

ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN

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AUGUST 2015

559

REPORT ON JULY MEETING (08.07.2015)

The Annual General Meeting of the Society chaired by Michael Browne, was held in the Banksia Room of the Commercial Club. Nineteen members and three guests were in attendance and there were six apologies. Minutes of the previous AGM and the Special General Meeting were read and confirmed and the President's Annual Report received together with the Treasurer's end of year report. Noel Jackling then took the Chair and declared all positions vacant. Those elected were President: Michael Browne; Vice President: June Shanahan; Secretary: Helen Livsey; Minute Secretary: Catherine Browne; Treasurer: Ron Haberfield; Committee: Marion Taylor, Ray Gear, Greg Ryan, Jill Wooding and Richard Lee(pending official acceptance of nomination). The Committee recommended that the annual subscriptions remained the same and this was endorsed by the meeting. You would have thought that anyone venturing out on a cold July evening would be barking mad but the members who were lured out of their warm lounge rooms to hear Noel Jackling and Doug Royal speaking about the early days of greyhound coursing in the Albury area had a howling good time. John Craig and Doreen Widdison shared their memories of going to the dogs. John donated some video tapes of the races that he used to gather information for the Gold Guide betting publication. On thanking the guest speakers Michael said his late father always commented that betting on the dog races was the fastest way to lose your money, even quicker than the "red hots" or the trots as a dog race was usually over in about fifty seconds.

NEXT MEETING WEDNESDAY 12 AUG, 2015

7.30pm at Commercial Club Albury

The early years of the Brewer family in Albury with emphasis on Dr Henry (Harry) Brewer who served the Albury community for many years.

Speaker: Judy Brewer

Speaker: Judy Brewer Fischer

ALBURY CITY COUNCIL FOYER ALBURY AND WAUGH THE REMARKABLE LIFE OF FORMER ALBURY MAYOR ALD, ALFRED WAUGH OPENS 3 AUGUST

Page 2 Greyhound Coursing Page 7 Antique Valuation Day Page 8 The Royal Family

ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

PO Box 822 ALBURY 2640 www.alburyhistory.org.au

For your reference A&DHS account details are: BSB 640 000 Acc No 111097776 (Albury & District Historical Society Inc)

Patron: Patricia Gould OAM Honorary Life Members: Howard Jones, Helen Livsey, June Shanahan, Jan Hunter. Public Officer: Helen Livsey

President: Helen Livsey
President: Michael Browne 0428691220
Vice-President: June Shanahan
Secretary: Helen Livsey 02 6021 3671

Treasurer: Ron Haberfield
Minute Secretary: Catherine Browne
Publicity Officer: Jill Wooding

Publicity Officer: Jill Wooding Committee: Richard Lee, Jill Wooding, Ray Gear, Marion Taylor. **Bulletin Editor:** Marion Taylor marion.taylor?@bigpond.com **Journals, Stock:** June Shanahan **Meeting Greeter:** Jill Wooding **Bulletin dispatch:** Ron Haber field

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

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

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Single: \$25 Family: \$33 Corporate: \$50

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

GREYHOUND COURSING OF LIVE AND TIN HARES AT ALBURY BY NOEL JACKLING & DOUG ROYAL



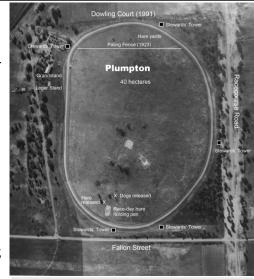
James Thomas Royal slipping greyhounds 1929

Photograph Courtesy: Doug Royal

Greyhound coursing of live hares in an enclosed area is called plumpton coursing after the town of Plumpton in England that first introduced coursing in a fenced-off area, as opposed to an open field. It is conducted in successive courses (or ties) with two greyhounds hunting a single hare. It was a blood sport based on pairs of greyhounds sighting, not smelling, a single hare, and hunting it, while humans gambled on the outcome. Which dog would reach the hare first and force it to turn or grass it or kill it? Would the dog that was the first to reach the hare be the first to grass it? Which dog would kill the hare? Or would the hare evade death by reaching the safety of its own enclosure? Greyhound coursing of live hares in Australia emerged as a sport following the introduction of hares in 1873. Greyhounds had already been brought out to Australia on the First Fleet in 1788 by the New South Wales governor, Captain Arthur Phillip. A judge awarded points for their hunting prowess to each greyhound in the successive pairs, with one greyhound being eliminated each time. Depending on the number of dogs in the fixture, there were successive elimination rounds called ties, before semi-finals and the grand final. The dog entry fee generally covered prizes, with a prize for first and second dogs, and the owners of the third and fourth dogs getting their money back. Sometimes the first-placed dog won an additional prize for its owner, such as a bracelet or gold cup, which a patron generally donated.

From 1885 to 1897, from 1923 to 1934 and in 1938 and 1948, the central area of the Albury Racecourse (about 40 hectares) was devoted to plumpton coursing. Three parallel fences surrounded the circumference of the central oval area. The middle and inner fences were wooden post and rail fences, the middle one being the running rails of the horse track, with the inner one defining the outer perimeter of the plumpton, as well as defining the inner perimeter of a track where horses trained. There was only a short distance between the middle and inner fences. The plumpton enclosure was created by covering the gap under the rails and between the posts of the innermost fence with wire netting, preventing the escape of greyhounds and hares. The plumpton fence was first erected in 1886-7, and was repaired in 1923-4. A paling fence ran from west to east across the plumpton. There is no known photo of the paling fence at the Albury Racecourse. The paling fence on the plumpton of the Albury Racecourse had a hole at the foot of twelve of the palings, large enough for hares to get through, but too small for greyhounds. The northern end of the inner racecourse area was called the hare yards and was the safety zone for the hares. At the southern end of the plumpton, there was a race-day holding pen for the hares. A tie was started by a hare being taken from this temporary holding pen and released nearby. Generally, hares were captured in a hare drive in the local district, such as at Jindera, but when there was a shortage of hares, they had to be bought. The hares were schooled to run to the paling fence and go through one of the twelve holes to the other side where they had learned they would be safe from the dogs. According to Patrick Ryan, whose father took him to the greyhound coursing as a young boy: 'The hare would give a buck and a skip and be off. The hares were real smart. They

only needed to be taught once to know where to go!' A greyhound handler, known as a slipper, stood not far from the race-day hare pen, holding two greyhounds under control by means of a specially designed leash or lead, which was looped over his wrist at one end and held the two dogs in a double collar at the other. The dogs were yapping and straining on the lead – their hunting instinct had kicked in, and they wanted to get after the hare. The slipper ran towards the hare with the dogs still on the lead. Inside the lead was a retractable cable with a ring on it at the slipper's end. When the slipper decided that both greyhounds had sighted the hare and were equally pulling on their respective collars, he let go the handle attached to the leather lead and collars, whilst at the same time pulling the cable at the other attached to his wrist, which was also attached to the pins holding the double collar. The double collar slipped off the dogs' necks, releasing them, and giving them an equal opportunity to charge the hare and



Albury Racecourse Aerial Photograph: Courtesy Albury LibraryMuseum

hunt it down. The hare had a start, but if the greyhounds loomed close and a kill was imminent, generally the terrified hare would deftly sidestep, and the greyhound would storm past and have to turn in a whirl to get back onto the hare's trail. One of the slippers at the Albury plumpton was Jim Royal (See Page 8.) Jim was a Master Slipper, who 'slipped' greyhounds at the Albury Racecourse for many years. He was the slipper at the second annual Gold Cup meeting on 13 and 14 June 1930 and was reported as having 'acted as slipper in his usual and efficient manner'. Slippers did not own the dogs they were slipping. Jim Royal's grandson, Doug Royal, can remember his grandfather still lovingly oiling the leather on the dog collars for many years after the sport was banned.

A judge awarded points to each dog, which determined the winner of each tie, and which greyhounds went on to the next round, or won the final. A different coloured cloth around each dog's neck helped the judge to determine which dog was which. A judge's tower was built in 1923, which meant that the judge was able to make decisions from an elevated position. Earlier, they may have been on an elevated platform on the plumpton, in one of the stewards' towers for the horse racing or on horseback. Judges awarded points for the dog being the first to reach the hare, for forcing the hare to turn and 'working' the hare by using its head to roll it over or flip the hare in the air, possibly catching it in its mouth on its descent. The coursing ended when the judge decided that the dogs had become too tired, when the hare had reached the safety of its yard, or when the hare had been killed.

Hares were considered, by the Pastures and Stock Protection Amendment Act of 1881 (NSW), to have increased in numbers, and to have the potential to 'inflict serious loss and damage upon owners or the occupiers of gardens, orchards, cropped or any cultivated lands'. Those wanting to keep hares needed to apply to the governor for a permit. Despite efforts to eradicate them, there is still a remnant population of wild hares at the outlying Albury suburb of Thurgoona! The first meeting of the newly formed Albury Coursing Club began at the Albury Racecourse on 7th August 1885 and concluded the next day in one of Mr Grieve's paddocks at nearby Bungowannah. The event was plagued with difficulties. The meeting was planned for 6 August 1885, but it transpired that this corresponded with the Corowa Show and a meeting of the Local Land Board, so the meeting date was changed to Friday 7 August. Then on the night of Saturday 1 August 1885, 59 of the 60 hares held in captivity for the meeting, escaped by burrowing under the racecourse fence, so the secretary had to go to Melbourne to secure replacement hares, which he did on the following Monday. The following Friday, the meeting was conducted on the Albury Racecourse in delightful weather, and the coursing was described as brilliant, though 'towards the close the hares were weak'. The event was not concluded by sunset and needed to be extended into the following day. Due to the sickness and scarcity of hares, a decision was made to run off the remaining ties in the Bungowannah paddocks, where hares were plentiful. On Saturday 8 August 1885, 'about 200 gentlemen assembled at Mrs Darby's Bungowannah

Hotel at 10.30 a.m., and with horsemen and foot beaters, a line was formed ... Hares being plentiful, the courses were run off quickly and well'. It would seem that women did not assemble at the hotel, although on the preceding day at the racecourse, 'there was a fair sprinkling of the fairer sex amongst the assembled crowd'.

On 26 March 1886, the Albury Coursing Club 'decided to erect a permanent plumpton at the Albury Racecourse'. This would have obviated the need for the horsemen and foot beaters used at the first meeting. The next coursing meeting was held on 21 June 1887. The meetings were mostly held at the Albury Racecourse, but a small number were run at the privately owned Table Top Estate, where hares were plentiful. The success or otherwise of the meetings was dependant on the vagaries of the weather, the size of the crowd, the availability and condition of the hares, described as being strong or weak. There were no greyhound coursing meetings from 1898 until 1923, for which the Great War can only be a partial explanation. So what was it that caused their sudden demise? A clue may lie in the fact that in 1893, for the first time, a fox was sighted near Albury. Could it be that as fox numbers increased, so hare numbers diminished? It is also possible that in the depression years of the 1890's, the club ran in to financial difficulties, which demanded the sale in August 1897 of its main asset, the wire netting that created the plumpton. It appears that the first coursing club in Albury ceased to exist shortly afterwards.

In August 1922, initial overtures were made to the Albury Racing Club for the use of that part of the Albury racecourse already enclosed by a fence covered with wire netting, quite possibly the original plumpton fence constructed around 1886. By October 1922, a new coursing club, the Albury & District Coursing Club, had been formed, often referred to as the Albury Coursing Club. In February 1923, the club engaged in a hare drive at Jindera. By early May, a paling fence had been erected at the escape end to establish hare yards, and verandas constructed over the twelve escape holes, so the plumpton had practically been completed, except for the hare boxes.

Arrangements were in place for the planting of salt bushes and soon a judging tower was erected. The inaugural event was fixed for 25-26 June 1923. On the preceding Saturday, further schooling of the hares took place, the highlight being two hares jumping right over the high escape fence. Entries exceeded all expectations, and all the stakes were filled several days before nominations were due to close. The wife of the club's president had the honour of releasing the first hare. The hares were described as being in excellent condition, so much so, that from about fifty courses, only five or six hares were killed. The dogs were slipped in a skilful manner by the slipper, so they were given every chance, but the hares, by dint of having been perseveringly 'schooled' through the escapes, knew exactly where to go, and naturally, went as fast as they possibly could. A large number of book makers were present. From 1923 until 1934, with the possible exception of 1931, coursing meetings were held at least once a year, although not without difficulties. Hare drives needed to be held to secure hares for meetings, but at times hares were scarce and advertisements were placed in the local newspaper in an effort to buy them. Hares needed to be obtained in time for the holding of dog trials and hare schooling. Conditions could be too dry. A further difficulty lay in the multiplicity of coursing clubs in the Riverina which led to competition for meeting dates which the National Coursing Association sought to manage.

In June 1933, the Australasian Waterloo Cup Coursing Carnival was held at the Albury Racecourse. The Australasian Waterloo Cup was the premiere event on the Australasian coursing calendar and drew entries from afar. The Albury & District Coursing Club conducted greyhound coursing of hares on its plumpton on Wednesday 21 June, Friday 23 June and Saturday 24 June 1933. The Albury Racing Club conducted a horse race meeting on Thursday 22 June 1933. The main event in the coursing fixture was the Australasian Waterloo Cup; another coursing event was the Alfred Waugh Class Stakes, sponsored by Albury's mayor. Attending the Carnival racing – but not the greyhound coursing – was the first Australian-born Governor-General of Australia, Sir

Isaac Isaacs, with Lady Isaacs. (This was a statement about status and class, it would have been inappropriate at that time for them to attend the dog races. Greyhound races were seen as the poor mans form of racing and gambling.)

According to John Craig of Albury, hares were rarely caught, as the hares would zig-zag to escape the greyhounds before making a beeline back to the safety of their yards. Nevertheless, in the heats of the Waterloo Cup:

'The hares, which had been specially trained for the carnival, ran well, and it was only in the last few

Australasian Waterloo Cup Badge 1933 Photograph Courtesy: Albury LibraryMuseum

courses that kills were made'. An oval-shaped badge made from copper alloy was issued to commemorate the occasion. The Albury & District Coursing Club held its last coursing event on 4 August 1934. The mechanical tin lure was invented in America around 1907 and first used in greyhound speed coursing in the USA in 1919. The tin hare was to change live hare coursing into another form of greyhound sport.

Greyhound coursing of live hares was highly controlled in that coursing clubs were only allotted dates for a few meetings each year. In Albury, for instance, the maximum seems to have been three, but often only one meeting was held. Meetings were always reliant on the success of hare drives or on the purchase of 'expendable' live hares. Attendance was variable, as was the weather, and betting opportunities were infrequent and irregular. The introduction of the tin lure meant that frequent and regular speed coursing meetings could be held day or night with an associated increase in betting opportunities.

Regular Saturday night meetings, with a low entry fee and low coin denominations accepted for betting, attracted the working class, who flocked to the tin lure meetings in their thousands. In the roaring twenties, an era of flappers, temperance movements and influential churches espousing Puritanical traditions, it was claimed that this new outlet for public gambling could have negative repercussions on family life. Women and children were reportedly gambling, and working men were neglecting their families to finance their betting activities.

The early years of tin hare coursing in New South Wales were chequered ones, as betting was initially not permitted, then was permitted, then was prohibited by legislation and was finally permitted by legislation.

Attendance at speed coursing events was reliant on people's ability to place a bet. When the first meeting using the tin hare was held at Epping Racecourse (later known as Harold Park) on a cold Saturday night on 28 May 1927, there was no betting, because the Labor Attorney General Edward McTiernan believed that tin hare coursing was not covered by 'coursing' in the Betting and Gaming Act, 1912 (NSW). Unsurprisingly, in between races, the crowd became restless. The next two meetings, held on the Monday afternoons of 6 and 13 June, were also betting-free and attracted reduced crowds. On May 27 1927, Premier Jack Lang replaced McTiernan as Attorney General with Andy Lysaght. Following consideration of counsel's opinion submitted by the Greyhound Coursing Association, Lysaght decided that coursing by means of an electrically propelled lure was 'coursing' within the meaning of the Betting and Gaming Act. He allowed betting to take place at the next meeting, on Saturday 18 June 1927, when attendances skyrocketed. The reversal was short-lived. In 1927, the Bavin Nationalist government was elected, and it passed legislation that banned betting after sunset as a way of curtailing tin hare coursing and its associated gambling. Jack Lang saw this as an attack against the working class, and when he was re-elected in 1930, steps were taken through to permit the working class to bet at night coursing events. The passage of this act was the key to tin lure coursing in the country where horse racing entertainment was limited, and by early March 1932, nine country licences had been granted – Albury was not amongst them. Nevertheless, in March 1932, an application was made by a syndicate to the Albury Show Society to rent its grounds for £5 per meeting to run 30 to 40 tin hare meetings per year. The application was rejected on the basis that the meetings would interfere with other local sports, and boys would follow the fortunes of tin hares when they should be at school. Meanwhile, the Albury & District Coursing Club was focused on successfully running the 1933 Australasian Waterloo Cup for coursing of live hares on the Albury Racecourse, and it was not until 21 June 1934 that a meeting of twenty-five interested persons decided to actively pursue the tin hare option. A new club was formed with the name of 'Albury Coursing Club', the name of the original club formed in 1885. The new Albury Coursing Club was empowered to conduct plumpton coursing, but it is clear that the thrust was towards speed coursing with the use of a mechanical hare. Of the 25 people who attended the 21 June 1934 meeting, at least three were committee members of the Albury & District Coursing Club. A committee of eighteen office-bearers and committee members was elected, with Mr A. Trenchard, the chairman of the Albury & District Coursing Club, being elected as chairman of the new coursing club. The mere fact that the establishment of a new club was considered necessary to embrace speed coursing suggests that the move towards speed coursing was not universally popular within the old club. Or perhaps it was simply considered best to start afresh? The new club applied to the Albury Council for permission to use the Albury Sports Ground, but at its July meeting, Council rejected the application. The Albury Show Ground was also briefly considered,

but, in August 1934, a lease was executed over the United Friendly Societies ground in Old Sydney Road (now Borella Road), East Albury, beyond the Newmarket Hotel. Then, on 24 October 1934, the KLM Douglas DC-2 Uiver, competing in the London to Melbourne MacRobertson International Air Race, an event celebrating Victoria and Melbourne's centenary, made an emergency night-time landing on the Albury Racecourse. The plane became bogged up to its wheel axles, and, after daybreak, the plane was manually hauled to drier ground by Alburysiders using ropes attached to the undercarriage, taxied to the southern end of the racecourse and eventually took off safely.

The day after the Uiver incident, the Committee of the Albury & District Coursing Club met, and the minutes of the meeting reveal displeasure, if not anger, at the plumpton damage. The secretary, Mr G.J. Clark, was instructed to write to the pilot and seek compensation. However, the plumpton lease of the Albury & District Coursing Club expired in late October 1934 so, by early November, when the Club wanted to pursue its claim for compensation, it no longer occupied or had any legal interest in the property. The secretary of the Albury Racing Club, Bertie Peacock, pre-empted any further action by stating that the plane had been on the racecourse by invitation of the Albury Racing Club, to which any right to claim belonged, and that it would not be making any claim.

Work meanwhile progressed in preparation for the first greyhound speed coursing meeting. Mr Winstanley, who was later appointed race starter, was contracted to construct an eight-dog set of starting boxes. A mechanical lure system was installed at the race track. The lure was a tin 'hare', a piece of tin covered with rabbit fur. Just before the race started, the lure was placed on a three- to four-foot long arm attached to a line of heavy duty wire that ran along the side of the track. The lure was roughly in line with the middle of the front of the dog boxes. Also attached to the lure was a long length of cotton line thread. At its other end, roughly 440 yards away, it was attached to a pulling mechanism. This was no more than an upturned bicycle from which the front wheel had been removed and the pedals replaced with long wooden handles, worked by two men, standing on either side of the bike. The men wound the bike 'paddles' vigorously for the duration of the race. The lure was fitted with a light, run by battery power, to allow those operating the pulling mechanism to see the tin hare and keep it about 30 feet in front of the dogs. At the end of the race, the lure disappeared into a trap door where it was safely out of sight of the greyhounds. On 4 March 1935, the new Albury Coursing Club elected a Committee of Management and appointed officials for the first race meeting. Early in March 1935, the club was granted a speed coursing licence. The inaugural meeting of the Albury Coursing Club was held on the Saturday evening of 23 March 1935. About 1500 people attended, although several hundred artful dodgers gained entry by scaling a fence at the back. One bookmaker was fielding without the consent of the club, but police took the view that they could not remove him as he was a licensed bookmaker and was legally entitled to be on the premises when the club accepted his admission fee. There were several mechanical breakdowns, presumably of the lure mechanism. What was happening in the Albury & District Coursing Club after its 25 October 1934 proposal to claim was thwarted? The answer very likely was 'nothing'. By January 1935, and probably well before, the focus of the key people with an interest in greyhound events was on getting greyhound speed races going, and not on further plumpton coursing. The club's lease of the racecourse had expired and there were, in any event, no funds to repair the plumpton's surface. Soon after, on 7 March 1935, the recently formed Albury Coursing Club passed a motion to assume and take over the whole of the liabilities and assets of the Albury & District Coursing Club. The era of plumpton coursing was not yet quite over, but the winds of change were very definitely blowing. A general meeting of what appears to be another new coursing club, the Albury Coursing Plumpton Club took place in August 1936. A report stated that, after inspecting the plumpton at the Albury Racecourse, the ground was found to be in good order. The outside fence required a little attention to make it hare-proof, and some work was required to fix the escapes. A working bee was arranged, but there is no ensuing report of a coursing meeting. Again, on 3 June 1937, there is a report that the 'Albury Plumpton is now in readiness for a kick off', but it was reported that in view of the prevailing dry conditions, no announcement of a meeting date had been made. Trials were held on 25 July 1937 at which 'the hares were in fine buckle, and only two were grassed'. Nevertheless, the anticipated coursing meeting still did not take place. Talk of a coursing event continued, but, by the annual general

meeting on 30 January 1938, there had still been no coursing meeting and since subscriptions had been fully expended to get the plumpton in order, the question was whether 1937 membership tickets would be valid for 1938. A coursing meeting eventually took place, but was not until 23 July 1938. During World War II, there was no thought of holding plumpton coursing meetings. The Albury District Plumpton Coursing Club planned to hold a meeting on the Albury Racecourse plumpton on 19 June 1948, but there is no report of it having taken place. It could have been deferred until 30-31 July 1948, because the Border Morning Mail did report a meeting held on that date. The hares were a speedy and sturdy lot and not one was killed. This is the last report of a coursing meeting on the plumpton of Albury Racecourse. By 1953, community attitudes towards the killing of live hares in a so-called sporting event had changed, and legislation was enacted to reflect this and coursing of live animals by dogs was banned in New South Wales. At least in New South Wales, the era of plumpton coursing was over. Plumpton coursing in Albury had run from 1885 to 1897, from 1923 to 1934, and in 1938 and 1948. Greyhound speed coursing in Albury went from 1935 until 2003, with the final race being held on 18 October 2003. Plumpton coursing had lasted on and off for 63 years, while greyhound speed coursing lasted continuously for 68 years. In Albury, at least, both forms of greyhound coursing had had their final yelp.



Article Reproduced in Part from the Victorian Historical

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Albury Coursing Club 1923 Harry Flood Senior Top Right. Harry Flood Junior Bottom

Row. Help needed to identify other

members.



ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES VALUATION DAY

SATURDAY 8 AUGUST

LIZ STEVENS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO VALUE YOUR TREASURES, UPSTAIRS AT THE ALBURY LIBRARYMUSEUM.

FROM 10AM TO 4PM

COST \$5 PER ITEM



REMINDER

Annual subscriptions for the year 2015-2016 are now due.

If you have not already done so, please forward your subscription to the Treasurer at:

PO Box 822 Albury 2640.

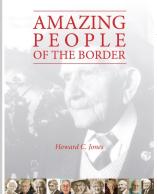
A&DHS account details are:
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Please use your SURNAME as the Reference.
Individual: \$25.00 Family: \$33.00 Corporate: \$50.00

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR XMAS GATHERING FRIDAY DECEMBER 11TH AT THE COMMERCIAL CLUB \$40 PER HEAD.

(IT IS POSSIBLE TO PAY THIS OFF MONTHLY. CONTACT THE TREASURER: RON HABERFIELD)







Howard Jones' latest book, Amazing People of the Border, consists of 40 stories of characters he has interviewed or written about in the past 30 years while a journalist at The Border Mail. They include former historical society members Lucy Staton, Gerry Curtis, Alice Haydon, Dick Fielder and Harold Mair. Mrs Haydon recalls being raised in a West Albury house made of kerosene tins while Mr Fielder gives an amusing account of helping build The Lodge in Canberra in the 1920s. Miss Staton became the baby clinic nurse in Albury after a career that included serving as an army nurse of a ship bombed in Darwin harbour. There are many other tales of former migrants. musicians such as Graham Stocks, and Jim Kennedy and much-loved figures such as Sister Zita. The book is a similar size to Howard's picture books on old Albury and sells at \$20. It will be available from Dymocks and the Library-Museum or direct from Howard at 635 Poole Street, Albury (\$20 including postage).

THE ROYAL FAMILY

BY DOUG ROYAL



James Thomas Royal 1947

James Thomas Royal (1893-1970) was the grandson of Thomas William Royal who was born in Manchester and transported to Australia for 7 years for pickpocketing when he was 16 years old. Thomas was assigned to a publican at Queanbeyan where he met and married Mary Tilden, an Irish transportee who had stolen some cloth. They had 8 children one son being James Thomas Royal (1865-1937) who is buried at Culcairn. He had no schooling and in 1885 he met and married Elizabeth Maria Smith, an aboriginal woman while droving in the Griffith area. The family stopped droving in 1885 and followed the railway work living in the tent cities along the rail lines. In 1897 they went to Chiltern to mine the alluvial gold. All the boys left school at 14. James Thomas Royal became a carpenter and moved to Wagga. He was a competent Aussie Rules footballer, winning the Best & Fairest award in 1919. In 1920 he began his greyhound slipping career after moving to Culcairn. On a trip to Melbourne for the dog races he met Agnes Teresa Peters who was the daughter of Friedrich Gottlieb Peters and Bertha Dohnt.

The Dohnt family had arrived in 1839 at Port Adelaide. (The name of the ship's captain was Hahn so the emigrants called their new village Hahndorf in appreciation of their safe passage.) James and Agnes had 3 boys. James was assigned to build army barracks at Norfolk Island in 1942 during the war as a civilian and then worked as a builder for the Culcairn Shire Council until he retired in 1958.

James Thomas Royal, Mick Royal, Len Royal & Tom Royal 1958. Photographs: Doug Royal In 1939 Len was the pub fighter at Culcairn Hotel where all hopefuls paid 5 pounds for the privilege. He was also the shunting yard master during WW2 at Junee. It was said that he didn't need a megaphone as his stentorian voice could be heard clearly at the end of the Southern platform.



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