



ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN

Registered by Australia Post PP 225170/0019

JUNE 2014

546

REPORT ON MAY MEETING (14.5.2014)

It was a relatively clear night for the meeting at the Library-Museum. That was fortunate because following David Thurley's talk we went outside to QEII Square where members of the Astronomical Society of Albury-Wodonga (ASAW) had set up three telescopes. We were able to view the planet Saturn with its rings clearly visible as it moved close to the moon. In addition David was able to point out Hadar and Alpha Centauri, the southern pointer stars familiar to Boy Scouts and Girl Guides because they combine with the Southern Cross to find South. He also pointed out the planet Mars with its distinctive red colour.

David Thurley, president of the ASAW, was born in Tasmania in 1947 and aspired to be a scientist from an early age. He obtained a Bachelor of Science with Honours degree in 1969 and began work with the Australian Newsprint Mills, a company now owned by Norske Skog. His work has taken him to England, Malaysia, Sweden, Brazil, France and Greece. He is now semi-retired which gives him time for civic activities; he is currently an Albury City Councillor, and has time to teach science as a volunteer at district schools. And of course pursue his interest in astronomy.

Following David's talk and our visit to QEII Square, we returned to the LibraryMuseum meeting room and concluded the meeting with an update by Joe Wooding on archaeological finds at the Art Gallery site and a discussion about current development proposals involving art deco buildings in Olive and Dean Streets, the former Baker Motors building and the former Rural

NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY

11 JUNE 2014

7.30pm at Commercial

Club Albury

Annual General

Meeting

Speaker: Richard Lee:
"Stuart McKenzie Logan"

and Victoria Cooper:

"Building Foundations:

Building plans from the

Logan and FA Stow

collection"

BUILDING FOUNDATIONS

at

Albury LibraryMuseum

6 June — 6 August

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ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

PO Box 822 ALBURY 2640

www.alburyhistory.org.au

Patron: Patricia Gould OAM

Honorary Life Members:

Howard Jones, Helen Livsey June Shanahan

Public Officer: Helen Livsey

President: Doug Hunter 02 6021 2835

Vice-President: Joe Wooding

Secretary: Helen Livsey 02 6021 3671

Treasurer: Michael Browne

Minute Secretary: Catherine Browne

Committee: Peter Whitbourn, Jill Wooding,

June Shanahan, Ray Gear, Bridget Guthrie and

Marion Taylor.

Bulletin Editor: Doug Hunter 02 6021 2835

<djhjrhlaptop@bigpond.com>

Publicity Officer: Jill Wooding

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 LibraryMuseum.

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

Bank. The feeling of the meeting was that the art deco features should be retained in future redevelopments by Hume Building Society and Commercial Club respectively and that letters be sent expressing the Society's view.

Bruce Pennay thanked members of the Society for their expressions of sympathy on the recent sudden death of their son Mark in Germany.

TRANSIT OF VENUS

Talk by David Thurley

Every so often the planet Venus does something remarkable, its orbit brings it to a point directly between the earth and the sun (that's called inferior conjunction) where it appears as a dark spot moving across the disc of the sun. This can only occur with the planets Mercury and Venus. Transits of Venus are rare events occurring in pairs 8 years apart and then not for more than a hundred years. They only occur in June and December.

So tonight I will talk about a feat of measurement that has direct connection with the European discovery of our land, a Transit of Venus. To be precise these events occur in a repeating pattern every 243 years with pairs of transits 8 years apart separated by gaps of 122½ and 105½ years. The last two transits occurred in 2008 and 2012 so we have a long wait until the next one.

Why was this event important? If viewed from two widely separated points on earth we are able to calculate the earth - sun distance using the method of parallax. From there, people could calculate the size of the solar system and by observing the positions of stars at times 5 months apart when the earth is at opposite ends of its orbit, they could calculate the distances to stars. But since this is not the Mathematical Society that's all the trigonometry you'll get from me.

Let me now turn to the historical aspects of transits.

JEREMIAH HORROCKS

The first ever transit to be observed was seen by Jeremiah Horrocks aged only 20 in 1639 from the village of Much Hoole near Liverpool. He died less than two years later. In the decades leading up to this transit most European powers were embroiled in the Thirty Years War between 1618 and 1648.

While calculating astronomical events for the years 1629 – 1630 based on his Rudolphine Tables, Johannes Kepler who was imperial Mathematician to Emperor Rudolf II in Prague, the capital of Bohemia, made the discovery that both Mercury and Venus would pass across the face of the Sun in 1631. He calculated that the Transit of Venus would occur on 6th December 1631. No



The first observed Transit of the Planet Venus predicted & observed by Jeremiah Horrocks 24th November 1639. Painting by JW Lavender 1903.

one observed this transit.

Jeremiah Horrocks realised only a month before the event that transits came in pairs and a second was likely in 1639. One Sunday in late 1639 he began preparing for the event. He set up a telescope to project an image of the sun onto a piece of paper in a darkened room. His image was only 150 mm across and he divided the circle into 30 equal parts to track the movement of the planet across the face of the sun.

There he "beheld a most agreeable spectacle, the object of my sanguine wishes, a spot of unusual magnitude and of a perfectly circular shape which had already fully entered upon the Sun's disk on the left, so that the limbs of the Sun and Venus were precisely coincided, forming an angle of contact. Not doubting that this was really the shadow of the planet, I immediately applied myself sedulously to observe it."

He also wrote that at one point he was "called away in the intervals by business of the highest importance which, for these ornamental pursuits, could not with propriety neglect". Since it was a Sunday and Jeremiah was a school teacher we can assume that he was carrying out the normal Sunday observance of a religious person in the 17th century.

His measurements allowed the earth - sun distance to be revised upwards from 20 million km to the figure of 191 million km. Though this value is too high it was a much better estimate. The actual distance is 149,492,000 km.

Horrocks came to be known as the "Father of British Astronomy"- not bad for a man who died at age 22! His abilities and achievements were later honoured when a memorial was placed in Westminster Abbey in December 1874, but I must point out what is probably an error in the inscription. Jeremiah was probably far too young to have been a curate at the time but I acknowledge there is some debate about this issue.

The 1761 transit had scientific academies planning for a concerted effort to make accurate measurements. Over 100 teams of astronomers in Europe began to make plans to observe the event

In Memory of JEREMIAH HORROCKS
 Curate of Hoole in Lancashire,
 Who died on the 3^d January, 1641, in or near his
 22^d year;
 Having in so short a life
 Detected the long inequality in the mean motion of
 Jupiter and Saturn;
 Discovered the orbit of the moon to be an ellipse;
 Determined the motion of the lunar apse,
 Suggested the physical cause of its revolution;
 And predicted from his own observations the
 Transit of Venus
 Which was seen by himself and his friend
 William Crabtree
 On Sunday, the 24th November (O.S) 1639;
 This tablet, facing the Monument of Newton,
 Was raised after the lapse of more than two centu-
 ries December 9, 1874

Memorial to Jeremiah Horrocks (1618 — 1641).
 It was placed in Westminster Abbey in December
 1874

from a variety of far-flung places. Records show that 176 astronomers took part in observing the transit from 117 locations.

We should also note that, as with the previous transit, between 1756 and 1763 Britain and France with their respective allies were engaged in the bitter struggles of the Seven Years War.

LE GENTIL DE LA GALASIERE

I will start with a Frenchman whose expedition was perhaps one of the longest in history. He probably also had one of the longest names too! This was Guillaume Joseph Hyacinthe Jean-Baptiste Le Gentil de la Galasiere who set off in March 1761 to observe the transit in India. When they arrived however they found that Pondicherry had fallen to the British and he could not land. He was at sea on the 6th June, the date of the transit but could not get accurate measurements of the timings because of the motion of the ship nor could he accurately determine his position. He decided to do some exploring around Mauritius and elsewhere and fill in the intervening 8 years until the next transit in 1769; now that's dedication!

He travelled to Manilla but had trouble with the Spanish governor who accused him of forging his letters of recommendation, (international relations were difficult even then and he couldn't call on Julie Bishop or Bob Carr!) so decided once again to go to Pondicherry. He arrived in March 1768 and still had a year to go before the event. With the help of the governor he set up an observatory on top of a citadel. Incidentally, for some time 60,000 pounds weight of explosive powder was stored under this observatory. By the 14th July 1768 he could begin the task of accurately deter-

mining his latitude and longitude.

On the night of the 2nd June 1769 the wind woke him at 2 a.m. and to his horror he saw that the sky was covered by cloud. By the time the clouds cleared the transit was over! Le Gentil said, "That is the fate which often awaits astronomers. I had gone more than 10,000 leagues; it seemed that I had crossed such a great expanse of seas, exiling myself from my native land, only to be the spectator of a fatal cloud which come to place itself before the sun at the precise moment of my observation, to carry off from me the fruits of my pains and fatigues ..."

JAMES COOK

Now let's move forward to the next transit in 1769. The consensus was that the observations of 1761, had not been wholly successful and it was resolved to send observers to various parts of the world including to a location in the South Pacific. For the most accurate calculations it is desirable to have widely separated observing stations.

The Royal Society submitted a memorial "To the Kings most excellent Majesty" seeking funds for such a voyage and in March 1768 King George III granted the Royal Society £4,000 and the British government indicated that it would provide a Royal Navy ship with

AGM AGENDA

Welcome, Attendance & Apologies
 Minutes of the AGM 13.6.2012

President's Report

Treasurer's Report & Audited Accounts
 Appointment of interim chairman to conduct election.

Election of Office Bearers:

Nominations as at 22 May in []

President [*Michael Browne*]

Vice-presidents (2) [*Joe Wooding, June Shanahan*]

Secretary [*Helen Livsey*]

Treasurer [*vacant*]

Minute Secretary [*Catherine Browne*]

Committee of 6 [*Ray Gear, Jill Wooding, Marion Taylor, Peter Whitbourn, Ron Haberfield, Greg Ryan*]

General business:

Setting of annual subscription

[Recommendation: Unchanged: Single \$25; Family \$33; Corporate \$50]

Tabling of Draft Constitution for comment.

Honorary life membership

AGM meeting closure

its crew. A non-commissioned sailor called James Cook aged 40 years was selected to lead the expedition and was appointed lieutenant. As master of a ship he was entitled to be called captain.

Captain James Cook travelled to Tahiti to observe the transit on the 3rd June 1769. There were problems with his timings because of the phenomenon called the "black drop effect" which makes it very difficult to determine the exact moment when the disc of Venus comes into contact with the disc of the Sun. (You can simulate this effect yourself by bringing your thumb and forefinger together and they appear to be joined just before they actually make contact.)

In addition, his orders read, "When this Service is perform'd you are to put to Sea without Loss of Time, and carry into execution the Additional Instructions contained in the inclosed Sealed Packet".

Cook was charged in a separate set of orders to travel south after observing the transit to search for the "great south land". We know of course that he travelled south, later observing a transit of Mercury on the 9th November at a place now named Mercury Bay on the North Island of New Zealand and then continued on to discover the east coast of Australia.

As a footnote of relevance to us in this area, observations of the 1874 transit were carried out at Glenrowan.

Let's have a quick wrap up by considering the mathematics of measuring the distance from the earth to the sun using the method of parallaxes during a transit of Venus. The disc of the sun subtends 30 minutes of arc and that of Venus 1 minute of arc and the Earth - Venus distance is 40 million kilometres. So the parallax angle for observers 1,000 km apart on the earth's surface is approximately 5 seconds of arc! That is equivalent to a 5 cent coin at a distance of approximately 15m. Not an easy task!

During the 2012 transit it was possible for a person in Albury with access to a telescope to photograph the disc of Venus with a smart phone and using a free app, submit the image and data to a centre and have that measurement used with others to calculate the Earth - Sun distance. Wow!

MEMORIAL THEATRE STONES

At the recent meeting of the Museum Social History and Archive Acquisition and De-accessions Committee it was agreed that the stone base which formerly held the memorial panel in the foyer of the War Memorial Civic Theatre should be returned to the Albury RSL. The memorial (pictured in BMM 15 November 1963), designed by Albury architect and RSL member Mr W Purtell, was donated by the Albury RSL sub branch in 1963. The Sub branch president, Mr C



The most striking feature in the foyer of the Civic Theatre is the war memorial donated by the Albury RSL sub-branch. Stones from famous battlefields on which Australian troops fought have been set around an illuminated glass panel in the centre of the memorial. Etched on the panel are the names of the battlefields. The back of the memorial has an illuminated badge. The collection of battlefield stones has been donated by Mr. W. E. Nicholson, of Paine street, Albury.

They come from such places as Pozieres and Palestine, World War I battlegrounds; Egypt, where A.I.F. men served in both wars; Greece, where they fought in World War II, and Korea. The memorial (pictured on page 1) is of modern design and in keeping with the theatre design. Albury architect, Mr. W. Purtell, a RSL sub-branch member, designed the memorial. Sub branch president Mr. C. M. Lowery said that since the hall had been designated a war memorial theatre the RSL deemed it its privilege to supply the memorial.

M Lowery, said that since the hall had been designated a war memorial theatre the RSL deemed it its privilege to provide the memorial.

The base was made from stones collected from famous battlefields on which Australian troops fought by Mr WE Nicholson of Paine Street Albury. They come from such places as Pozieres and Palestine, World War I battlegrounds; Egypt where AIF served in both wars; Greece where they fought in World War II and Korea.

The memorial was removed during renovation work at the theatre and the glass panel in the centre of the memorial mounted on the wall of the foyer. The stone base was moved to the Museum store at Thurgoona where its significance was temporarily lost. When Albury RSL became aware of the unique nature of the base it approached AlburyCity asking that the base might be relocated to the garden at ANZAC House Wilson Street.

ANNUAL REPORT

The year 2013-14 began with an extravaganza, the installation of the Robbins and Porter replica monoplane in the foyer of the Albury Library Museum on 27 July. To say the project went down to the wire is an understatement, but it happened. The project was a joint venture between Albury-City and A&DHS and drew considerable community support.

The success of the venture was a triumph of the engineering research, technical drawing and construction skills of Michael Browne and Peter Whitbourn; the organisational and networking acumen of Chris McQuellin who harnessed the energy of the Manual Activities Centre and the generosity of owners of empty sheds; and the scheduling and liaison aptitude of Bridget Guthrie who arranged skyhooks and scissor platforms at all hours of day and night.

Monthly meetings were again the Society's major activity. The range of topics was extraordinary and the quality of the presenters superb. Keith Crossley spoke on First Fleeters, Ross McGarvie on teaching history to secondary students, Bianca Asimovic kept us informed about the Art gallery redevelopment and introduced "Doing a Deanie", and Nathan Esler highlighted the Daniels Gift held by AlburyCity and the resulting exhibition "Gods and Monsters." Brian Paatsch and David Willis entertained with a presentation from the Wodonga-Albury Camera Club, Heather Heinjus, Jenny Ruming and Val Symons reminisced at the launch of the booklet "Moresby Park Preschool; Sandra Rouvray spoke about 100 Albury Easter tennis tournaments and Chris Edgar showed images of tennis greats and changing fashions of players. Charlie Summerfield spoke about his father Tom and the business of T R Summerfield. We stargazed with the Astronomical Society and heard David Thurley speak about the Transit of Venus. This abundance of talented speakers were ably supported by our own Society members.

Most presentations were reported in the *Bulletin* so the body of recorded Albury history grew by about 50,000 words, a small book. In addition to the *Bulletin*, two booklets were published in our series, No 22 "The Hume Dam" and No 23 "Moresby Park Pre-school". Richard Lee's book on Stuart McKenzie Logan was launched on 5 June at the LibraryMuseum in conjunction with the opening of the exhibition "Building Foundations: Building Plans from the Logan and FA Stow collection."

Outside activities began in October with our annual Pioneer Cemetery Walk. This attracted a good crowd but was forced to a hurried end by the weather. A second event for the month, the Antiques and Collectibles Valuation day in conjunction with Wodonga Historical Society had to be cancelled owing to the valuer becoming ill. An excursion to Holbrook in November, a joint activity with Wagga Wagga Historical Society gained good reports with the Hologram presentation at the Submarine Museum being a highlight. In April we motored to Tallangatta to visit the Heritage Museum conducted by Ray Crispin and view film footage of the Wodonga-Cudgewa railway in operation.

This year we have received generous support from the Commercial Club who provided excellent venues for our monthly meetings and from AlburyCity who provided venues for our Committee meetings and two cultural grants which enabled projects to be undertaken.

Society volunteers continue to assist with cataloguing and scanning objects, photographs and documents at the LibraryMuseum. The Society is represented on the Museum Social History and

Archive Acquisition and De-accessions Committee.

Finances fell behind this year. For reasons difficult to explain a number of our members failed to renew their membership subscriptions. It is hoped a new process to remind members when subscriptions are due will avoid the problem in future. We have been fortunate in that earnings from research has increased this year through the efforts of Joe Wooding, Chris McQuellin and Helen Livsey and this went some way to covering the shortfall in subscriptions.

The decision of AlburyCity to remove the waterwheel from Australia Park (after a consulting engineers assessment that the wheel was in a dangerous condition and would require tens of thousands of dollars to relocate and return to working order), caused disagreement within the Society and the Committee. The Council is expecting to relocate the wheel to Eskdale, but there is always the possibility it could be offered back to the Society. Should this happen, it will require very careful consideration to formulate our response.

Indirectly, the waterwheel controversy hastened the review of the Society's constitution. The review was necessary in order to comply with the Associations Incorporation Act 2009. Catherine Browne has been active in drafting the new document and Noel Jackling has offered valuable advice. The committee has held three special meetings to discuss drafts and it was hoped the final draft document would be ready for the AGM, however it now seems more likely it will be at a special general meeting later in the year.

I thank the office bearers, committee and appointees during the 2013-2014 year. All have worked hard for the Society. My thanks too, to our guest speakers and our own members who have contributed to regular meetings and outings. I will be leaving the committee at the AGM and wish the new office bearers and committee good fortune as they steer the Society into the future.

Doug Hunter

THE BRITISH LANDING AT GALLIPOLI PENINSULA.

CONCLUSION OF EYE-WITNESS ACCOUNT BY
HAROLD COX. SEE EARLIER SECTIONS IN
BULLETINS 544 & 545

At daybreak the warships recommence, and then up comes the *Queen Elizabeth* - "Big Lizzie" as we called her. As she takes up a position her huge 15 inch guns train up and up until they point right overland. Then you stand very expectantly with your fingers in your ears (if you are wise), for if you happen to be near the noise is simply deafening; There she goes! Flash! Boom! And you strain your eyes shorewards, but nothing is visi-

ble, for that target is somewhere in the Straits, perhaps on right the other side of the Peninsula. "Big Lizzie" can fire a shell, I think, 20 miles.

Until we on board can land our field guns and horses, we can do nothing but wait and watch our troops climbing up impossible cliffs, making small pathways, and dragging guns, &c., with shrapnel bursting all around. It seems rather selfish to be lying out at sea in comparative safety, while your countrymen ashore are facing such terrible music; but we were not quite forgotten, for the *Goeben* on the other side of Gallipoli evidently thought the transports were being overlooked, and straightway opened fire, more or less at random. It was more exciting than pleasant, and the frightful whistling scream of the shell, as it whizzes through the air, and having no idea where it is going to strike, makes the strongest man turn a shade paler.

A sudden flop, with a huge column of water about 100 feet high, only a couple of hundred yards from the ship's side, marks the landing of that particular shell; so as calmly as possible you wait for the next one.

It is a much better idea to get out than go under, so we heave up anchor and clear out of the *Goeben's* range, for a time.

These attacks only lasted about an hour each day, but as they came every day, we soon got to know when to expect them.

If the *Goeben* only knew it, it was a terrible waste of ammunition, for she only succeeded in hitting a small coal boat, and apart from a few tons of coal lost, no damage was done.

Every day seemed to bring some new excitement, and the monotony of war was not apparent during the first fortnight at any rate.

One afternoon a tiny black speck in the sky gradually developed into a German aeroplane, luckily it could not carry many bombs, and these dropped harmlessly into the sea, rather near our balloon-ship, perhaps; but nevertheless no damage was done.

Another day a report was circulated regarding an enemy's submarine, and the very same night we received quite a shock. It was one of those dark, wet, windy nights, when you think more especially of the poor beggars in the trenches. Just about mid-night we caught sight of a long, dark-looking object coming slowly head-on to our ship. Of course the first thought is a submarine, and you begin to wish he had come at any other time than on such a dirty night. But there was really no cause for alarm, for it was only a few ships' life-boats lashed together which had all broken adrift from another ship. I might say that without any outside help we captured that "submarine."

And so the work goes on from day to day. The little wireless station on shore might say, "Please blow up watch tower on a certain position". Right! Two shells; exit watch tower. Or, perhaps, a trawler comes alongside and takes away some of our troops; and, my word, they are keen to go. In

fact a watch has to be kept on the gangway to prevent more than the required number leaving the ship. They are simply dying to get ashore and "have a go" at the Turks.

Things were rather quiet for a day or two, till one evening, about 6 o'clock, after we had lain there a week, a furious fusillade broke out. All our guns seemed to open fire simultaneously - at some pre-arranged [some words are obliterated by the crease in the paper] great roar of the naval guns backed up by our field guns ashore, the sharp crack of bursting shrapnel, together with the rattle of rifle shots, caused one continuous deafening din. [Word blacked out and second word changed by hand to read Gaba. Possibly it should read Achi Baba] seemed literally covered with a cloud of smoke, from the bursting shells, and, as darkness came on, flashes of fire from death dealing muzzles seemed to come from everywhere.

Way up on the face of the cliffs, where our men, standing, perhaps, on a small platform of rock, were fighting desperately to improve their position, or in some little cluster of trees, in fact, every available spot, produced its point of light, and added to the din. I can give no details of the attack, as, of course, we were only spectators this time. I can only try to describe what it looked like. After a time things became quieter and the heavy firing ceased altogether. But later on came the counter-attack. Then the rifle and machine gun fire broke out afresh, with an occasional boom from the battleships. I think it continued all night for I dropped off to sleep to the sound of firing, and in the morning they were still at it.

After spending 17 days at Gaba Tepe [the name Anzac Cove was obviously not yet in general use] we were ordered back to Alexandria. Some of our troops from the shore returned with us, and their stories would make far more interesting reading than this.

So we took one more look at the now familiar scene, brought our ship round to the homeward track, and said "Good-bye." Little did we think the companion of our stay, H.M.S. *Triumph*, would so soon lie in her watery grave. Nothing further happened, and we arrived all well at Alexandria.

Carrying convalescent soldiers is our present occupation. And the beautiful island in the Mediterranean, to which we take them, [Cyprus] is a most agreeable change from that war-scarred Peninsula of Gallipoli, where so many of our brave fellows have died for their King and country.

Note: The *Official History*, Vol IX p. 536, shows the A52 *Surada* was requisitioned by the Australian government for naval purposes. It had a speed of 10 knots and was fitted to carry 7 officers, 257 other ranks and 275 horses. It was released from naval service on 4 January 1917, but was torpedoed and sunk near Port Said on 2 November 1918.

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