

ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN

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526

REPORT ON JULY MEETING (11/7/2012)

President Chris McQuellin welcomed sixty members and guests who gathered at the Commercial Club for the July meeting. Extra chairs had to be brought in. Chris reported on meetings with Jacqui Hemsley, Group Leader Cultural Services at AlburyCity where the review of the 2030 Strategic Plan was discussed. Members are urged to fill in the comments and suggestions forms available at the Council offices. Also discussed was the preliminary planning for the activities to mark the centenary of the Great War 1914-18. Council will need to bid for travelling exhibitions soon, but first wants to know what is available locally. The Society has been invited to send a representative to a co-ordination meeting at Anzac House on 21 August.

What followed was a computer malfunction; actually the power cord had come out and it took a while for our "technical manager" to discover that.

Leo Coyle from Walbundrie kindly filled the gap and spoke about the work which has been done to acknowledge unmarked graves at the Walbundrie Cemetery. Leo issued an invitation to members of the Society to attend the opening of a commemorative wall at Walbundrie on Sunday 14 October commencing at 2 pm.

Jan Hunter then spoke on the topic "Albury Cemeteries: Alive and Well." This was followed by a short quiz on products and events drawn from advertisements in newspapers dating from 1898. Jan then returned to the podium to give a short talk on the Albury Rifle Club in which she showed photographs of the remains of the butts behind the Albury TAFE and Kalianna in

NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY

8 AUGUST 2012

7.30pm at Commercial

Club

Albury

Speaker: Ken Ashley:

"Forty years of Archery
in Albury";

and

Members' 15 minutes.

ON THIS DAY

August 8th 1918 was the start of the Battle of Amiens, an attack by British Empire, French and American forces which signalled the final phase of the 1914-18 War.

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Single: \$25

Family: \$33

Corporate: \$50

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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

Sackville Street and the club house in Davies Road off Union Road.

Bruce Pennay spoke about three projects he is currently engaged in and sought Society support for two grants applications.

Edward Dale spoke briefly about his work at the Culcairn Cemetery. Chris rounded out the evening with some photographs of the Hume Weir Motor Racing Circuit taken in the 1970s.

Many then adjourned to the Commercial Club Reflections Cafe for supper and a chat.

ALBURY CEMETERIES: ALIVE & WELL

Edited talk by Jan Hunter

Cemeteries are places where we bury our dead but they are alive with the stories of individuals, families and our community. Yes, they tell stories from the past – some sad, some inspiring but cemeteries also raise questions. Why is the cemetery where it is? Who looks after cemeteries?

When did we begin cremations in Albury? Let's look at the stories of Albury cemeteries and their continuing part in our city's life. And, in that sense, we'll see that Albury Cemeteries are Alive and Well.

EARLY DAYS

In the very early days of Albury's settlement there was an Aboriginal burial ground in South Albury. It was known as The Sandhills and was on the site of Waite's Park, bounded by Olive, David, Ebden and Hovell Streets. As the first European settlers died, they too were interred in the same place.

Very quickly, this arrangement proved unsatisfactory and in 1849 Townsend set aside land for a new cemetery to the north of the town. But nobody bothered much about the new site. However, during the 1850s, with Albury growing, sand was removed from the original cemetery for building works. Human remains were scattered about and a great furore erupted when a bone was found in the sand being used for paving outside a Dean Street shop.

In 1862, the magistrate, Captain Brownrigg, officially ordered the re-interment of all bones from the old site and the David Street cemetery was gazetted in 1867.

PIONEER CEMETERY

The Pioneer Cemetery (as it is now known) was laid out in a pattern of four sections, along religious lines – the major religions having the larg-

est lots. Within those larger lots, space was set aside for smaller groups, including Chinese and Unsectarian, Jewish residents and Seventh Day Adventists.

There were problems with the management of the 'new' cemetery for decades. Trustees were appointed from the various denominations but the financial arrangements were difficult. A sexton or caretaker was appointed, but even then the overall care of the cemetery was lax. "Disgrace" was a word much used by the newspapers and the council. Cattle and pigs grazing; rabbits eroding the stones and plinths; the road to the Cemetery full of stumps; and fences falling down. It was all a disgrace to the community.

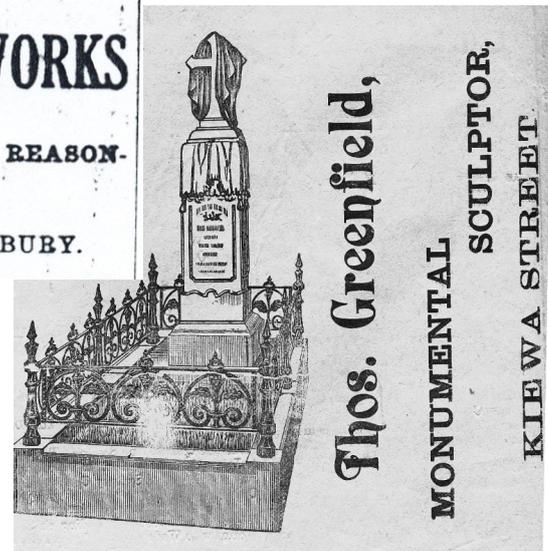
SYMBOLISM & MASONS

In the 19th Century, funerals were very elaborate and headstones ornate and symbolic. A broken column indicated a life cut short; a cherub or angel, the grave of a child; an urn – often draped – was a symbol of the ashes of mourning, and the

book represented a Knowledge of Life or the Bible and the dove is the Holy Spirit.

Most of these headstones were made by local stone masons in-

BENNETT BROS
(LATE T. T. MOLLOY),
MONUMENTAL WORKS
FIRST-CLASS WORK AT REASON-
ABLE PRICES.
KIEWA STREET, ALBURY.



cluding A D Livie, Dickson & Son, Ballantyne, Molloy and Thomas Greenfield. Greenfield Park is named after Thomas and he lived in a house, overlooking the Park. Greenfield advertised extensively over a long working life. His workshop and yard were on the corner of Kiewa and Englehardt Streets, on the site of the former Hume Shire building.

Other stone masons included the Bennett Bros from England, who bought the Molloy business and worked next door to the current K Mart Complex. The partnership dissolved but one brother continued with his trade. Some may remember John Bennett's home and workshop which were

just across the road from the Pioneer Cemetery at the end of David Street.

Some of the cast iron and wrought iron grave railings in the Pioneer Cemetery were locally made by blacksmiths like John L McEachern, L Schneider and J P Laughton.

EX-SERVICE GRAVES

Prior to 1934, the RSL identified the graves of World War I ex-servicemen. They found 23 not being tended, so cleared the grass around those and arranged for each grave to have a simple concrete border and headstone, with a rising sun. On Anzac Day that year, 500 people gathered for a special service. Each grave was covered with an Australian or Union Jack flag. On a signal from a bugle, a Boy Scout removed the flag and placed the laurel wreath of peace on each grave. Historical Society stalwart, the late Ron Braddy was one of those Boy Scouts.

In general cemeteries, ex-servicemen's graves are often signified by a rising sun or a laurel wreath plaque placed on the grave stone. Today, the RSL facilitates the placing of these emblems through the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

CHILDREN

The deaths of very young children are recorded on many headstones, usually in the same space as their parents. But there are clusters of small graves in the cemetery which are not named. In the past, stillborn or short-lived babies were not always acknowledged in a public way. Around 2000, a group of middle aged people approached Darren Eddy of Lester and Son asking for his help in erecting a memorial on which names could be recorded. Darren went to the Albury Council who facilitated and paid for the erection of this stone cairn. There is provision for names to be recorded. Any family who has lost a young babe or sibling at any time may add names to this memorial.

In 1949, between July and September, 13 children from the Bonegilla Migrant Camp died of malnutrition in the Albury Hospital. There was a great deal of publicity looking for an explanation and shifting of blame. Various reasons were given including the condition of the children before they left for Australia. Another explanation was that there was a gastro outbreak on the ship bringing the migrants and the children were given sugar and water only which weakened them fa-

tally, and then the conditions at Bonegilla were also blamed. Perhaps a combination of all factors? The cluster of graves is very poignant.

CHINESE GRAVES

[See *Bulletin 514* July 2011, for a report on the Cemetery Walk by Pauline Harbick and Chris McQuellin.]

LYCHGATE

In the mid nineteen eighties, Gerry Curtis, president of the A&DHS became interested in a photograph of the 1934 Anzac Day service which showed a structure at the cemetery gates. Under his leadership the Society decided to build a lychgate to replicate the original.

Lychgate means Corpse Gate and in the past the funeral procession paused there while part of the burial service was read. Ken Young designed the gate; public donations in money and kind were sought and given; TAFE took on the project and the gate was built by carpentry apprentices. The sparkling new lychgate was opened in 1987.

WAUGH ROAD

In the past, a rule of thumb for the location of cemeteries was one mile out of town so that mourners could walk and not have to hire a horse drawn or motorized vehicle. Prior to

1920 Albury Municipal Council had purchased land in Wagga Road Lavington and opposite the present Peard's Nursery in East Albury. However these sites were deemed too far away, so council began to look at land surrounding the existing cemetery. Nearby landholders objected. They said that the town was expanding in that

direction so land should be reserved for residential use.

The landholders included Stanton's Nursery, on the corner of Stephen and David Streets. Stanton's had a small shop at the side of their house where you could buy fresh flowers for the graves, order wreaths or buy a fresh orange from their nursery.

Spencers also objected. They had a dairy farm in Fallon Street, on the site of the Kandeer School, next to James Fallon High. But the Council decided to buy land which had



Babies Section in Pioneer Cemetery with Memorial Cairn erected c.2000 in centre

originally belonged to the Kolb Family; do some rearranging of the roads in that vicinity and to open another cemetery on the corner of Fallon Street and what is now Waugh Road.

WAR CEMETERY

The Albury War Cemetery in Waugh Road was begun by the Australian Army but in 1949 the War Graves Commission took over responsibility for it.

The first burials in this cemetery were of the 23 servicemen and one woman killed when a bus and train collided in Thomas Mitchell Drive in Wodonga in May 1943. Their funeral was the biggest Albury had ever seen, with the procession one and a half km long. At the funeral, five services were held simultaneously and the 24 coffins were lowered at the same time.

There are now 96 graves in the War Cemetery. A Cross of Sacrifice stands in the central path, flanked by the marble headstones.

COUNCIL TAKES OVER

By 1950 the Albury City Council had finally decided to take over the running of the cemetery. Roy Collings was Town Clerk at the time and he tried to gather up the relevant documentation from the churches. This proved difficult as several church trustees were very reluctant to hand over their registers.

The Roman Catholic trustee had a theological reason for not wanting to give up their right to administer their portion of the cemetery. Roman Catholics hold the view that a burial site is holy ground. In 1950, the Cold War was at its height and many thought that the Communists would take over the world. The local priest feared that if the Albury City Council became Communist, people might be buried in mass graves in unconsecrated grounds so he fought against the secularisation of the Cemetery. However, the Council finally prevailed and has been in charge of the Albury cemeteries since 1951.

GLENMORUS

The Glenmorus Memorial Gardens at the western end of Union Road Lavington were set up in 1971. Previously any cremations took place in Melbourne.

This Cemetery is a lawn cemetery with plaques for both cremations and burials. It is in a beautiful setting, nestling into the hills and looking to the

mountains. The chapel and office are built on the site of Thomas Affleck's house, "Glenmorus". The name is made up of "glen" the setting of the home, and "morus" which comes from the Latin, meaning Mulberry. The Afflecks had mulberry trees there and they ran a silk farm. Affleck Street and the Crematorium honour this man who was owner of the *Border Post* newspaper for 25 years.

ST JOHNS THURGOONA

Strictly speaking, this cemetery is not an Albury cemetery. It is a private one which is allowed in NSW. The graves are on the site of the former St John's Orphanage at Thurgoona. Run by the Sisters of Mercy, the first grave is dated 1880, although that nun was re-interred here when the orphanage opened a few years later. Nuns and priests and six girls were buried here, but the cemetery was closed in 1978.

However, in 2007 the Mercy Order gave permission for the land to be used again for burials of local Religious. In the interim about 20 other nuns or priests have been buried throughout Glenmorus Cemetery.

INDIAN CEMETERY

On a very early map of Albury there is a section designated "Cemetery" just a little to the south-east of Wagga Road Lavington. It is marked "Unsectarian Burial Ground." This area is now Jelbart Park bounded by Moore Street, Nowland Avenue and Kaylock Road. It was known as the Indian Burial Ground, but the Indian hawkers who died in Albury were cremated and most ashes were sent back to India.

In 1928 a cremation took place at Jelbart Park.



The original "Glenmorus" homestead owned by Thomas Affleck, owner of *Border Post* and silk-worm farmer. Now the site of the Crematorium chapel and office.

We have an account from a lady who was a child living nearby at the time. On her way to school, she saw the funeral pyre being prepared with wood and "lots of butter". When she came home that afternoon, there was only a heap of ashes remaining. The paper recorded the dead man was a "votary of Buddhism" but it is most likely he was a Sikh, as were the majority of hawkers in Australia.

One might say this cemetery is not alive and well anymore. However the presence of the hundreds of people who play sport there every week tells another story.

MAINTENANCE

A primary aim of AlburyCity is that all the Cemeteries are kept in good order, with easy access to all parts. In recent years the Green Corps

and those on Community Orders have helped with maintenance. A great deal of drainage has taken place in the Pioneer section so that the walkways are as dry as possible.

RECORDS

There is a map at the front gates of the cemeteries, some markers have been installed and signs put up to direct people. Currently, AlburyCity is checking all the records for accuracy with a view to having an extensive data base, complete with photos of the headstones in all the cemeteries. This is taking some time.

Meanwhile there are cemetery records in the Albury LibraryMuseum, including a transcription of each headstone in the Pioneer Cemetery, done by the late Audrey Summerill in the early eighties. Photos have been taken of the headstones in the Pioneer Cemetery and there is a CD of these also at the LibraryMuseum.

CONCLUSION

As you can see, Albury cemeteries are not only the stories of death and dying in the past, but a continuing story of life in this city – and in that respect, Albury Cemeteries are Alive and Well.

TOWNSEND STREETS IN RIVERINA TOWNS.

Faye Stevenson responded to a question in *Bulletin 525* asking if there were any other streets in Riverina towns named after Thomas Scott Townsend.

Howlong and Narrandera both have streets called Larmer & Townsend in the older parts of the town. Larmer was also an early surveyor in the region, but he did work mainly around the Lachlan River and tributaries. It is reasonable to assume both these streets were named after the surveyors. Finley has a Townsend Street, also in the central part of town so reasonable to assume that it is named after the surveyor. Tumberumba has a Townsend Street not in the centre, but as a bent linking street which could be named after Townsend as he did a lot of surveying in the district.

Wagga Wagga has a Townshend Place in a new estate, but it is doubtful that it is named after the surveyor.

BONEGILLA & INDIGENOUS PROJECTS

Bruce Pennay sought the Society's support for two Bonegilla-related grant applications he is making to meet out-of-pocket expenses in producing a booklet, academic article and both website and on-site display materials about *Picturing Bonegilla* and about *Taking in Strangers*.

Bruce also informed the Society he had been engaged to prepare a thematic history to inform the production of public art along Council's proposed Wagirra Trail. He is initially exploring three themes – traditional ways, dispossession and voluntary family resettlement in the 1970s.

The project is subject to the approval of the Wiradjuri Council of Elders.

Bruce reminded members that 2013 was a significant anniversary for Albury, marking the 175th anniversary of the Faithful Massacre on 11 April 1838. It was that massacre that prompted Governor Gipps to establish a police station to guard the Bungambrawatha river crossing and a town (later called Albury) to lay firm claims to the territory. It is an integral part of our town creation story.

WALBUNDRIE CEMETERY

Walbundrie is a village on the bank of the Billa-bong Creek, 50 km northwest of Albury. In the process of gathering information for the book *Walbundrie: Riverina Crossroads* in the mid-1970s, it was apparent that there were no records of early burials in the Walbundrie Cemetery. District historian, Rupert Paech, eventually found them in the Court House at Holbrook. Prior to local government the police kept such records so they were lodged at the courthouse.

An examination of the Walbundrie Cemetery records revealed there were 115 burials, but only 23 were marked with gravestones.

Leo Coyle, who lived close by, noticed visitors to the cemetery and was concerned that although they believed forebears to have been buried in the cemetery, there was nothing to indicate it. Edward and Kay Dale who, with their team have done so much at Henty Cemetery, offered advice and the Walbundrie group was able to obtain a grant to build a commemorative wall to record the names of those in unmarked graves.

The cemetery lies in the flood plain of the Billa-bong Creek, so care was taken to construct the wall high enough so plaques and niches were above the 100 year flood level. The levels were tested when the Creek flooded in March this year and came through with flying colours.

Walbundrie Cemetery was gazetted in 1880 replacing two earlier burial grounds, Piney Range and Billabong Cemeteries. A factor in the large number of burials was the presence of a doctor at Walbundrie. When workers from the surrounding rural properties fell ill or were injured in accidents, they were often brought to Walbundrie to see the doctor and those who died were buried in the cemetery. District folklore suggests the skill of the doctors recruited to the town was sometimes lacking. Certainly their facilities were basic and no doubt they did their best with patients who came to them only when very ill.

The opening of the commemorative & niche walls will be held on Sunday 14 October commencing at 2 p.m. and will be followed by afternoon tea.

SNAPSHOT OF ALBURY RIFLE CLUB HISTORY

In the late 1800s one element of the strategy for the defence of the Colony of New South Wales was to develop an interest in rifle shooting. Rifle clubs were established throughout New South Wales, mostly sponsored and supervised by an Infantry Regiment Company located in the district. Members of the rifle clubs could be recognized as reservists and obtain weapons and ammunition through the military forces. Clubs formed between 1893 and 1901 included Albury Rifle Club and Germanton (Holbrook) Rifle Club both affiliated with H Company, 1st Infantry Regiment. There were 124 clubs formed across NSW.

The Albury Civilian Rifle Club, usually known as the Albury Rifle Club was formed in 1896 and began with 40 members. Members who were graded as efficient through attendance and skill at shoots were issued with a Martini Henry Rifle, a white belt and bayonet.

An area at the northern end of Sackville Street was reserved for Rifle Range purposes on 4 December 1897. A portion of the site is now occupied by Kalianna. The range was said to be "conveniently close to town", and the butts comprised six double targets of the Hawker type, set in concrete. The shoot could be done over 900 yards (822 m)

The reinforced concrete butts are all that remain today hidden in the woodland that covers the site.

The Albury Club became the premier club in the area and in 1898 won the G A Thompson Trophy. They also won prizes in the Riverina Rifle Club Union competitions at Wagga including the Westmacott Shield in 1909. The club also won the LV Shield and both those trophies hung in the Mechanics Institute in days gone by.

Pat Lee was Albury's premier shooter in the 1930s, 40s and 50s. He won the prestigious Australian States' King's Prize four times – a record, and was in the Australian Team sent to Bisley UK in 1937 and again in 1953. Bisley is the holy grail for rifle shooters. The Australian teams were very successful and toured the world competing. Pat's trophies were donated to Albury Council when he left Albury in the 1950s but their current whereabouts are not known.

In 1948, Albury won the trophy donated by Sars O'Shaughnessy, proprietor of Sars Hotel at the Five Ways Lavington, now known as Northside Hotel. Both the Sars and the Westmacott Shields are now in the Albury LibraryMuseum Collection.



Butts at Sackville Street Range and Clubhouse at Union Road Range

As Albury grew the rifle range was too close to residential areas so a new range was established at the western end of Union Road. A derelict clubhouse is visible from near the entrance to the Glenmorus lawn cemetery.

Is there a history of this club? If not, someone might like to write one!!

JOURNEYING THROUGH THE JOURNALS

By John Craig

History: RAHS Magazine, March 2012.

- Mutuality: Worth banking on – Credit Unions & Building Societies;
- Calendar of Events – Autumn



2012.

Wagga Wagga Historical Society Newsletter, April/May 2012.

• History of Wagga Wagga river crossing, Pt 1. *Ances-Tree: Burwood & District FHG, March 2012.*

• Immigrant ships to Australia, *Johann Caesar 1856.*

Argyle Bulletin: Goulburn HS & FHS Journal, May 2012.

- Affray at Bolong Station (Fullerton);
- Anzac remembered (Report *Penny Post*, February 1916).

RAHS Journal, June 2012.

- Working the Land laws: manipulation of free selection 1860/1914.

Insites: Historic Houses Trust (NSW) Magazine.

- Old buildings: carbon villains or carbon heroes? *History RAHS Magazine, June 2012.*

- RAHS Council member profile for 2012;

- Calendar of events for winter 2012;

- The life and death of Patrick (Paddy) Cleary, nom de plume Phil Random.

CULCAIRN CEMETERY RECORDS

Edward Dale is keen to hear from anyone who has information or records of people buried at Culcairn Cemetery prior to 1950. A fire destroyed the hearse and many of the records sometime in the 1940s, so Ed would appreciate any help.
