the absence of Chris McQuellin who was unavoidably in Melbourne. Thirty members were in attendance and there were four apologies.

Minutes of the previous AGM were read and confirmed and the President's annual report received together with the Treasurer's end of year report. It was pleasing to note the range of activities involving Society members throughout the year.

Joe declared all positions on the committee vacant and invited Honorary Life Member Howard Jones to chair the election of office bearers for the ensuing year 2013-14. Those elected were: President Doug Hunter; Vice-presidents Joe Wooding and Chris McQuellin; Secretary Helen Livsey; Minute secretary Catherine Browne; Treasurer Michael Browne; Committee: June Shanahan, Bridget Guthrie, Marion Taylor, Jill Wooding, Ray Gear and Peter Whitbourn.

Writer and historian Jane Downing spoke on her research into Lavington history and the stories that street and park names tell about a settlement, separate from Albury, which was built initially on gold mining and later fruit growing. 'And even today seen by many as a community in its own right rather than just another suburb of the city.'

NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY

10 JULY 2013

7.30pm at Commercial
Club Albury

Speakers: Keith Crossley
"Fellowship of First

Fleeters;" and

Jan Hunter: "Albury's
Book of Remembrance."

Members' 15 minutes

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

When was the first private telephone connected in Albury and when was the automatic exchange giving us 060 numbers installed?

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ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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Honorary Life Members:

Howard Jones, Helen Livsey June Shanahan

Public Officer: Helen Livsey

President: Doug Hunter

02 6021 2835

Vice-Presidents: Joe Wooding, Chris McQuellin

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Minute Secretary: Catherine Browne

Committee: June Shanahan, Jill Wooding, Marion Taylor, Bridget Guthrie, Ray Gear and Peter Whitbourn.

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Meeting Greeter: Catherine Browne

Membership list & Bulletin dispatch: Ray Gear

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Subscriptions are due 31 May

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

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

Bruce Pennay took the technology of presentation to a new level with an imaginative audio-visual of the construction of the Lavington North-point Tower.

Bruce has taken photographs of the growing building from the same location during his daily walks. He enlisted the assistance of his son John to assemble the photos into a rapid sequence showing the building rising from the ground to the finished structure. All this is set to modern music. The Lavington Library will relocate to the ground floor of the building in July.

Peter Whitbourn rounded out the meeting with a report on progress with the Robbins & Porter aircraft project. He displayed one of the landing wheels and showed a tyre he is modifying to match those of the 1913 era.

The evening finished with supper.

LAVINGTON: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By Jane Downing

This history was written as part of the catalogue to accompany the exhibit at the opening of the new Lavington Library. There are no claims to it being a definitive history as it was written to capture the story part of history – the many stories of the residents. Too many stories for short space – so for the catalogue we used the thread of naming to make choices of what went in and what didn't. The talk is an even more reduced part of the story to fit the time limits.

Where is Lavington? 'Lavington' came to mean the area of approximately 50 square kilometres located north of Union Road, bordered by the Black Range on the western and northern sides and the Great Southern Railway to the east. Initially the township was called Black Range, until 1909 when the name changed to Lavington.

First point to remember – Lavington has a separate history to Albury, the two only amalgamated in 1962. Union Road runs east to west along the boundary between the two. Also, two themes emerged: the ongoing Indigenous story and the story of migration, shared with everywhere else in Australia. Lavington was multicultural from the beginning of the non-Indigenous story.

The Wiradjuri people called this area Bungambrawatha and has a history of habitation dating back at least 40,000 years. Non-Indigenous people didn't arrive until 1824 – the first white men being the explorers Hume and Hovell. They described the Aboriginal people in the region as numerous, tall, robust and well-proportioned; a kind and inoffensive people. The tone changed when squatters took up land and it is hard to read this era without acknowledging the word invasion. By 1838 a police camp was established at

Bungambrawatha to protect white residents from 'Aborigines, escaped convicts and other criminals.'

Beginnings and Gold

The settlement coalesced into a township after 1851 when gold was found. Initially it was called Black Range, perhaps because of dark appearance of the surrounding hills. Flush with funds in the 1860s, a community hall, school, four hotels and log houses replaced the tent city and the population reached about 600. The gold never really paid however, and the dream continued on a small scale for decades.

Black Range was multicultural from the start; perhaps Darkie's Hill Quarry was named for three African-American miners. There were many Cornish miners, and a large number of Chinese, 200 in 1860. Some stayed on after the gold was found not to pay, getting into tobacco production and market gardening. The northern end of Prune St is still called Chinaman's Flat by older residents.

Growth and Orchards

The industry changed from gold to fruit growing, with more migrants arriving, some escaping religious persecution in Prussia, others pushed out by famine in the Rhineland. The Murray Valley Vineyard Company was established on Quicks Hill, and managed by John Frauenfelder, a Rhineland, He is also credited as planting the first fruit trees in Black Range. Prune Street was named to commemorate this first orchard.

The Buchhorns were also early orchardists and this remained the main source of income in the



A set of iron scales, including three weights, with a tin dish used for weighing prunes at Lavington's Frauenfelder Pioneer Orchard. The prunes were packed in wooden boxes and dispatched by train for sale in Sydney and Melbourne.

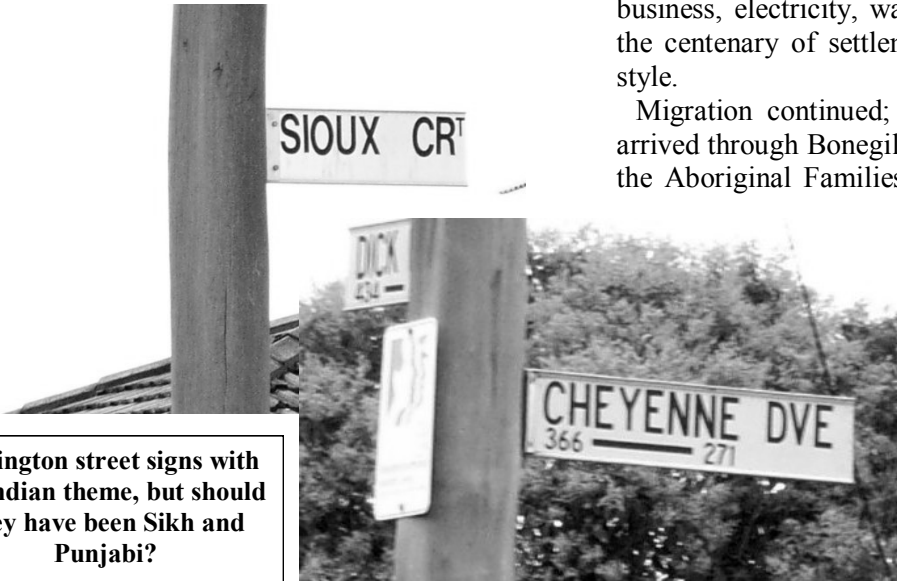
AlburyCity Collection

district until the end of WWI. A drought in the 1960s came as the last straw to many orchardist.

There was also sericulture – silk farming. Mulberry trees were planted, matured and some fine silk produced. Unfortunately the industry didn't continue but is remembered in the name of the crematorium and lawn cemetery. It was the name Thomas Affleck gave his mulberry farm: Glen-

morus; *glen* for the valley and *morus* for mulberry trees.

As Black Range grew, so did all the business



Lavington street signs with an Indian theme, but should they have been Sikh and Punjabi?

and retail to support a town. Early on there were blacksmiths, rabbit trappers, wood cutters and stone breakers and hawkers: butcher, bread, vegetables, haberdashery and ice. Perhaps these can be seen as precursors to Centro and the retail centre that is today's Lavington.

Indian hawkers used an area of what is now Jelbart Park for the cremation of their dead. A housing development nearby in the 1960s decided to use Indian names because of this. There is now a Cheyenne Drive, Sioux Court and Indiana Court. Unfortunately, the wrong Indians.

Identity in the 20th century

The town continued, and continues to be, a place of arrival for families fleeing war and persecution. It was part of Hume Shire from 1906 and transformed from a semi-rural to an officially gazetted urban area in 1947. It then survived amalgamation with Albury in 1962.

After WWI there were soldier settlement blocks in the area, and then many orchards were subdi-



**Architect's sketch of North Point Tower Griffith Road Lavington. Lavington Library is to occupy the ground floor of the building
Image: Zauner Constructions website**

vided after WWII. The Hume Dam was a factor in re-routing the Hume Highway through Lavington. This led to new hotels, motels, business, electricity, water, sewerage. In 1957 the centenary of settlement was celebrated in style.

Migration continued; many Dutch residents arrived through Bonegilla after WW2. In 1972, the Aboriginal Families Resettlement Scheme brought more Indigenous families here.

Later that decade a more ambitious national scheme aimed to accelerate population growth. The Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation (AWDC) developed Springdale Heights to attract new

residents. The Bhutanese arrivals are the latest in the long line of migration to the area

Pride

Lavington has had a reputation for being a Struggle Town with the nicknames Lavie and Stabbington. This is the view from outside. There has in fact been a sense of community from earliest times with the schools, the churches, the many activities at the Lavington Hall, and the sports teams. The library has also been a focus for the community, with a new library to be opened in Griffith Road on the 12 July 2013.

THOMAS SCOTT TOWNSEND

1812-1869 PART 5

By Joe Wooding

See earlier reports in *Bulletins* Nos 500, 505, 512 & 524

Surveying and laying out the seven streets for the township which became Albury in 1838 forms just a fraction of Townsend's contribution towards us being able to call Australia home. Though several Riverina towns including Albury have a Townsend Street and Australia's second highest mountain is named after him, there is little else to remind us of his work and enterprise in the early days of white settlement. Fortunately a great deal of correspondence between the surveyors in the field and head office in Sydney is available on microfilm.

Thomas Scott Townsend was born on 27 April 1812 in Medmenham, Buckinghamshire, England, the son of William and Ann Townsend. He made his way to Sydney as a teenager, where on 1 April 1831, the 19 year old gained employment as draftsman in the Sur-

veyor General's Department of NSW headed by Surveyor General, Thomas Livingstone Mitchell.

On 23 September 1836, Deputy Surveyor General, Captain Samuel Augustus Perry, in Mitchell's absence, directed Townsend to Bolong, south of Sydney, to relieve Assistant Surveyor Rusden. His main work for about two years was the measuring and marking out of the townships of Gunning and Yass along with numerous pastoral selections and furnishing descriptions and details thereof to Sydney.

On 5 July 1838 Perry instructed Townsend to make a careful survey of the ground around Mungabareena on the Murray. Townsend completed this task by the end of 1838 and returned north, but not before he applied unsuccessfully for the additional appointment as Commissioner of Crown Lands. The township of Albury was gazetted on 13 April 1839.

On 23 July 1839, Townsend was instructed to leave Mulwaree Ponds (Goulburn) for Melbourne. Many tasks were accomplished along the Port Phillip Road as he travelled south. He reported concerning the route past Gundagai with the need for a government punt on the Murrumbidgee, while on 17 September he dispatched a plan to Sydney having surveyed the crossing place on the Broken River (Benalla), and scene of the Faithful Massacre just 18 months earlier, along with police barracks and paddock.

Shortly after reaching Melbourne, Townsend was assigned to assist Surveyor S J Tyers in his survey of Portland Bay where the Henty family had been squatting since 1835 and also ascertain the meridian of the 141st degree of east longitude, already decided on to form the boundary to separate New South Wales from South Australia. The marking was done by excavating large holes and filling them with limestone rock. The party returned to Melbourne on 5 March 1840. Two days later, Townsend submitted a request for promotion to Surveyor, but without success.

He returned to Sydney for a short period, then to Melbourne on 18 July 1840, where he was in charge of the survey staff at Port Phillip until 19 May 1841, when he was requested to proceed to Corner Inlet in Gippsland. He encountered considerable resentment in marking out a harbour and reserves thus excluding the squatters from some very appealing land.

Back to duty in Sydney, Surveyor General Mitchell instructed Townsend to mark out and trace the best line of route from Corner Inlet through Gippsland and Moneroo Plains to the head of the Shoalhaven River. Townsend reported "mission accomplished," to Mitchell in a letter of 16 July 1842. Many hardships had been over-

come, not the least being the hundreds of miles through the winter snows in some of Australia's most rugged country. Townsend himself required urgent surgical attention in Sydney for a jaw complaint he was suffering.

Towards the end of 1842, Townsend was ordered to Twofold Bay to lay out a government town, Eden. It was somewhat reminiscent of the Portland and Corner Inlet affairs. During 1843 and part of 1844, he was mostly on the eastern slopes of the Great Dividing Range tracing the Snowy, Eucumbene and other rivers and laying out Pambula on the coast. Townsend returned to Sydney and spent 18 months working on the surveying and alignment of Sydney streets and suburbs. He was promoted to the rank of Surveyor on 1 August 1845.

Back into the high country, Townsend reported to Perry on 16 April 1846, advising he had located the most easterly source of the Murray nearest to Cape Howe. (This later became the Black Allen Line, the boundary between New South Wales and Victoria). On 16 July 1846, Townsend reported the mid-winter death of Murray Mitchell, 18 year-old son of the Surveyor General from want of medical aid. Mitchell (Snr) was leading an expedition in northern New South Wales, so it was many months before he was informed.

On 10 September 1847, Townsend applied for two year's leave of absence to proceed to Europe for health reasons. However, with so much to be done, he was talked into continuing. His workload increased dramatically during the last seven years of his working life. He was given a new responsibility, the Riverina, a vast area between the junction of the Murrumbidgee with the Murray in the west and literally to the coast in the east. The town designs of, or additions to, Deniliquin, Moama, Moulamein, Albury in 1848, 1849 and 1851, Wagga, Tumut, Cooma, Pambula and Bombala, and numerous roads, other rivers including the Edwards and Lachlan, plus stock reserves and land holdings all had to be surveyed and recorded. More than 200 maps and letters were forwarded to Sydney during this period.

A series of letters from Townsend to Sydney, all dated 8 October 1849, from a camp on the Port Phillip Road, are of considerable interest to us here in Albury.

First: Mr Richard Heaver had applied for two or three acres at Doctors Point to construct a water mill on an anabranch of the Murray. This was done, but on 3 June 1850, Mr Heaver informed Townsend that he had built a steam flour mill on one of his own allotments in Albury and would not require the land for a water mill. (Heaver's allotment was in the vicinity of 569 Hume Street. Previously it had been Mate's Ltd Stables).

Second: the Committee for the erection and management of the National School applied for a block at corner of Dean and Kiewa Streets.

Third: The Magistrate applied for one acre of land which the Bench had selected as a site for a Court House.

Fourth: By far the most informative correspondence was a letter about the Committee for the erection of a church in connection with the Church of England at Albury. Enclosed with this letter was the plan and description thereof, plus reference to the National School and Court House blocks. It also has a scale showing 10 chains to the inch which permits us to measure all of his town survey sites.

In another letter dated 31 October 1849, from a camp on the Murrumbidgee, Townsend replied to a letter from Sydney relating to measurement of the Burial Grounds in Albury, informing them that he is very uneasy that they have not received the aforesaid package dated 8th inst. and would make enquiries of the mailman.

On 29 March 1850, Townsend was involved in a very nasty incident near Tarcutta when Robert Edward Knox, in company with another villain, held up the mail coach. Townsend was tied to the wheel of the cart, minus his pants, for some time, with the March flies causing considerable discomfort. Knox was caught 10 days later near the Goulburn River in the Port Phillip district some 200 miles south of the hold-up. Knox got 10 year's hard labour, the first three in irons. His companion was not caught. The *Goulburn Herald* on 10 August 1850 published the story.

In early 1853, Townsend was recalled to Sydney, where for a short period, immediately after Perry's retirement, he was promoted to Acting Deputy Surveyor General. On 27 April 1853, in Queanbeyan, Townsend married Frances Emily Davis (Emmy). She was 20 years his junior. What could have been a 'lived happily ever after' story, soon became a nightmare. Emmy miscarried early in their union, but became pregnant again in August. By year's end Townsend was acting very strangely; possibly suffering a nervous breakdown. The mental disorder was diagnosed as mono-mania in which he was under the terrible delusion that his young wife was unfaithful to him. The couple went to Wollongong and on medical advice, parted. Townsend went to Melbourne and Emmy returned to her family in Queanbeyan. In the last week of April 1854, a son, Scott, was born.

Back to Sydney in early May, Townsend's mental state had declined alarmingly. On the evening of 9 May he accosted a Captain Burlton, out strolling with his own wife, when Townsend challenged him to a duel, accusing him of having seduced his wife. Burlton did not know Emmy,

having never met her.

In July 1854, Townsend prepared a Will, and a Deed of Separation requiring that husband and wife would forever live separately. Bank and gas shares to the extent of 300 pounds per annum were to be provided for mother and son. That same month Townsend departed for England, never to see his son, one whom he would always refuse to own.

Late in 1856, Townsend returned to Sydney where the government presumably required he undergo a medical examination. A Dr MacFarlane and another physician, signed with Townsend a certificate he was of unsound mind. He did return to England but little is known of either party from this point until Townsend's death on 26 August 1869.

The *Brisbane Courier* reported he had committed suicide by cutting his own throat. "He had been an Assistant Surveyor under government in Australia," they wrote, "and was in receipt of a pension." He had, according to his brother-in-law's account, been overworked in the Australian bush. The jury gave a verdict of suicide while in a state of temporary insanity. The *Hobart Mercury* also ran the story, but *The Sydney Morning Herald* just reported his death.

In June 1870, Emmy contested the Will, and applied for it to be set aside, alleging unsoundness of mind. Judge John Fletcher Hargraves (father of Lawrence, a pioneer of the aviation industry), not only dismissed her caveat, granting probate with costs against Mrs Townsend, but questioned her motives for taking such action as well. (Interestingly, the first Supreme Court Sittings were held in Albury on Friday, 16 April 1869, the Presiding Judge was none other than Justice John Fletcher Hargraves.)

Taken to the Full Court, (ecclesiastical jurisdiction on appeal) in 1872, Chief Justice Sir Alfred Stephen, with Justice Faucett, overturned Hargrave's judgement and had some very strong words in a 12,000 word judgment on the appeal.

'Not merely had she a right to come here in vindication of her own and her son's rights', wrote Stephen, 'but that in our opinion, she has in these proceedings, done no more than her duty. The Primary Judge not only decided in favour of the Will, but condemned the defendant in the cost of the suit accompanying his judgment with severe censures on her conduct and motives in the matter and we feel bound to say, after most minute and careful scrutiny, that we entirely dissent from his Honour on every one of the points taken by him'.

Was there a fortune at stake? You be the judge. The Appeal Judgment provided much information. Sir Alfred Stephen gave these clues when he

wrote -

“Mr Townsend had considerable property in Victoria, some also in England, with the New South Wales portion I observe, is estimated at 10,000 pounds. Townsend himself, when questioned about the bank and gas shares, not realizing the agreed 300 pounds per annum for his wife, wrote that his Melbourne property alone produced a much larger sum than 500 pounds per year”.

The England and Wales National Probate Calendar provides the following – “On the 9th day of May 1873, Letters of Administration of all and singular, the personal Estate and Effects of Thomas Scott Townsend formerly of Sydney in the Colony of New South Wales, but late of No. 34 Surrey Street, Strand in the County of Middlesex, Esquire, Deceased, who died on the 26th day of August 1869 at No. 34 Surrey Street, aforesaid intestate, were granted at the Principal Registry of Her Majesty’s Court of Probate to John Davis of Bloxham, near Banbury in the County of Oxford, Gentleman, the lawful attorney of Frances Emily Townsend, who now resides at Sydney aforesaid, the lawful Widow and Relict of the said deceased for her use and benefit and until she shall duly apply for and obtain Letters of Administration of his personal Estate and Effects to be granted to her, he having been first sworn duly to administer the personal Estate and Effects”.

The value of what she inherited, the cost of local and international attorneys, and the date of Emmy’s death are all unclear. Her son Scott died in Middlesex, England in 1933.

The tragedy of this man’s torment during the last 15 years of his life should not overshadow the contribution and legacy left to us by this most competent and industrious surveyor, Thomas Scott Townsend.

My thanks are due to Ray Gear, Chris McQuellin, Catherine Browne, Bruce Pennay, Betty Dunne and Faye Stevenson for information enabling this story to be told.

Sources used –

CSU Library Thurgoona

State Records New South Wales

Surveyor General letters received 1822-1855 held on micro film reels 3091 and 3092

Major Mitchell’s 1836 Australia Felix Expedition

“Surveyor Thomas Scott Townsend, His Work in Australia 1831-1854” by Alan EJ Andrews, in *Journal of Royal Australian Historical Society*, 1993, Vol. 79

Historical Records of Victoria, Vol. 2A and Vol. 5 by Michael Cannon and Ian McFarlane

The squatting age in Australia 1835–1847, Stephen H Roberts, MUP 1964.

The Goulburn Herald, 10 August 1850

Gordon v Townsend in Supreme Court Reports, 1872

England and Wales National Probate Calendar

TROVE

Digitised newspapers on line

Members will rejoice to know the following regional newspapers have recently been added to Trove:

- *Albury Banner and Wodonga Express* (1896-1939);

- *Border Morning Mail and Riverina Times* (1903-1920);
- *Wagga Wagga Express* (1858-1875);
- *Wagga Wagga Advertiser* (1868-1905); and
- *Adelong & Tumut Express & Tumbarumba Post* (1900-1925).

The *Wodonga and Towong Sentinel* (1885-1954) was added to Trove some time ago.

TOWNSEND’S CONVICT LABOURERS

Information from Faye Stevenson

Thomas Townsend headed a survey party of about six convicts. The personnel changed as convicts gained their ticket-of-leave, or reached the expiry of their sentence. Documentation is sparse as to who were the men with Townsend when he surveyed Albury. Faye suggested eight possibilities:

- Joseph Carr from Birmingham serving a life sentence;
- Caleb Tandy, also serving life;
- George Daniels from Liverpool serving 7 years;
- Daniel Donovan, life;
- Thomas Lawley, 14 years;
- Samuel Evans, 14 years;
- Charles Evans, cousin of Samuel, 14 years; and
- John Keegan serving life.

NOTICES

LAVINGTON LIBRARY OPENING

The new Lavington Library in North Point Tower Griffith Road will be officially opened at 11 a.m. on Friday 12 July 2013. At 2.30 p.m. the exhibition *Lavington What’s in a Name?* will be launched. A&DHS members are welcome to attend both events.

ROBBINS & PORTER

The launch of the Robbins & Porter Exhibition at the LibraryMuseum will take place at 11 a.m. Saturday 27 July. Be there and marvel at the plane suspended over the foyer of the Library.

WRITE AROUND THE MURRAY FESTIVAL

Would you like to write a paragraph on “Belonging; being Australian” and participate in a major artwork to be installed on the LibraryMuseum Criss-Cross wall during the Festival. Contact Caryn Giblin at AlburyCity 6023 8349, or <cgiblin@alburycity.nsw.gov.au>

PIONEER CEMETERY WALK

Six presenters have indicated they will contribute at the Cemetery Walk planned for Sunday 13 October. Several more are needed, so if you would like to present your story about someone in the Pioneer Cemetery please contact Chris McQuellin. 6021 3697 <cpmq@bigpond.com>

SUBSCRIPTION

Have you renewed your subscription for 2013/14? See renewal form in June *Bulletin*.