

# ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN

Registered by Australia Post PP 225170/0019

JULY 2011

514

## REPORT ON JUNE ACTIVITIES

June has been an active month for the Society. On 4 June sixty people attended the guided visit to the Chinese section of the Albury Pioneer Cemetery to hear talks by Pauline Harbick and Chris McQuellin. And on Wednesday evening 8 June, forty-five members and guests attended the monthly meeting at the LibraryMuseum to hear a fascinating address by Johan (John) Domenie from Florida USA and to view a display of memorabilia relating to the *Uiver*.

John Domenie was accompanied by his son Douglas. The two men are son and grandson respectively of Roelof Domenie who was one of three passengers who flew in the *Uiver* in the 1934 London to Melbourne Air Race.

Both events had a social aspect: a BYO afternoon tea in the lychgate on the Sunday, and a fine supper arranged by Bridget Guthrie following the Wednesday meeting.

### CEMETERY VISIT

A wet morning gave way to bright sunshine in the afternoon adding to the enjoyable day out. The cemetery visit was held as part of the "Tracking the Dragon Exhibition" then showing at the Albury LibraryMuseum. Chris McQuellin and Pauline Harbick provided an entertaining and informative talk on the Chinese in Albury and the Riverina.

Pauline spoke of the work Chinese labourers did in the agricultural industry especially the clearing of land and sinking of dams, and the market gardens which improved the diet of rural people. She talked about the Chinese Camp with its Joss House and Lodge in Townsend Street Albury which was a cultural centre and rendezvous for Chinese in the district. More than 100 Chinese lived at the Camp at any one time, but the floating nature of the population meant many more were associated with it. Chris added details on Chinese funeral customs which he obtained from the Chinese Embassy in Canberra. Our Secre-

## NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY

13 JULY 2011

7.30pm at Commercial

Club Albury

Speaker: Nancy Sarre:

"Hunter & Stelling"

AND

Annual General Meeting

See Agenda p.3

**ALBURY DELIGHT-  
FULLY DECO**

**Opens 9 July Art Gallery &  
LibraryMuseum**

### QUESTION

**What is the origin of the  
term Art Deco, and when  
and by whom was it first  
used?**

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Helen Livsey,

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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](http://www.alburyhistory.org.au)

tary received this email the next day:

*Just a very quick note to say how much I enjoyed your organisation's presentation at the Chinese Cemetery on the weekend. I made the trip up from Melbourne just for this event because I am of Chinese descent from the C19th. The information that was presented was very enlightening and I learnt a lot as a result. I was very proud to stand in the cemetery and could not help but think of my own ancestors. I felt the contribution of the early Chinese in your area was explained very well but more importantly was acknowledged and valued.*

Well done Pauline and Chris.

#### MEETING WITH JOHN DOMENIE

Wednesday evening was the culmination of a project to have John Domenie travel from his home in Naples Florida USA to present to the City of Albury a collection of his father's memorabilia. Roelof Domenie was one of three passengers on the KLM DC2 entry in the 1934 London to Melbourne air race. The plane named the *Uiver*, meaning stork, was forced to make an emergency landing at Albury Racecourse in the very early morning of 24 October 1934.

Roelof Domenie has been described as an adventurer, and in some senses he was. However he was much more complex than that, as his son explained at a well attended meeting at the Albury LibraryMuseum. Roelof served in the Dutch Army during WWI. Holland was not a belligerent, but had responsibilities to maintain neutral borders.

Following military service he joined the staff of a Dutch bank and in the 1920s was posted to the bank offices in Rio de Janeiro. John and his brother were born in Rio and commenced school there. Roelof travelled extensively as part of his work. He was an advocate of air travel. Amongst the collection donated to AlburyCity is a ticket on a Zeppelin air-ship flight and a photo showing the sleeping accommodation which resembled a sleeping car on a train with double-decker bunks.

Roelof Domenie was also a sportsman. He was an outstanding polo player and a silver cup awarded to him is part of the collection. The Domenie family were in Holland on holidays when Roelof obtained a passenger ticket from London to Melbourne on the KLM DC2 *Uiver* that was competing in the Macpherson Robertson Air Race. The other passengers were another banker PMJ Gilissen and an aviatrix and journalist Thea Rasche.

Roelof Domenie wrote notes that later were assembled into a journal. Unfortunately the last stage of the journey, Cloncurry to Melbourne

which included the unscheduled stop in Albury is missing. The journal has been posted on the internet and is also included in the three-volume Domenie family history that has been donated to the LibraryMuseum.

John Domenie said the collection has been in his family's possession for more than 70 years and he's delighted that it will now be safeguarded in a permanent home for future generations to enjoy. He concluded: "Without the unselfish efforts by residents of Albury 77 years ago, who left their beds and headed out in the middle of a stormy night to light up a race-track, this historic event would have ended in disaster."

The project which resulted in AlburyCity acquiring this unique collection, is owing firstly to the willingness of John Domenie and his family to donate it to the city that had such a special role in the Uiver story. And secondly to the untiring work of Society member Noel Jackling ably assisted by Bridget Guthrie, Museum and Social History Coordinator AlburyCity and the A&DHS President, Chris McQuellin. All are to be congratulated.

**The LibraryMuseum holds a copy of John Domenie's PowerPoint presentation and the three-volume Domenie Family History.**

#### **MEMORIES OF THE UIVER**

There were four people at the meeting who had been taken to see the *Uiver* on the morning following the landing: Patricia Strachan, Audrey Nugent, Catherine Wilson and Ray Hartwig. Noel Jackling introduced them to John Domenie and invited them to share their memories of the day.

PAT STRACHAN

My father had made himself a wireless to listen to the race. He was listening when Arthur Newnham appealed for drivers to go to the race course. He was one who went. I was only three, so didn't go till next morning.

My recollection was of a cold wet morning when my sister and I were got ready to go out. We had to put our galoshes on and that was rather difficult because mine were a size smaller than my shoes and I cried trying to put them on because my fingers hurt.

We were driven out to the race course and there I saw the most splendid, biggest silver plane I have ever seen. I was mesmerised. We got out of the car and stood on the ground outside and there were a group of men pulling on ropes to turn the plane round. And the rope broke and they fell in the dirt. I laughed, and that is why I remember the day. I don't remember what happened next.

AUDREY NUGENT

I was 10 years old and we lived on the corner of Bonegilla and Wyse Streets. Round the corner in Griffith Street lived the Allans. They were school teachers: Rene, Josie and Arthur. They came

along in their car very early in the morning because they had heard the wonderful news.

We were following the race at school. Each morning we got a report and we had a map and a light went on when the planes got to Karachi and another light when they reached Colombo. At that stage we had no idea, we were just waiting for them to arrive in Melbourne.

Overnight there had been a severe electrical and the Bungambrawatha Creek overflowed and flooded along Wyse Street. Arthur Allan came along in his car and we all piled in and went out to the race course; it was way out in the bush then, not in the centre of Albury.

My main memory is of all the fellows in their long coats. Men all wore long overcoats and hats in those days. All the luggage was being taken off the plane and stacked up against the fence. And I wondered what they were doing; of course they were lightening the load in the plane.

In 1950 I went overseas with a friend and we hitch-hiked through Holland on our way up to Scandinavia. When I mentioned I was from Albury the hospitality was overwhelming. I didn't think we would ever get out of Holland. It was just amazing, after fifteen years people knew so much about Albury and the *Uiver*.

CATHERINE WILSON

I was eight at the time and we were at my grandmother's place. We stood on the footpath outside and watched the plane fly round. We couldn't see the plane, just the light. My grandmother became alarmed and kept saying, "My God, it's going to hit the hills."

Next morning we went out to the race course where men were pulling the plane round. We watched for a couple of hours till the plane took off. That was enthralling.

I was frightened of planes. Several years before there was an air show at Alexandra Park; a couple of Tiger Moths I suppose. I was so scared my parents took me to Sandy Creek for the day.

RAY HARTWIG

I was a little boy at the time. It must have been 10 o'clock and I was in bed listening to the wireless. We could hear the aeroplane. It seemed to go on for hours, the plane always flying in the same direction. It would disappear then return a bit later from the other direction. It was too exciting to go to sleep.

Eventually, Mum said "Well, we better go out to the race course." So away we went Mum, Dad, my sister and me. I was in my pyjamas. At the race course the cars, with their headlights on, were lined up and the plane was just down. I saw two people get out, a man and a woman. The others must have been out already, because I didn't see them. They seemed very calm. Perhaps they were putting on a good show.

## AGM AGENDA

Minutes of the AGM 9.6.2010

President's Report

Treasurer's Report & Audited Accounts

Appointment of interim chairman to conduct election.

### Election of Office Bearers:

*Nominations in [ ]*

President [*Chris McQuellin*]

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

Secretary [*Helen Livsey*]

Treasurer [*Michael Browne*]

Minute Secretary [*Catherine Browne*]

Committee of 6 [*Bridget Guthrie, Doug*

*Hunter, Ray Gear, Jill Wooding, Eric*

*Cosser, Marion Taylor*]

### Appointments

Public Officer [*Helen Livsey*]

Honorary Auditor

Bulletin Editor [*Doug Hunter*]

### General business:

Setting of annual subscription

[*Recommendation: Single \$25; Family \$33;*

*Corporate \$50*]

### Meeting closure

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2010-2011

### ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Chris McQuellin June 2011

The Society has had a very full year with the energetic contribution of members engaged in local history publications, historical research, and excellent participation in our community events. We also have a number of our members active in the AlburyCity LibraryMuseum Volunteer program.

On a reflective note the Society lost esteemed past committee members Tom Jelbart OAM who passed away last October and Roddy Davies in December 2010.

Community activities: June Shanahan again had a very successful valuation day. 9 October - we are very grateful to the volunteers who continue to assist June on this day. We had a successful Murray Riverfront walk as part of Heritage Week in April; more recently, a talk to the members of Age Concern at St Luke's Parish Hall in Guinea Street; and on 4 June a community presentation in the Chinese section of the Pioneer Cemetery with Pauline Harbick.

Also earlier this year we had a great local

exhibition on Albury Base Hospital at the Library Museum. Special thanks to the team who catalogued the ABH collection - Doug Hunter, John Craig, Ann Brennan, Helen Livsey and Margaret Royle. Bridget Guthrie and her team did a fantastic job with a very well attended exhibition.

Helen Livsey again has done a great community service for us as our Research Officer in fielding many requests for assistance on historic locations, facts and family history.

I am also pleased to report that the Society has had a continuing very successful association with AlburyCity LibraryMuseum over the last 12 months.

A special thank you to Carina Clement, the Libraries and Museum team leader and her staff (including our own Carole and Bridget) for the provision of their support and use of the Museum and Library meeting rooms. All the LibraryMuseum staff have been extremely helpful to myself and our members.

The Society started the 2010-2011 year with a talk by Dot Hennessy and Henry Livermore on the Wodonga Place Adelyn Clothing Factory.

Over the year there was a broad spectrum of topics ranging from the September History Week "Faces in the Street" program: stories of five women in Albury (which was a great success at the LibraryMuseum), to the equally interesting History of the Albury Fire Brigade presented by Mark Trebley. The society finished the extended year with an excellent presentation by John Domenie from Florida in the United States – speaking on the donation to AlburyCity of the family's *Uiver* memorabilia.

Our guests during the year included Frank O'Rourke, Henry Livermore and as previously mentioned John and Douglas Domenie. There were a great variety of member speakers without whose enthusiasm and research capability we would not be the society we are today. Our active speaking members included talks on Rail Motors, Stately Homes, Builders, Tulips, Russell Drysdale and Walla Walla life and the Albury Surveyor Thomas Scott Townsend.

Our members who presented talks included Dr Bruce Pennay, Edward Dale, Dot Hennessy, Roma Freeman, Geoff Hamilton, Noel Jackling, Pauline Harbick, Carole Whitbourn, Ann Brennan, Jan Hunter, Joe Wooding, Ray Gear, Doug Hunter, Mary Anderson, Doug Royal, Marion Taylor, Howard Jones, Patricia Strachan, Jean Whitla, Arthur Newnham, Michael Browne and Chris McQuellin.

Membership remains healthy and it has been good to welcome a number of new members to the Society. Attendance at our monthly meetings

has increased too.

It is pleasing to report that our web site has become increasingly popular with over 18,000 individual enquiries to date. There has been a modest financial cost to the society with this new technology.

The A&DHS web site has some recurring maintenance and monthly costs which has had some impact on the financial position in our working account. The treasurer will give you a breakdown of our working account income and costs in his report. The Society Investment Account remains unaffected and stable.

The Society attracted some grant money for its participation in the Murray River waterfront heritage program and we used this income to support two of our largest expenses this year. The major project this year has been to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the A&DHS with the restoration project of the Hume Monument in the AlburyCity Botanic Gardens. This work was completed by Brosolo Monumental Masons in late May for a cost of \$3080.00. We (A&DHS) have also contributed to the part funding of an airfare to allow John Domenie to come to Albury from the USA to give his family 'Uiver' collection to Albury-City.

The A&DHS Committee has been again working consistently to bring informative guest speakers to our meetings and also to encourage member participation in historical research for the educational enhancement of all our members. Special thanks to Doug Hunter, the A&DHS *Bulletin* editor, in keeping us all well informed and to Ray Gear for his great work in getting the *Bulletin* to us with regular mail and e *Bulletins* during the year.

The new committee for 2011-2012 is to be formalised at the AGM. I hope that the coming year will allow for an informative and energetic program to be developed, and thank all of you for your support of the team during the year.

#### **CHINESE SECTION OF THE ALBURY PIONEER CEMETERY**

**Extract of the address given by Pauline Harbick**

There were small numbers of Chinese immigrating to Australia from very early days especially into Northern Australia where they worked as labourers. Larger numbers came from 1847 to work as indentured labourers on pastoral properties: clearing land, fencing and building dams. Significant numbers came in 1850s & 60s while the gold rush was on. The Californian Gold rush ended in 1855 and the focus turned to Australia where 12,396 Chinese arrived the following year. Most came from Canton/Pearl River delta in the SE part of China near Hong Kong.

Migrants were predominantly men; in 1861

there were almost 13,000 men in NSW and only two women. Many of the men had families in China and planned to return home. Between 1852 and 1889, there were 40,721 arrivals and 36,049 departures.

Australia's population trebled in the 20 years from 1851, from 430,000 to 1.7 million. By 1861 3.3% of the population was born in China. At Bendigo they made up more than 25% and an even greater proportion in Beechworth/Ovens area

#### LOCAL SITUATION

According to Barry McGowan, in September 1860 there were about 200 Chinese & 50 Europeans in Black Range (Lavington). The papers reported a row at Black Range involving 30 Europeans and 100 Chinese. There was a dispute between 2 Americans who accused Chinese of encroaching on their land. Three Chinese were wounded, one shot in thigh and hinder parts, and another had cuts to head. Europeans incurred minor cuts and bruises. The Chinese were left in possession of ground. By January 1861 Chinese numbers had declined to 100 indicating the itinerant nature of Chinese residency.

#### CHINESE SECTION OF CEMETERY

The Chinese section of the Albury Pioneer Cemetery is located mid-way along the eastern side of the cemetery. It is easily identified by a brick Burning Tower with a small altar type structure beside it. The Burning Tower was for the burning of grave money and other objects. Chinese bodies were not cremated. The graves themselves have small marble stones with Chinese characters engraved on them.

The large stone on the altar structure signifies the Deity associated with a particular locality, the god that looks after their local home town; significant, especially for those who live overseas, because the Deity is here to look after the spirits. It is a link back to their region. An ancestral Deity is also worshipped; this is the Deity of the clan. Paying respect to ancestors is a very important part of the culture.

The common grave stone was restored in 1911, possibly by the extended Chinese community from around Australia via the Hung Men Society, also known as the Society of Heaven and Earth. The symbol at the top is a bright light shining with 11 large rays. Eleven is a significant number to the Hung Men.

#### HUNG MEN or HEAVEN AND EARTH SOCIETY

This was a benevolent Society that sponsored immigrants, promoted their interests and helped them become established. They provided meeting places and lodging houses as well, and sometimes arranged funerals and transhipped the bones of the dead home to China. They helped to find em-



**Burning Tower located in Chinese section of the Albury Cemetery. Tower was for the burning of prayer money and paper facsimiles of objects for the deceased in the afterlife. A number of displaced grave stones have been placed on the roof of the Tower.**

ployment, write letters, send money home, take care of financial obligations and mediate in disputes.

Hung Men had connections with the SE region of China and operated much like an unofficial consulate. From 1911 it morphed into the Chinese Masonic Society.

There are strong indicators that the Chinese section of the Pioneer Cemetery was a burial ground for the Hung Men.

#### BURNING TOWER

We do not know when this tower was built, but it is likely that it was in the very early days. Beechworth towers have been dated at 1857. The tower was not used for cremation, but was a safe place for the ritual of burning spiritual tributes. Friends and relatives used it to burn paper and cardboard facsimiles of money, clothes and possessions to assist the dead in their journey to the afterlife. This custom particularly comes from the southern part of China and can still be seen today, especially outside a temple in Hong Kong. It is traditionally done in April when graves are tended. Incense is burned and fire crackers are set off to ward off evil spirits.

#### CEMETERY RECORDS

Albury Cemetery records give no details of Chinese burials prior to 1900. NSW Births Deaths

and Marriages (BDM) show at least 30 people with a name beginning with "Ah" that died in Albury between 1866 and 1900 and there would have been other deaths. There are 21 names in council records of those buried after 1900. But there are at least another 20 Ahs in BDM and are not in cemetery records.

#### GRAVE STONES

Chinese grave stones generally have 3 columns of writing; deceased's name in the centre, town of origin on the right while the left column sometimes has dates.

Sixteen stones in the Albury Chinese section have been transcribed, They use Chinese names that do not correspond to the names by which the deceased were known locally, so it has not been possible to match any of the grave stones with stories of people. We do know something of several of the men buried here however.

Jack Coon who was from Tai Shan and worked as a cook at Sodens Hotel for almost 30 years until his death in 1930 (aged 60). He was hoping to return to China, but was stricken with illness before he could make the trip. We know that he was married at age 28 and had a son and a daughter, presumed remaining in China. We know that he made a visit to China when he was aged 30 and returned 2 years later.

And there was Tommy Hoy, 32, fruiterer, who hanged himself in prison in 1911. He was serving time for stabbing his girlfriend 6 times in the head and neck after she changed her mind about marrying him.

Grave digger records between 1905 and 1916 note 12 burials in the Chinese section; 7 of the deceased were listed only as "Chinaman".

Pauline's full address will be included in the forthcoming Cemetery Walks Booklet.

#### **HUME MONUMENT REFURBISHMENT PROJECT 2011**

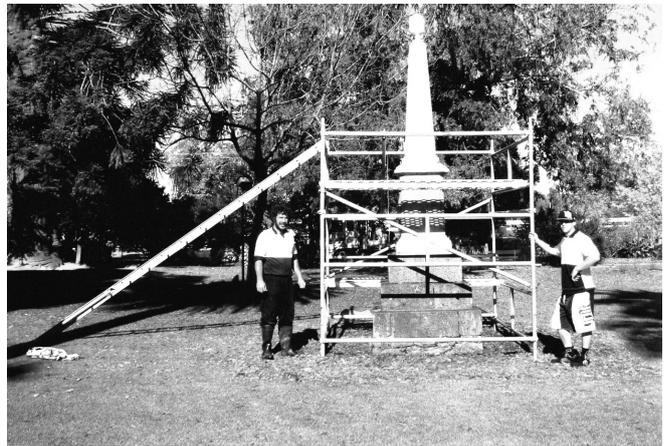
By Chris McQuellin

As part of the Society's 50th Anniversary celebration, the A&DHS commissioned a refurbishment of the Hume Monument situated in the southeastern corner of the Albury Botanic Gardens.

The North Albury firm of Brosolo Monumental Masons was commissioned to inspect and report to the Society with a quote. Paul and Tania Brosolo inspected and photographed the monument and issued a quote to the Society of \$2,800 plus GST.

The Society committee and general meeting accepted their quote and the following work was undertaken: The memorial was acid cleaned and jet washed with high pressure water. The deteriorating mortar joints were re-pointed and the rockwork at the base of the memorial was re-grouted. The costs associated with the work entailed the hire of a cherry picker hoist.

The restoration was completed by the end of May 2011 and after the final inspection by Joe Wooding



**Cleaning and repair of the Hume Monument in the Albury Botanic Gardens, May 2011.  
A&DHS 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary project.**

and Chris McQuellin, a discussion was held with gardens supervisor Paul Scannell who in due course will have a small garden planted around the memorial to protect its environs and to enhance its position in the gardens.

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

By John Craig

*Descent: Society of Australian Genealogists Journal*, March 2011.

- President, councillors and financial reports for year ending 2011.

*The Muster: Central Coast (Gosford) FHS Journal*, April 2011.

- Poor Law records can help in research.

*Wagga Wagga HS Newsletter*, April/May 2011.

- William Yeomans 1843-1920, famous old-time jockey.

*Stockman Hall of Fame Magazine*, March 2011.

- Outback Stockmen Show, April 2011;

- Events calendar 2011.

*History RAHS Magazine*, March 2011.

- Annual report 2010 & Calendar of events 2011;

- HMSS *Dromedary*, Governor Macquarie's ship to Australia in 1809.

*Ances-Tree: Burwood FHG Journal*, March 2011.

- German ship *Wilhelmsberg* to Australia 1855, Part 18.

#### **FAUGH A BALLAGH**

Readers might remember the informative talk given by members of the Albury Fire Brigade last year. The first fire engine was mentioned and its name was thought to be Fogga Bolla.

By chance, Jan Hunter came across a reference (in Jean Macdonald's book, *The First Ninety Years*, p. 51), to the first engine being named Faugh a Ballagh.

It is an Irish battle cry meaning Clear the Way, so an appropriate name for a fire engine on its way to a fire. It is easy to see how it might have been pronounced Fogga Bolla.

Faugh a Ballagh has been adopted as a motto by a number of military units in Ireland, USA and Australia.