

ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN

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FEBRUARY 2011

509

REPORT ON THE DECEMBER MEETING (8/12/10)

Once again our meeting was well attended and again it proved to be varied and entertaining. Members continue to bring along a trove of photos and objects for Show & Tell segments.

President Chris McQuellin welcomed several new and out-of-town members, and guests including Nicole Barlow and Matthew Dallinger who had brought along some photos from their collection. They hoped people at the meeting might be able to identify some of the subjects.

Chris asked for answers to the Question of the Month carried over from last month and also reported on progress to obtain a quotation for re-pointing and cleaning work to be done on the Hume Monument at the Botanic Gardens as part of A&DHS 50th anniversary.

Michael Browne presented a succinct treasurer's report showing the Society to be in a sound position financially. Michael noted the healthy balance in the general account was owing to prompt payment of annual subscriptions, interest from the investment account and proceeds from the successful antiques & collectables valuation day organized by June Shanahan.

Bridget Guthrie gave an update on preparations for the Albury Base Hospital exhibition planned for the LibraryMuseum in March 2011. It will mark the 150th anniversary of the completion of the first Albury Public Hospital building in Thurgoona Street. The exhibition draws on the cataloguing and storage of the ABH heritage collection done by the A&DHS team and is supported by the ABH ex-graduates & employees association.

NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY

9 FEBRUARY 2011

**7.30pm at Commercial
Club
Albury**

Speakers:

**John Vandeven & Mark
Trebley: "History of the
Albury FireBrigade"**
and

**Edward Dale: "The Rail
Motor journey between
Henty and Albury"**

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Patron: Harold Mair OAM

Honorary Life Members

Howard Jones, Anne Davies,
Helen Livsey,

Public Officer: Helen Livsey

President: Christopher McQuellin
02 6021 3697

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Gear

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Single: \$25

Family: \$33

Corporate: \$50

Research undertaken \$25 first hour.

Enquiries in writing with \$25

History 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

VALE RODDY DAVIES

The Society acknowledges with sadness the passing of our former member, Roddy Davies, on December 22.

Roddy served as Treasurer for five years in the 1980s and 90s and supported his wife, Anne, over the many years she meticulously compiled the Bulletin.

Several Society members attended Roddy's funeral at St Matthew's Church, Albury, where he had previously been a member of the choir.

Sympathy is extended to Anne and their family.

DOUG ROYAL

Doug Royal conducted the inquisition about the Dallinger photos while Chris showed them on the big screen. Some information was added to what was known on 13 of the 19 photos shown, which was a good result.

A photo of the Union Bridge showed the Albury Brewery building in the background. Jean Whitla was able to add that in 1919, the vacant building was used as a processing station where travellers from Victoria were interviewed prior to being taken to the isolation camp at the Albury Show Ground. Several years after this, the building was demolished and some of the bricks used in the Albury War Memorial.

NOEL JACKLING

Noel Jackling spoke briefly about the reason he wrote his history of classical music in Albury and cited several instances where readers had discovered new information pertaining to their special interests. Noel had books available at a special price on the night.

MARION TAYLOR

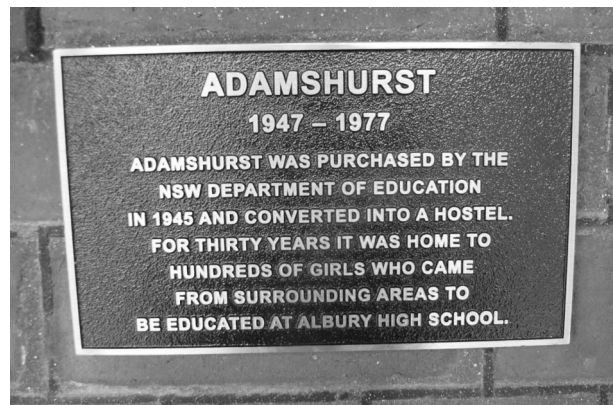
New member, Marion Taylor, brought along a mystery box and offered a prize for the person who correctly guessed the contents. After many wide ranging guesses, a correct answer was



given: wool samples. The eligibility of the prize winner was a bit suspect as he had once worked at Table Top Station where the box had originated. The box had been the property of James Mitchell Esq., son of Elizabeth Mitchell and the contents were an integral part of his merino stud program. (Picture below)

The box had escaped destruction on two occasions before being given to Marion, the current owner of the Table Top homestead.

On the first occasion, 1964, the box was saved by a jackaroo when other records and objects were burned following sale of the property. Again, in 1984, the box was dragged smouldering from a shed destroyed in the Thurgoona bushfire. The box was given to Marion in 1994 by its res-



cuer whose dying wish was it be returned to Table Top homestead.

It is hoped Marion can speak at a future meeting on the history of Table Top Station and the pioneers of the district.

JAN HUNTER

Jan Hunter presented four small items: Ray Harrison's account of a caper by a member of Harrisons Good Hardware who flashed a mirror into the eyes of Ivor Harris's workers who were painting the CML building. Ivor, a customer of Harrisons came down to the store found who had done the flashing and "gave him a verbal roasting!"

The second item also involved the CML, this time a photo that Bill Washington had found of Romley Evans in 1967 painting the flag pole on top of the building using a ladder tied to the pole for support with a piece of rope.

Another photo supplied by Bill was of the erection of the Pollard Archway on the Lincoln Causeway named in honour of Wodonga Shire president Charles Pollard.

Jean Whitla was able to add some information on Charles Pollard whom she said was known as 'Mr Wodonga'. Jean added that the arch was removed when the Lincoln Causeway was widened to four lanes and the arch didn't fit. It was stored in the council depot for many years before being re-erected at the entrance to the Wodonga Show-



grounds. Charles Pollard was a foundation member of the Show Society and its first president. His son Ray placed the last bolt joining the arch.

Jan's final item was a plaque placed at Adamshurst in David Street in 2009 by former boarders of the building when it was the Albury High School Girls' Hostel. (Picture previous page)

PATRICIA STRACHAN

Patricia Strachan brought a reminder of the Australian Senior Cadets in Albury prior to WWI in the form of a medal awarded to her father, Cadet H A Angel, 44th Battalion, as part of the Champion Team at the Brigade competition 1913/14. (Picture above)

Junior and senior cadets were part of the scheme of universal military training that was introduced by the Commonwealth government in 1911. Boys aged between 12 and 26 were required to register for training. On attaining the age of 18, cadets were required to serve the remainder of their obligation in the militia. The scheme remained largely in place till 1929.

Senior cadets (16-18) in Albury belonged to the 44th Infantry Battalion. Many of the senior cadets of the pre-war era, including Cdt Angel, were caught up in the First World War.

DOUG HUNTER

Doug read an article about the Botanic Gardens in a recent copy of *Out & About in Albury-Wodonga*, in which the statue at the Botanic Gardens was referred to as the Virgin Mary. The statue is in fact Melpomene, the Muse of Tragedy in Greek mythology. It was presented to Albury in 1892 by hotelier and alderman Charles

Schmiedt, a man who had experienced much sadness in his own life. (See photo on page 8)

HOWARD JONES

Howard presented Chris McQuellin with a Transvaal two shilling piece dated 1897, (see picture below) in recognition of Chris's efforts in researching the death in action of Gunner Bernard Gowing during the Boer War. Howard believes the coin, featuring Paul Kruger on the obverse, was brought home to Wales as a souvenir by a returning serviceman.

Howard also showed a fund-raising button put out by the World Council of Churches Aged People's home.

ROMA FREEMAN

Roma Freeman displayed an ice-cream scoop that had served many ice-creams to WWII servicemen at Freeman's Café. Roma also had a milk thermometer, an instrument that was instantly recognized by Ron Haberfield.

Other speakers were Michael Browne, Jean Whitla, Joe Wooding and Chris McQuellin. Their contributions follow.

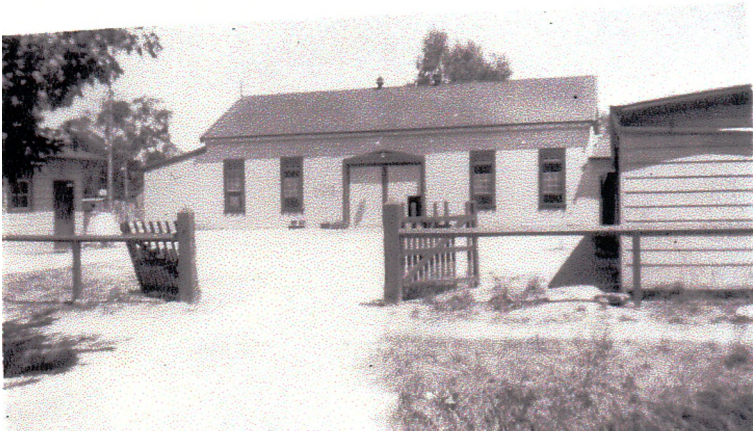
ANSWER TO QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Albury Drill Hall: where was it, when was it built and what happened to it?

The Albury Drill Hall was built on what was known as the police paddock in Victoria Street. It was officially opened in May 1900 by the mayor, Alderman W J Billson. The timber framed and weatherboard clad hall measured 18 metres by 9 metres. The roof of corrugated galvanised iron was carried on timber trusses. The distance from the timber floor to the under side of the truss was 4.5 metres.

The equipment in the Hall when it opened in 1900 included trapeze ropes, horizontal ladders, parallel bars, a vaulting horse and springboard, Indian clubs, singlesticks, boxing gloves





Albury Drill Hall Victoria Street c.1951

and a rowing machine. Physical fitness and coordination was given high priority, and no doubt the well equipped gymnasium was an attractive recruiting enticement.

The Drill Hall was home to Albury's citizen soldiers for a century, beginning with 'H' Company 1st Infantry Regiment, NSW colonial militia, and ending with VMR Squadron 4th/19th Prince of Wales's Light Horse Regiment, Army Reserve.

Prior to WWI, a company of the 44th Infantry Regiment (Senior Cadets) shared the Hall with 17th Battery Australian Field Artillery (AFA). Prior to WWII the Albury Battery, now designated 40th Battery AFA, shared the Hall with a company of the 59th Infantry Battalion.

During WWII a number of army units stationed in the town used the Hall and other ancillary buildings that had been built over the years.

In 1948, when the Citizens Military Forces (CMF) was raised, Albury was designated a Royal Australian Armoured Corps (RAAC) depot. Squadrons of the 8th/13th Victorian Mounted Rifles (VMR) served at the Victoria Street Drill Hall for the next 48 years. For part of that time a large number of national servicemen from the city served with the Regiment.

The depot in Victoria Street closed in 2000 and the historic Drill Hall and other buildings dating from before 1939 were demolished in 2004 and the site sold for redevelopment.

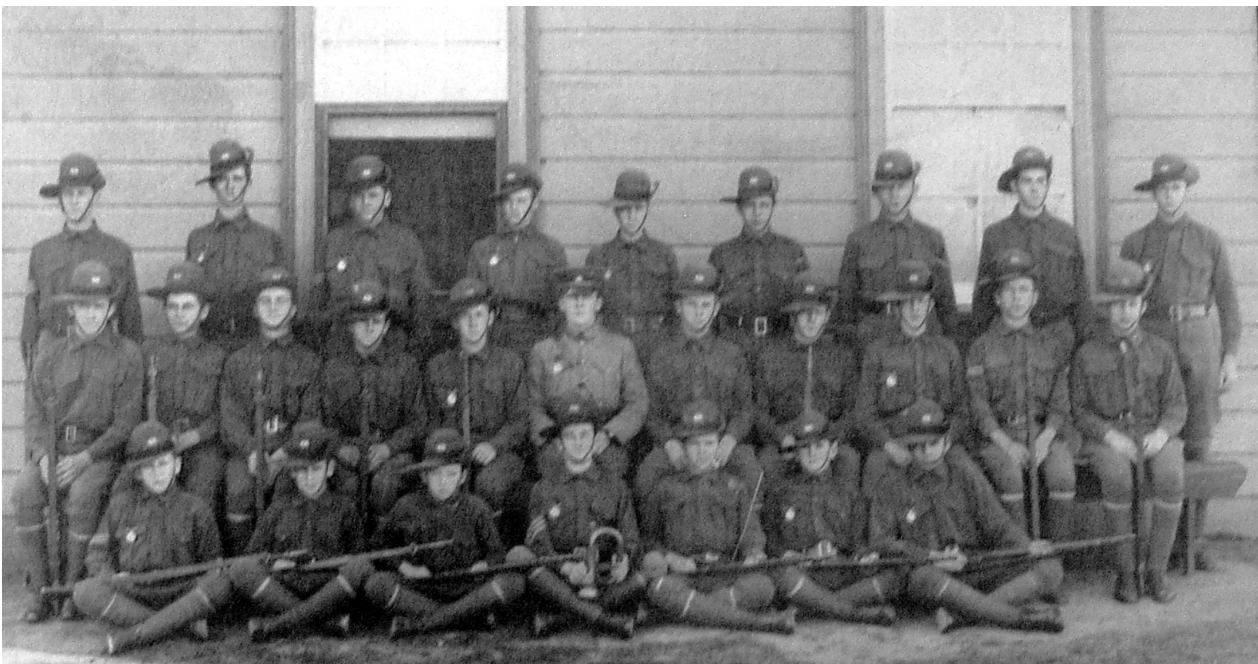
Thus passed an era of Albury's history and with it, evidence of a regional community's close identification and connection with its military institution.

THE PRINCESS MARY 1914 CHRISTMAS GIFT

By Chris McQuellin

In November 1914, an advertisement was placed in the national press inviting monetary contributions to a 'Sailors & Soldiers Christmas Fund' which had been created by Princess Mary, the seventeen year old daughter of King George V and Queen Mary. The purpose was to provide everyone wearing the King's uniform and serving overseas on Christmas Day 1914 with a 'gift from the nation'.

The response was truly overwhelming, and it



Senior Cadets of the 44th Infantry Battalion photographed outside the Albury Drill Hall in 1914.

Photo from the 8/13 Victorian Mounted Rifles Collection donated by Patricia Strachan

was decided to spend the money on an embossed brass box, based on a design by Messrs Adshead and Ramsey. The contents varied considerably; officers and men on active service afloat or at the front received a box containing a combination of pipe, lighter, 1 oz of tobacco and twenty cigarettes in distinctive yellow monogrammed wrappers. Non-smokers and boys received a bullet pencil and a packet of sweets instead. Indian troops often got sweets and spices, and nurses were treated to chocolate. Many of these items were despatched separately from the tins themselves, as once the standard issue of tobacco and cigarettes was placed in the tin there was little room for much else apart from the greeting card

The 'tin' itself was approximately 5" long by 3¼" wide by 1¼" deep with a double-skinned, hinged, lid. The surface of the lid depicts the head of Princess Mary in the centre, surrounded by a laurel wreath and flanked on either side by the 'M' monogram. At the top, a decorative cartouche contains the words 'Imperium Britannicum' with a sword and scabbard either side. On the lower edge, another cartouche contains the words 'Christmas 1914', which is flanked by the bows of battleships forging through a heavy sea. In the corners, small roundels house the names of the Allies:

Belgium, Japan, Montenegro and Serbia;
France and Russia are at the edges, each superimposed on three furled flags or standards.

All boxes, irrespective of recipient, contained a Christmas card and a picture of the Princess. Those which were not distributed until after Christmas were sent out with a card wishing the recipient a 'victorious new year'.

The wounded on leave or in hospital, nurses, and the widows or parents of those killed were also entitled to the gift. Prisoners of war at the time had theirs' reserved until they were repatriated.

Great efforts were made to distribute the gifts in time for Christmas, and huge demands were made on an already stretched postal service. More than 355,000 were successfully delivered by the deadline. As time pressed on, a shortage of brass meant that many entitled personnel did not receive their gift until as late as the summer of



1916, and in January 1919 it was reported that 'considerable' numbers had still not been distributed.

Orders for brass strip were placed with the USA, who were not yet involved in the war, and a large consignment was lost with the ship

'Lusitania'. As so much brass was being consumed in the production of weapons and munitions, the quality of the boxes which were manufactured late on was poor, being of a plated inferior alloy, when compared with the earlier pure brass examples.

When the fund finally closed in 1920, almost

£200,000 had been donated for the provision of more than two and a half million boxes.

ALBURY'S FIRST ELECTRIC CAR - THE BOTH

By Joe Wooding

Howard Jones' report and picture of Albury's first electric car (*Border Mail* 1/12/2010) created some interest. The three wheeled vehicle was known as a 'Both' - named after its inventor Edward Thomas Both.

It was powered by sixteen 6 volt, 11 plate, lead acid Vesta batteries, providing 96 volts for the motor. The lights, horn and windscreen wipers operated on 24 volts. It could turn in its own circle; had a three speed gear box for both forward and reverse; a top speed of 35 mph and on the flat it could do 200 stop/starts between recharges. A recharge took between 7 and 8 hours.

Albury Municipal Council purchased the vehicle from Both Electrics Ltd, Adelaide, for use in their Electricity Supply Department (ESD) where it was mainly used for appliance repairs etc. The vehicle was usually parked and recharged overnight at the ESD Volt Lane workshops.

In 1949, Council disposed of the vehicle by tender. It was bought by Kemp's Plumbing, Electrical and Refrigeration, cnr Hume & Olive Streets. Eventually, the constant recharging caused the batteries to fail. The cost of replacing the batteries was more than the vehicle was worth. Kemp's still have the charger and some parts of the vehicle.

The inventor was a most extraordinary individual. Edward Thomas Both, OBE, was the eldest of five children born at Caltowie, South Australia, on 16 April 1908. A well above average student, ET, as he was known, became a technical assistant in physics at the University of Adelaide.

In 1932, he built the first electro cardiograph (ECG) and when joined by younger brother Donald, produced a wide range of medical and scientific instruments. During the polio epidemic 1937/38, they produced a simple and inexpensive respirator to replace the cumbersome American iron lung prototype. In 1941, the brothers established Both Electrics Ltd. The war was to see them involved with the Army Inventions Directorate. Their contributions included medical equipment, an electro micrometer for checking the bore of a gun, cloth cutting machines and of course, their electric car when petrol was in short supply, and they did research into guided torpedoes. They patented the Visitel - the first fax machine.

After the war, they designed electronic scoreboards for the Davis Cup and 1956 Melbourne Olympics, the humidicrib, foetal heart monitors and much more.

ET died at Mt Beauty, Victoria, on 18 November 1987, aged 79. It seems the people who regarded Both as Australia's Edison were not far off the mark.

LOGBOOK SCRAPBOOK

By Michael Browne

I bought this large fragile scrapbook at a swap meet without really knowing what it was. It turned out to be the signal log of the HMAS *Geranium* covering the period from early to mid 1922. Some of the ship's correspondence is still able to be read quite clearly.

The book then however becomes a scrapbook beginning with newspaper cuttings from 1923 and finishing in 1974. There are also clippings about the landing of the *Endeavour*. There is no indication who made the scrapbook; whether it was started by a crew member and continued after *Geranium* was withdrawn from service in 1927.

HMS *Geranium* was an Arabis Class sloop built for the Royal Navy by the Greenock & Grangemouth Dockyard Company, Greenock, Scotland. Construction commenced August 1915 and the ship was commissioned three months later on 8 November. In 1919, *Geranium* was transferred to the Royal Australian Navy and commissioned as HMAS *Geranium*

on 17 January 1920 as the first RAN survey and mine sweeping ship.

Following its transfer to RAN, *Geranium* worked sweeping for mines off Cape Everard, Victoria. The mines were reportedly laid by the German raider *Wolf* in 1917.

In 1924, *Geranium* was fitted with a Fairey IIID seaplane. She was paid off on 10 November 1927, dismantled in June 1932 and sunk as a target on 24 April 1935.

ARABIS CLASS

The *Arabis* class was the third class of mine-sweeping sloops to be built under the Emergency War Programme for the Royal Navy in World War I as part of the larger "Flower Class", which were also referred to as the "Cabbage Class", or "Herbaceous Borders". All thirty-six vessels to this design for the Royal Navy were ordered in July 1915, in three batches averaging twelve ships each; a further eight vessels were later built in British shipyards for the French Navy. Like the preceding *Acacia* and *Azalea* class sloops, these were single-screw Fleet Sweeping Vessels (Sloops) with triple hulls at the bows to give extra protection against loss when sweeping for mines.

SPECIFICATION

Length: 267 ft 9 in (81.61m)

Propulsion: 1 x 4-cylinder triple expansion engine

Speed: 17 knots (31 km/h)

Range: 2,000 nmi (3,700 km) at 15 kn (28 kph) with max 260 tons of coal

Complement: 79 men

Aircraft carried: 1 x Fairey IIID seaplane (RAN) I

1 x 4.7 inch gun

SPRING SHOWS

Transcript of a radio broadcast made on 2CO ABC

Albury by Jean Whitla 4 September 1970

This is Jean Whitla, in Albury.

Within our listening area, hundreds of people are putting the finishing touches to the produce, animals and articles they'll exhibit at Spring Shows in the next few weeks.

For the older folk, Show time stirs memories of horses being harnessed, picnic lunches packed and a journey to the Showgrounds in the jinker or buggy.

Show schedules were not printed in booklet form in the early days, but on a cloth poster. At Tallangatta recently I saw a cloth poster for the Tallangatta Show of 1904 when admission for horsemen was 1/6d. and 2/- for horse-drawn vehicles.

The schedule was not greatly different to that of modern shows although there was a class for hackneys and buggy horses, and a separate class

for buggies - and you don't see many of those about these days. There was a section too, for single, double and 3-furrow ploughs.

In that year there was a special prize awarded the best rabbit poison distributor and the best rabbit exterminator. Perhaps the increase in our rabbit population might lead to a re-introduction of those two items!

I recently borrowed from the secretary of the Albury Show Society, Mr Wal Shearer, a booklet called "50 years of the Albury and Border Pastoral, Agricultural and Horticultural Society." It was written and read by Dr. Andrews at the Annual Meeting of the Society in 1907 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of- the foundation of the Society.

I found it a fascinating and, at times, amusing document.

The first white settler on Albury town site, Mr. Robert Brown, called a meeting for 13th January 1857 at the King's Criterion Hotel in Hume Street to discuss the forming of a Show Society. A report on the meeting states that "it was more remarkable for earnestness than for speechmaking."

A permanent committee was elected at a subsequent meeting on 3rd March 1857.

Subscription was fixed at £20 for life members and 2 guineas for annual members. The governing body provided for lectures and readings at meetings with the proviso that "no religious nor political topic shall be introduced."

The first Show & Ploughing Match was held on 13th April of that year and was restricted to farm and dairy produce, vegetables, fruit and wines, while a stock show was held later in the year. Admission was free.

At this juncture I must tell you that this year, for the first time in the Albury Show Society's 113 years of history, the subscription has been raised for annual members. Remember that in 1857 it was 2 guineas - \$4.20 - this year it will be increased to \$6. It was actually decreased during the depression years to £1.

The ploughing competition with £20 in prize money was held in Crisp's paddock at the north end of Kiewa Street with both bullock and horse teams competing. Produce was shown at Layton's Hotel with 27 prizes allotted to 15 exhibitors.

To mark the anniversary of the discovery of the Murray River in 1824, by the explorer Hume, the 1857 Stock Show was held on 24th of November. Fruit, vegetables, farm and dairy produce, and agricultural implements were shown. The Show resulted in the exhibition of what is quoted as "some very fine stock though many were shut out by flood"... apparently only the first of many wet shows in Albury.

The public was again admitted free and apparently seemed to think that the exhibits were there for their refreshments for Dr. Andrews' report states that "some very fine strawberries, shown by the Police Magistrate, and some cherries from Mullengandra, were speedily consumed by the boys who then topped up with green peas and other raw vegetables." The Committee was helpless as neither Police nor the Police Magistrate, could be found.

A Ball successfully terminated the day's proceedings and all felt that the first Albury Spring Show had been decidedly satisfactory.

The credit balance, after deductions for prizes, printing and advertising, and 10% commission to the Secretary, was £61.

At the first annual meeting a decision was made to hold but one show in 1858 and that in March. That Show was, more successful, the wheat section bringing out 10 competitors with two prize samples that weighed 64¾ lb-to-the-bushel.

It was then proposed to hold a Show in Wodonga to extend the sphere of operations and a grant was made by the Victorian Government of £200, but nothing was done that year and Wodonga's first show didn't take place until May 1859. With a subsequent grant from the Victorian Government, also towards a Wodonga Show, Albury had £350 with which to become financially established.

In 1859, sheep were shown for the first time - the entry consisted of only two fats - ewe and wether - and the ewe scaled 99lb when dressed.

So much for the early history of the Albury Show.

The 1970 Show, to be held from 10th to 12th September, is expected to attract 6,000 entries, a far cry from the 27 entries of 1857.

Most Show Societies have had to update their presentations in order to remain financial. Night shows have been introduced to attract the public and increase the gate takings.

An important "first" for Albury this year will be the introduction of exotic breeds of cattle.

Perhaps the biggest change in Agricultural shows is that they are no longer purely competitive, but are used as displays for the selling of wares and stock.

Jean Whitla from Albury

ARTHUR NEWNHAM

Out-of-town Society member Arthur Newnham spoke briefly on his early life in Albury, especially his service in the Air Training Corps (ATC). Arthur joined the ATC in 1942 with a view to becoming a pilot in the RAAF.

Arthur remembered the early training consisted of drill at the Albury Drill Hall and mathematics classes at the High School. Later they moved to rooms at the T&G Building in Dean Street.

He recalled a memorable experience of flying in a Wirraway during an ATC visit to Uranquinty.

Arthur was called up in 1944, but owing to a surplus of aircrew in training, he returned to his civilian job and to the ATC until the war's end.

Arthur's story, and a complete story of the ATC in Albury is contained in Chris McQuellin's excellent book, *12 Squadron Air Training Corps*, published in 2008.



The statue of Melpomene in the Albury Botanic Gardens. The original statue, donated in 1892 by Ald Charles Schmiedt, was severely damaged by vandals in 2000. It was repaired sufficiently to have a mould made and a new statue cast. The new statue was unveiled on 10 March 2005. Over the years, the statue has been misidentified as Madonna and the Virgin Mary. See article by Doug Hunter on page 3

JOURNEYING THROUGH THE JOURNALS

By John Craig

The Muster: Central Coast (Gosford) FHS Journal, December 2010.

- The Female Bridegroom--Amy Maud Bock (1859-1943);
- Trove Website; Puts truth to a family tale.

Richmond River HS Bulletin, December 2010.

- Sandakan Memorial, Lismore.

The Argyle: Goulburn HS & FHS Bulletin, November 2010.

- Galloping Jack(General)Royston. His exploits in WWI.

Royal Australian Historical Society Journal, December 2010.

- Constructing Aboriginal Tribal Entities in NSW;
- Frank De Groote; Loyal Lieutenant or spy?

Stockman Hall of Fame Newsletter, November

2010.

- Events Calendar for 2011;
- Channel Country-- by Cameron J Nunn.

Ances--Tree: Burwood FHG Journal, November 2010.

- Ship *Diana* Bremen to Moreton Bay 1855. Migrant list possibly from *Diana*;
- Who was Thomas Garde?

History: RAHS Magazine, December 2010.

- Trove: National Library search engine;
- Australian Dictionary of Biography online.

Insites: Historic Houses Trust of NSW Magazine, Summer 2010.

- Hyde Park Barracks. World Heritage Site;
- Lost convict lodge re-discovered.

NOTICES

Help Please! **Do you happen to know the whereabouts of a large scrapbook belonging to the Albury Business and Professional Women's Branch (now defunct)? Contact Jan Hunter (0260212835) or <djhjrh@bigpond.com> .

James Wallace (Wal) Sproule was an innovative architect working in Albury particularly in the forties and fifties. Do you know of any houses he designed? Contact Jan Hunter (0260212835) or <djhjrh@bigpond.com>

Dallinger photographs may be viewed by clicking onto:
<www.flickr.com/photos/oakleystudios>

Looking for information about the lives of the first 500 workers on NSW Railways. Most arrived from England in 1853 on the ships *David McIvor* (1), *Maidstone* and *Herefordshire*. Contact: Elizabeth Hook, <e.v.hook1@optusnet.com.au> ; phone (AH) 02 4656 1439 or <www.evhook.com>
