

# ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN

Registered by Australia Post PP 225170/0019

SEPTEMBER 2013

538

## REPORT ON AUGUST MEETING (14.8.2013)

“They don’t teach history in schools anymore, well not the way I was taught anyway.” We hear people say this and realise that, as people interested in history, we should know the facts of if and how the subject is being taught. To tell us what was happening in schools we invited Ross McGarvie, Head Teacher of English & History at James Fallon High School, to speak to us on some of the latest developments in history teaching. We were not disappointed and came away knowing that history has an important place on the school curriculum and is being taught in informative and imaginative ways.

Ray Gear spoke about Town Planning in Albury in 1914 and the actions taken by Albury Council to lay the foundation for many of the amenities we enjoy today.

Joe Wooding conducted a quiz about Albury in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and rewarded those giving correct answers with Fantales and chocolates. The rewards were hard won however, because the questions were difficult. For instance when did Albury residents first see electricity used? It was well before 1916 when electric power came to the town; it was on 11 June 1883 when the engine shed at the Albury Railway Station was lit by electric lights for the banquet celebrating the joining of the NSW and Victorian rail lines. Or, who succeeded James Fallon and John Roper as mayor of Albury in 1862? It was Walter M Miller Esq. The prize jack-potted!

In the Members’ 15 minutes, Roma Freeman read an article entitled “Indian hawkers in the early days of Walla Walla” writ-

## NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY

11 SEPTEMBER 2013

7.30pm at Commercial

Club Albury

*NSW History Week*

*Picture this!*

**Presentation by Wodonga-Albury Camera Club.**

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## ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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**Journals, Stock:** June Shanahan

**Meeting Greeter:** Catherine Browne

**Membership list & Bulletin dispatch:** Ray Gear

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

Committee meets 3rd Wednesday of the month 5.15pm at Albury Library-Museum.

## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Single: \$25

Family: \$33

Corporate: \$50

Subscriptions are due 31 May. *Bulletins* will not be sent to members who have subs outstanding as at 31 August.

**Research** undertaken \$25 first hour. Enquiries in writing with \$25

ten for the Walla Walla CWA by Mrs Elise Wiesner. Doug Hunter asked a question on behalf of a lady in Melbourne seeking relatives of the family of Dr Jeffrey Wilkinson, son of Colonel John Wilkinson and brother of Maynard Wilkinson who are still in the Albury district. She has letters written from France in 1917. Doug also added some information about the early days of the Albury Blood Bank.

### **HISTORY IN SCHOOLS**

**Report on talk by Ross McGarvie**

Teaching of History begins in primary schools and continues on into secondary schools. It is a compulsory course of study in years 7 to 10. The syllabus is state-wide, applying to government and non-government schools. The current syllabus has been in place for about 10 years and is scheduled to change next year as the new National Curriculum is introduced.

The syllabus is enquiry based where students come to understand what history is and the way sources are studied in order to understand the basis of history; how we know about the past, and why knowledge of the events and people of the past are important. A walking tour of the Waugh Road Cemetery is undertaken to demonstrate one type of historical source which can be interpreted to give information about Albury's past. This is undertaken by Year 7 students.

Year 7s also look at two of the following three ancient societies: Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, seeking to determine what can be learned from their history and to see the origin of the basic elements of the western tradition which underpins our modern society.

Year 8 students study the indigenous people of Australia as well as the indigenous people of another part of the world, their customs and the effect of colonisation. The Aztecs of Central America with their gory rituals are a trendy area of study. The native people of North America, the 'red Indians' are also popular. Year 8s also do medieval and early modern peoples, Vikings and Anglo-Saxons among others.

Year 9s launch into two years of solid Australian history beginning with Federation, voting rights, immigration restriction (White Australia policy). Next is World War One (1914-1918) looking at Gallipoli and the effect of the war on the Home Front. In the between-the-wars, 20s & 30s, the topics include the returned soldiers and then unemployment and the Great Depression. In this segment, one event or one person is selected and studied in detail. Year 9 concludes with World War Two; why did Australia fight; what

happened to POWs; and what about nurses? The Battle for Australia is studied and one other land campaign, often North Africa. On the home front the changing role of women is a topic, also the disagreement between Churchill and Curtin and the shift in reliance from Britain to the USA.

Year 10 begins with the immediate post-war period and the massive influx of European migrants. One major national group is selected, often the Italians migrants; and one major event, possibly the Snowy scheme and their impact on Australian life, culture and industry is studied.

Conflict in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century is another segment. The Vietnam War, the lead up to it and the aftermath are studied. This includes the Korean conflict, ANZUS and SEATO, the Petrov Affair, the referendum to ban the Communist Party, the Australian involvement in the war and the anti-war movement, the returning Vietnam veterans and the problems of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and finally the Vietnamese Boat People who fled the communist takeover in 1975.

Another segment looks at the changing rights and freedoms of the indigenous people. This includes the Stolen Generation and the Intervention; also the 1967 referendum and the Mabo and Wik decisions of the High Court.

Year 10s continue the Australian history themes when they look at Australia as a 'global citizen' and its involvement in the United Nations, relations with Asian neighbours through the Colombo Plan and aid programs and APEC; the Whitlam Dismissal and the career of Sir John Kerr. Each year one Prime Minister is chosen for in-depth study. The second Year 10 segment has a social history theme where a decade is chosen, often the 1960s and the music, sport and fashion are studied and the American influence analysed.

History is not a compulsory course in the senior school, Years 11 & 12, however last year, of the 70,000 students who sat the HSC exams in NSW, about 20,000 sat for history exams, so the subject remains popular. History is considered among the top rating subjects in the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

History in Years 11 & 12 offers 3 courses: ancient history, modern history, and an extension course where a student who is studying one of the structured courses is able to pursue individual research on a chosen topic. At the end of Year 10, the history faculty make a presentation to students to guide them in choices for the Senior School. One maxim is: "to do history you must enjoy reading."

The ancient history course includes a study of Rome and in particular the Roman city of Herculaneum which was destroyed by a volcanic eruption in AD 79. Modern history studies Britain and Germany in World War One; Germany between

the wars; Personalities in 20<sup>th</sup> century and Conflict in Europe 1939-45. Personalities in 20<sup>th</sup> century provides a wide range including Albert Speer, Nelson Mandela and Emperor Hirohito. Conflict in Europe includes a study of the Holocaust.

In response to a question Ross outlined the examination process. The HSC history exam is a 3 hour paper in which students answer four questions. Three questions require essays each of about 1000 words, and a fourth question with multiple choice answers. Answers are hand written which raises the question of the steady decline in hand-writing standards. Asked if there is a case for computers to be used, Ross was of the opinion that very few students have the keyboard skills to produce 3,000 words in 45 minutes. Almost all his students take hand-written notes and practise their hand-writing skills.

The new national Curriculum will be introduced in Years 7 & 8 next year. The enquiry based focus will continue and many of the current topics will be retained. There will be a broadening of the topics to include topics which place Australia in the context of the world especially the Asian world. The Ottoman Empire, the Mogul expansion into India and the Khmer civilisation in south-east Asia will be part of the new curriculum. Ross believes the broadening of the syllabus will be beneficial in encouraging more students to go on to study history at HSC level.

At the end of Ross' presentation, members were assured that history is being taught in schools and were vastly better informed as to how and what is being taught.

### TOWN PLANNING IN ALBURY 1914-1918

By Ray Gear

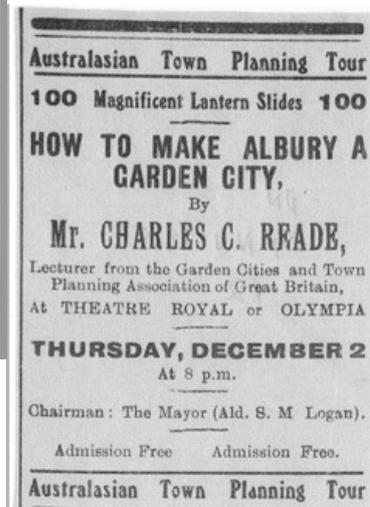
Albury entered the twentieth century seeking to host the Federal Capital site which, must have created in the minds of its citizens how they wanted to see Albury in the future. It was also a time, with the introduction of the car, that Albury again was seen as a major rural service centre, a role that had declined after the railway reached Albury in 1881.

Australian wide interest in town planning in the years prior to World War I saw the formation of various planning bodies, one being the New South Wales Town Planning Association formed in October 1913. This association was requested by Albury Council in December 1914 to provide for a town planning lecture in Albury by an expert. Lectures organized by the NSW Town Planning Association were intended to demonstrate 'that towns could be made beautiful, healthy and useful by the application of Town Planning Principles'.

According to the *Albury Daily News* of 29 April



Advertisements for Town Planning lectures, 29 April and 2 December 1915.



1915, town planning was a subject that 'seems to have

instinctively appealed to the citizens of Albury'.

Charles Compton Reade (1880-1933) on behalf of the Association gave two separate town planning lectures in 1915. His first titled "The Message of Garden Cities and Town Planning" was delivered to a large audience at the Mechanics Theatre on April 29. On 2 December Reade delivered his second lecture at the Theatre Royal titled "How to Make Albury a Garden City". His visits to Albury were prompted chiefly by Alderman James Allan (1860-1941) who served some fifteen years on council between 1911 and 1925.

Town planning at the start of the twentieth century was about scheduled land use and road layout as a means of minimising health risks.

Having toured the town before both lectures Reade offered during his lectures, several suggestions for town improvement including: beautifying the approach to the railway station, securing land on Western Hill for a park, improving Mungabareena Reserve, constructing narrower carriageways in making of chain roads, road making methods in Broad Street, elimination of fences, proper placement of public utility services, eliminating checkerboard subdivisions, turning Brown's and Waite's lagoons into ornamental gardens, tree planting in Alexandra Park, and beautifying the approach to Albury Cemetery. To the suggestion during his second lecture, that a war memorial be erected on the summit of Western Hill, Reade, 'heartily commended the suggestion'.

Some of these suggestions were taken up by Council at their meeting of 16 June 1915.

Work included, allowing for tree planting in the construction of Parkinson Street, preparation of a plan for improving the approach to the railway and the planting of native trees in Mungabareena Reserve. On the 17 November, Councils Works Committee recommended that a sum of two hundred pounds be placed on the 1916 estimates for land resumption on Western Hill.

In August 1917 Council was invited to send delegates and exhibits to the First Australian Town Planning Conference and Exhibition to be held in Adelaide. Although not a unanimous decision benefits seen in attending included bringing Albury under notice which might lead to tourists and others being attracted to visit Albury. A photographic exhibition was authorized for the conference, the cost to not exceed three pounds.

The Adelaide conference held between 17-24 October was attended by Councillor Alfred Waugh (1870-1948). London born Waugh, who served some 45 years on council between 1903 and 1948, was a 'strong advocate for Albury's quality of life supporting amongst other services, provision of electricity, sewerage and better road construction.' In question times during the conference, 'he advocated decentralization policies and establishment of more provincial towns rather than spend huge sums of money in one centre, such as Sydney for instance.'

He submitted a report on the conference to Council on 31 October in which he set out some of the essentials of town planning exposed at the conference. Summarized they were:

- The need for varied road widths;
- Re-arrangement of existing land parcels and roads;
- Demolition and re-construction of buildings in the interests of amenity and public health;
- Zoning to divide the city into various activities;
- Height and advertisement control;
- Open space resumption;
- Density, siting and landscaping control for dwellings; and
- Sound building construction.

Was this interest in town planning beneficial to the citizens of Albury? Council's action in June 1915 and later, to implement some of the ideas and concepts expressed by Charles Reade and, in particular enhancing the city's open space assets, indicate that the lectures did play a role in adding to the understanding of town planning and enhancement of the city. This particularly can be seen in the development of Western Hill, now known as Monument Hill which is today one of Albury's most significant landmarks.

**Principal Bibliography Sources:** *Albury Banner & Wodonga Express, Albury Daily News & Wodonga Chroni-*

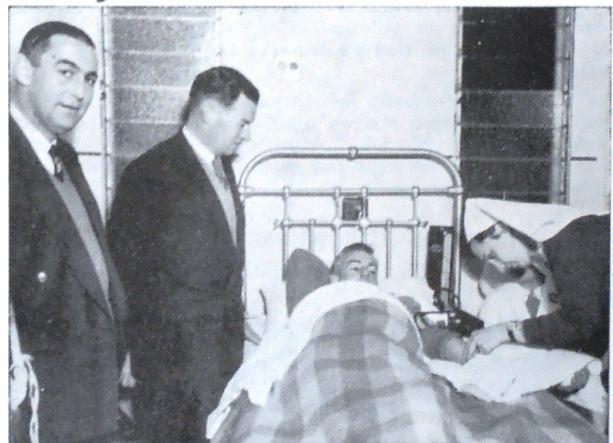
*cle, Border Morning Mail and Riverina Times. Proceedings of the First Conference and Exhibition of the Australian Town Planning and Housing Conference, 1918,*

### BLOOD BANK

In a talk by Ron Haberfield on Apex in Albury (*Bulletin 532*) mention was made of the strong connection between the club and the Blood Transfusion Service at the Albury District Hospital. ADH Annual Reports shed further light on the transfusion service and the eventual Blood Bank.

In the Annual Report for year ending 30 June 1943 both the Secretary and the Medical Superintendent refer to the blood donor panel associated with the Apex Club. And in the Annual Report for year ending 30 June 1956, the secretary reports:

"Blood Bank: After much discussion and planning this hospital will soon open a Blood Bank. The Albury Hospital Auxiliary has supplied the equipment and the Hospitals' Commission has now agreed to its commencement. Negotiations are at present being conducted with the Red Cross Transfusion Service with regard to technical details. Dr Hambrett, medical officer in charge of the Commonwealth Health Laboratory has been appointed honorary director of the Blood Bank and a trained Sister is to be employed after receiving special tuition at the Red Cross Transfusion Centre."



**Scene in newly opened ABH Blood Bank 1958. From left: Dr A B Hogan, Dr R J Walsh, Director NSW Red Cross Transfusion Service, donor, and Sister-in-Charge Miss Jean Smith**  
Photo: ABH Annual Report 1958

The Annual Report of the following year notes:  
"The long awaited Blood Bank has now become a reality. Honorary Director of the Bank Dr D Mitchell, supported by the Honorary Medical Board and Dr Hambrett, of the Commonwealth Health Laboratories, has made a solid start by grouping over 400 donors at the time of this report, while the Blood Bank Sister [Sister Jean Smith] has commenced duty and is making prepa-

rations for an early opening of the ABH Regional Bank.”

The 1958 Annual Report has a photograph of ‘a scene in our Blood Bank’ and gives the strength of the donor panel, as at 30.6.58 as 1428.

### **JOURNEYING THROUGH THE JOURNALS.**

By June Shanahan

*Murrumbidgee Ancestor, Journal of Wagga Wagga and District Family History Society Inc*, No 109, June 2013.

- ‘A County Heroine: Augusta Lydia Odewahn Schirmer;
  - “Ask Granny” Project.
- Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol 99 Part 1, June 2013.
- The role of Robert James Ellicott QC in the dismissal of the Whitlam government in 1975;
  - Did Henry Hacking shoot Pemulwuy? A reappraisal;
  - ‘Mrs Thunderbolt’: Setting the record straight on the life and times of Mary Ann Bugg.
- Wagga Wagga & District Historical Society Inc*. No 401, June-July 2013.
- Wagga Wagga & District Family History Society, 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Saturday 12th October;
  - Mark Redhead, a ‘Kangaroo’.
- Ancestree, Journal of the Burwood & District Family History Group*, Vol.26, July 2013.
- The 1850’s Immigrants to Eastern Australia from Frauenstein in the Duchy of Nassau. Pt 1;
  - James Bradley Circa 1765-1838.
- History: Magazine of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, No 116, June 2013.
- Royal Australian Historical Society 2013 Annual State History Conference 2 & 3 November at Katoomba RSL;
  - The Frank Walker Western Crossings Collection.

### **TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

The answer to last month’s question: *When was the first private telephone connected in Albury and when was the automatic exchange giving us 060 numbers installed?* is proving more difficult than we might have expected. However it is turning up interesting snippets of information.

Concerning the first part of the question, Helen Livsey has found an article in the *Border Post* 1885 quoting the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 7 February 1885 as saying “Albury is certainly a pretty little town... Gas has been supplied and telephone established in several houses.”

The answer to when the 060 numbers were introduced is unclear. The Telephone Exchange building at 473 Kiewa Street was built in 1959, but we know 060 numbers were not introduced till long after that. The best we can say is that it was post 1971, the date of Roma Freeman’s directory mentioned at the last meeting.

The end of the 060 period however is clear; the *Border Mail* 10 August 1998 reported, “phone numbers in old 060 and 069 areas became mandatory eight-digit numbers yesterday,” i.e. 9 August 1998.

### **INDIAN HAWKERS IN THE EARLY DAYS OF WALLA WALLA**

Article written by Mrs Elise Wiesner for the CWA newsletter in 1992. Mrs Wiesner died in 1999 aged 101.

*The Indian hawkers were quite numerous in the Walla Walla district in the early days and were seen driving around selling goods which they carried in covered wagons drawn by two horses. There were shelves built into the back of, the van where they carried all their material and. general drapery. They called on farmers in the surrounding districts at regular intervals and it must have been quite a help for families in isolated areas to be able to buy drapery and clothing in this way. The children were always very delighted when an Indian hawker opened the back of his van and they could see all the goods he had for sale.*

*We always had a regular caller named Sommer Singh. He didn't have a van, he just walked around carrying a big white bundle of goods on his back and, on his head, he carried an oblong tin box with a lid in which he had a variety of goods such as jewellery, pocket knives and many useful articles. He wore a very neatly wrapped turban around his head which was also quite a help to be able to balance the tin trunk.*

*He used to camp in a shed at our place at “Beaver Rock” and would make a fire outside and cook his Johnny cakes and curry, which was his main diet. The younger members of our family would sit around the fire and watch Sommer-Singh cook his tea. After tea he would bring his goods and show us what he had for sale and this was also a great delight to us children. Our parents always made some purchases.*

*On one occasion, Sommer Singh with his load of goods, and turban and box on his head, was coming along through a crop paddock where a farmer was stripping with his horse team. You can imagine how the horses would have got excited at seeing this strange figure. The farmer was just able to control his team and prevent them from bolting. Our cattle would also gather together to watch this strange man walking toward our home.*

*The Indians who were hawkers with horse-drawn vans had names that sounded like Sunda Singh, Rutten Singh, Eassa Singh, Mitta Singh and Ghan Singh, a farmer from Milbrulong. The best known one was “Dooky” who was in this area for many years. One day he was travelling through Walla Walla with his van and two horses*

and, when he was crossing the railway line a train ran into his two horses and the van was dragged along with them. When the rescuers arrived, Dooky was unhurt inside his van but one horse was dead and the other had to be destroyed.

Dooky died of a heart attack when he was camping at Mr Muller's place. This happened when the new bridge was built at Walbundrie and I was informed that some of the men who worked on the bridge supplied the coffin and Dooky was buried at the Walbundrie cemetery.

On making enquiries about Indian hawkers in the surrounding areas, I was told of Shar Khan who smoked a pipe, with a very long stem with an arrangement to the bottom of the pipe. It appears that these travelling hawkers all had permission to camp at certain farmers' places and made this their routine.

As the years passed by, the Indians seemed to disappear from this area; probably with the introduction of the motor car the "hawking" business would have faded out. I gather that a number of them had wives and families in India and they would send money home to support them.

Most of the Indians were cremated in the North Albury area where they had their burial ground. Mr. Tom King of Walla Subdivision was an executor of Rule Singh's will and carried out the rules of the Indian cremation. They had to get a load of wood and a box of butter to carry out the burning of the body. The piles of wood were built up around, the body like a pyramid and the butter placed on it and lit with paper.

After the body was burnt, some of the ashes were placed in a small "trinket" [which was] sent to India and thrown into the Ganges River, and the rest of the ashes were buried in their burial ground in Albury and a cement block placed alongside the grave. There were Indians in high office in charge of these burials.

#### **FORMATION OF HENTY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Six members of A&DHS joined 28 interested residents of Henty and district at a meeting on Thursday 22 August at the Henty Memorial Hall for the purpose of forming an Historical Society.

Doug Hunter chaired the meeting at which a steering committee was elected and tasked to prepare a constitution, approach likely trustees, investigate insurances and prepare a collection policy. These matters are to be presented at another meeting scheduled for Thursday 24 October.

The embryo Society already has a room in the Memorial Hall which is currently undergoing extensive renovation to convert it into a community facility with gymnasium and sports hall and sup-

per room. The Historical Society room has been fitted out as a functional research space with storage cabinets, desks, a photocopier, bookshelves and tables.

Edward and Kay Dale, who are members of A&DHS, have been enthusiastic advocates of the move to form a Society in Henty. They have received support from Greater Hume Shire and members of the local community. Bridget Guthrie and Chris McQuellin of our Society have provided advice and assistance to this initiative. Chris, on behalf of A&DHS, donated a small PA system to the Henty group for use in its meetings.

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#### **STRANGERS IN PARADISE**

##### **A history of the ABC in regional Australia on the four Sundays in November ABC Classic FM**

"Strangers in Paradise" is a four part series devoted to the history of the ABC in regional Australia. Hosted by Martin Buzacott, who visited Albury in early July collecting material for the programs, the series will use Toowoomba, Grafton and Albury as examples of ABC operations in the country. Episodes 2 & 3 will feature Albury.

The series goes to air on ABC Classic FM at noon on Sundays 3, 10, 17 and 24 November 2013, and will include interviews of several members of the Albury & District Historical Society, and a special interview in Berlin of Argentinean-born Daniel Barenboim, who played the piano at the Plaza Theatre in Albury on 16 September 1958 and 5 June 1962, and who became one of the world's foremost pianists and conductors.

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#### **SPEAKER**

Joe Wooding represented A&DHS on Saturday 24 August as guest speaker at a family meeting at the Church of Latter Day Saints in Albury. The Church members are aware that their building is located across the road from Hovell Tree Park, the birth-place of Albury and were keen to hear about the beginning of the city.

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#### **CEMETERY WALK**

Plans for the guided walk in the Pioneer Cemetery scheduled for Sunday 13 October commencing at 2 p.m. are being finalised. Chris McQuellin 6021 3697 is in charge of proceedings.

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#### **IT ASSISTANCE AT MEETINGS**

Ron Haberfield has kindly volunteered to assist with setting up the laptop computer and data projector prior to our meetings. Thank you Ron.

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#### **ANTIQUES & COLLECTABLES VALUATION DAY**

The annual Antiques & Collectables Valuation Day will be conducted on Saturday 12 October 2013 at the Wodonga Senior Citizens' Centre, Havelock Street Wodonga, 10 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. Well known antiques dealer and 2UE presenter, Elizabeth Stevens, will again be the valuer. The day is a joint venture organised by Wodonga Historical Society and A&DHS. Contact June Shanahan on 6025 1324 if you require more details.