



ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN



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SEPTEMBER 2016 **571**

REPORT ON AUGUST MEETING (10.08.2016)

At our last meeting a question was asked regarding the Time Capsule placed near the Turks Head Hotel in Wodonga Place. The capsule is still safely buried under a very large rock with a bronze plaque attached. It was placed there during the bicentennial year, 1988, and is to be opened in 2088. The committee has met and adopted a budget for the coming year. It was decided that an approach be made to the Hon Sussan Ley to have a plaque placed in the Mate's building, corner Dean and Kiewa streets, to record that this was the site of the official conference in 1944 to launch the Australian Liberal Party. This would rank alongside the Tree of Knowledge at Barcaldine in Queensland where the Labor Party was founded in 1891. Howard Jones advised that the Salvation Army Historical Society have asked permission to publish "Blood & Fire, Rotten Eggs and Gaol". Diane Edmondson presented her new book, "Tawonga Remembers", a valuable social and historical reference which documents the development of the town from the 1850s to the arrival of the State Electricity Commission for the Kiewa Hydro Electric Scheme in the 1930s and subsequent evolution to the present day. In the "fifty years ago this month slot" Ray Gear discovered that the Ritz Discotheque Au Go-Go opened to accommodate a new dance craze. The Albury Library-Museum has a dedicated team working hard to maintain the collection and many interesting programs. Collections officer Stephen Bigelow revealed some of his past. Marion Taylor then showed some photos found on eBay of Georges Frere from St Hilaire winery, Thurgoona.

NEXT MEETING WEDNESDAY

14 SEPTEMBER, 2016
**7.30pm at Commercial
Club Albury**

Scots School Albury is this year celebrating 150 years. Opened in Olive St in 1866. In 1972, Albury Grammar School and Woodstock Presbyterian Girls School amalgamated to form "The Scots School."
Speaker: Noelle Oke

ALBURY LIBRARY- MUSEUM

**ELECTRICITY IN
ALBURY SWITCHED ON
100 YEARS AGO
UNTIL 3 OCTOBER**

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ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

PO Box 822 ALBURY 2640

<www.alburyhistory.org.au>

For your reference A&DHS account details are:

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Honorary Life Members:

Howard Jones, Helen Livsey,
June Shanahan, Jan Hunter.

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Meeting Greeter: Jill Wooding

Bulletin dispatch: Richard Lee

Webmaster: Greg Ryan

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

Committee meets 3rd Wednesday of the month 5pm at the Albury LibraryMuseum.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Single: \$25

Family: \$33

Corporate: \$50

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



Old Tawonga Store

Tawonga is a small rural town situated at the foot of Mount Bogong in the beautiful Kiewa Valley. The first pioneers selected land in the area in 1869, and over the next eleven years they cleared the forests and built their homes. After these opening years, settlers began to arrive in numbers until the land between Yackandandah and Tawonga was selected. By the early 1880s the whole of the Kiewa Valley was settled.

The major changes in the development and growth of Tawonga occurred when the Hydro Electric Scheme (SEC) came to the top part of the valley in the late 1930s. This saw an influx of people seeking employment and as a result it opened up new opportunities for locals and business families in town.

I grew up on the family farm which was situated three miles on the northern side of the township of Tawonga. In the late 1800s, this was actually the centre of Tawonga, as the school, school house, recreation reserve and hall were all located opposite and in the vicinity of our farm.

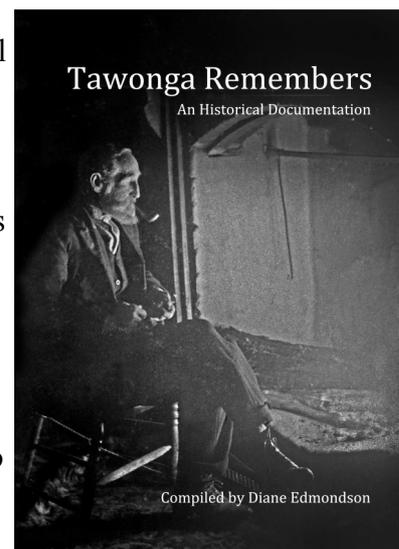
In 1912 a new school was built on donated land, three miles north of this location. At this time a wayside inn and butter factory had also been built, thus creating a new location for the centre of Tawonga.

I was a child of the 50s and as a result saw a very busy Tawonga with an increased population. This also meant an increase in school numbers and busy workforces for the Tawonga sawmill, tobacco industry and State Electricity Commission.

The wayside inn had changed hands and now operated as the Bogong Hotel. A bakery, butcher shop, café, post office, general store, hall, caravan park, tennis courts, two garages and new homes had all been built along the main road between 1940 and the late 1960s.

Today Tawonga is a very different place. The SEC has downsized, the tobacco industry ceased and the mill closed down. The butchers shop and café have both closed and the bakery and Bogong Hotel burnt down. (Bakery in the late 1960s and the Bogong Hotel in 2011.) School numbers have dropped, but they do have a new school.

The population of the township and outlying areas consists mainly of farming families, professional people and retirees.



Most history books that you see published are mainly about the early settlers and years in an area or town. History is made every day and the changes in society, environs and technology need to be recorded for future generations. I felt that Tawonga's story of evolution from the early days to 2015 needed to be documented for this very reason.



SEC Depot, Tawonga.

Photograph: Tawonga Remembers

TAWONGA REMEMBERS **BY DIANE EDMONDSON**

Tawonga has had seven historians that I know of. (All deceased except for one who is my Auntie Muriel Edmondson). My grandfather, Jim Edmondson, was one of these. After he passed away I found diary jottings and letters amongst his papers. These were filled with history of our area and information that he had received from his historian friends.

I felt it a shame that this information was never published, so in dedication him and the others, I vowed to continue their research and have it published. The book is now complete and it contains in-depth chapters about the town's buildings, education, community organisations, roads, transport, recreational activities, farming and historical events. It also contains notes, letters and dairy jottings from individual people. Overall there are 356 pages filled with historical information and images of the township and its people.

This book is a social and pictorial documentation that has been a community research project and one that has brought together people from all over the country.

Twelve months ago I started a FaceBook group as a way of communicating with the public about the progress of my book. Well, the interest has been absolutely over whelming. At present there are 523 people following the posts and comments that are left on the page. Some of these comments have been published in my book.

Even though the book has been completed I am using this group as a way of collecting history of areas in the Kiewa Valley. The book was launched on 3 September at the Tawonga Hall.

Books are available for purchase from the 4 September at a cost of \$60.00 from the following locations: Mount Beauty Museum, (situated at the Information Centre at Tawonga South), Mount Beauty Newsagent, Tawonga South Store, Tawonga Store and Mahoney's News agent in High Street Wodonga. They may also be purchased from me. Diane Edmondson 0428297373.

Photographer (Dyanne Photography, Wodonga), Artist, Historian and Funeral Celebrant. Diane was born in Yackandandah, and grew up on the family farm at Tawonga. After she left school she secured a traineeship as a photographer with McPherson's Studios in Albury under the guidance of Gustav Pottyondy. This was the beginning of a career that has spanned 46 years. Her interest in history began after she married John Ryder from Tawonga. The Ryder family were the first settlers in the top part of the Kiewa Valley. In 1980, as a member of the Tawonga Primary School Centenary Committee, she co-ordinated the street procession, and historical display at the school. She was elected president of the Upper Kiewa Valley Historical Society in 1981, and in 1982 she organised and hosted a reunion for the descendants of the Ryder family at her home. Over one hundred and seventy people attended this event from all over Victoria. In 2006 and 2010 she held two photographic exhibitions at Wodonga Arts Space. The first, titled Wedded History, documented the changes in photographic technology, style and fashion over a four decade period. The second exhibition was titled Salt, which is the cry of the stock men as they call their mob. This was a conceptual photographic exhibition which paid tribute to her grandfather Jim Edmondson, and his daughters Muriel and Isabel. Jim was a renowned cattleman of the Bogong High Plains. In 1960 he built Edmondsons' Hut on Mount Nelse. In 2011, as a member of the Back to Tawonga committee, Diane set up an historical display on the town in the Tawonga Hall. Diane realised that her fantastic collection of history on Tawonga needed to be preserved into a permanent resource for future generations, thus the publication of her latest project - Tawonga Remembers.



Dianne Edmondson Photo Courtesy: Border Mail

INTERPRETIVE PANELS OR PLAQUES IN ALBURY



Plaque at Kia Ora, Townsend St placed by A&DHS.

Do you know of a place in Albury where you think a plaque or interpretive panel would be appropriate? There are already some plaques and panels explaining the history of Albury in position around the city. For example over the years the Society has placed plaques at Elm Court (Higgins' Coach Factory) Townsend St, Murray Campus Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education, The Carriageway Smollett St, Lychgate at the Pioneer Cemetery, Tax Office (Farmers & Graziers, Exchange Hotel) Cnr Smollett &



Interpretive panel at Noreuil Park placed by AlburyCity.

Townsend, Kia Ora Townsend St, Model Store Cnr David & Wilson and the War Memorial. AlburyCity also has placed interpretive panels in the Noreuil Park vicinity. Plaques and panels take a variety of forms: bronze or enamel plaques affixed to buildings or rocks; or etched photographic panels on free standing steel supports. The latter are larger and contain more information. The Committee has received suggestions of other locations where a panel or plaque might be appropriate. These include the Albury Drill Hall site in Victoria Street, The Sand Hills in South Albury which was the original Albury burial site, and the site of the post-war RSL Settlement at Mungabareena. Are there other places you think should be considered? Please let Doug Hunter know where and why.

FRERE PHOTOGRAPHS

Grape pickers at St Hilaire vineyard, Thurgoona around 1910. They all look like very young boys, labouring for long hours for little money, in the days when children had to work hard to help their families survive.



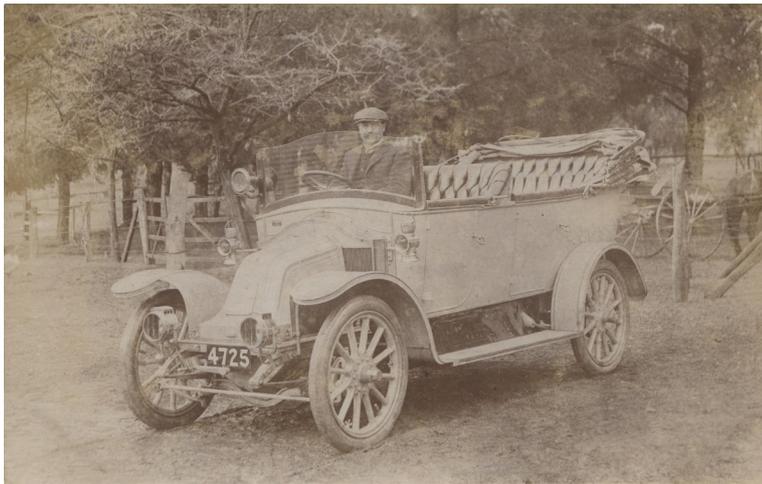
Madame Madeleine Frere with Father Patrick Hartigan also known as John O'Brien author of *Around the Boree Log* (published in 1921 to broad acclaim.) Born at Yass and ordained as a priest in 1903, Father Hartigan spent 7 years in Albury. He was one of the first curates in the State with a motor car and this is probably his car. He apparently had a life time love of motor cars and always had the best car in the district. He became the

Inspector of Schools for the diocese of Goulburn in 1910 and lived in a small cottage near the Thurgoona orphanage. Jane Plunkett remembers how, when she was a child her dad Jim Bell from Spring Park, Thurgoona would always call his car the Father Hartigan. He would yell out "come on kids we're going to town, go and jump in the Father Hartigan." The Table Top history book states that Mr & Mrs Frere had purchased a motor buggy about 1910 before cars were seen and here we have a photo of that machine in front of the St Hilaire Homestead, Thurgoona. It is a 1907 International Harvester, two cylinder, chain drive, air cooled machine.



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MEMBERSHIP FORM WAS SENT WITH JULY BULLETIN**





These original photographs were found for sale on eBay. When we hear the name Frere from St Hilaire we remember the story of the first champagne made by Monsieur Leonce Frere and the disastrous explosion of several thousand bottles due to the high temperatures in the cellars (as reported in the Sydney Mail, 1886). Leonce and Martha Frere had been brought to Albury by JT Fallon in 1875 to help manage his extensive vineyard and cellars. With them was their nine year old son Georges Pierre Frere. (Leonce's

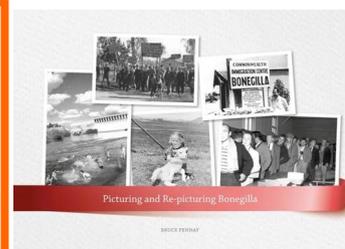
brother, Gustav Frere also emigrated.) After working for Fallon for twelve years Leonce purchased St Hilaire, a property of 92 acres which he fully planted to wine grapes. By 1886 he was said to be producing 2000 dozen bottles of wine and ramping up to 10,000 dozen bottles. His son Georges was fully involved in the wine production and growing. Leonce was quoted as saying he had changed his bottle label from L.Frere, St Hilaire Vineyard, Albury to L.Frere, St Hilaire with a resultant huge increase in sales as drinkers were prejudiced against colonial wines. In 1889, Georges or George aged 23, with his father and uncle selected 1230 acres of rough sandstone country adjoining the Georges River and Punchbowl Creek about 4 kilometres north-east of Campbelltown. He apparently owned a boat which was used to cross the river when it was high so in 1893 when a bridge was built it was called Freres Crossing. Unfortunately this grape growing venture was a failure for the family as the soil was totally unsuitable for grapes, it was said they had purchased the land sight unseen. While living there George married Madeleine Kelso and they returned to Albury, possibly in 1893 as George was then listed as an inspector for the Murray River Vine Diseases Board. In the years 1902 to 1903 George and Madelaine are often mentioned in the society pages staying at the Hotel Metropole, Sydney. An article in the Sydney Morning Herald of 1904 describes how train passengers pass through the pretty vineyards of Ettamogah, Valverde and St Hilaire before arriving in Albury. The Freres were buying all the grapes their neighbours would deliver at four pounds a ton. These growers included the Frauenfelder, Day, Mutsch, Dick, Schubach, Burke, Darcy and Lynch families. The Albury Banner wrote that St Hilaire was a very up to date winery with many mechanical improvements, they could crush up to 11 tons per day. There was a large dam with a windmill for water supply and a stone building measuring 120ft by 25ft with a cellar underneath. In 1905 George acted as an interpreter for a Frenchman in a court case involving the malicious wounding of a policeman. In 1906 Madeleine was noted as being a member of the Albury Dramatic Club performing in Albury theatre with a "splendid stage presence" in the Runaway Girl. George and Madeleine were both members of the Albury Operatic Society. George served as a juryman and as a delegate of the Newtown & Thurgoona Vine growers Association. The newspaper of 1909 describes George as "one of the most prominent and progressive vigneron in the State who has written many instructive and useful articles on the development of the wine industry. He is a member of the Council of NSW Winegrowers Association and council of the Agricultural Society of Albury." George stood for Albury Council that year and was duly elected. In 1910 the Governor of NSW visited Albury and motored out to St Hilaire in Mr Blacklock's car. George became Mayor of Albury in 1913, we believe for only 1 year. 1914 was a drought year and the phylloxera aphid destroyed many vines. In 1916 George was the convener of the YMCA at the Thurgoona Hall and wrote in favour of conscription. In 1921, Downy mildew attacked the vines. In 1936 George was fined for selling two bottles of wine without a licence. In 1945 his wife Madeleine died, I don't believe they had any children. The following year George sold St Hilaire and moved to Manly where he died in 1951, aged 95.

Special thanks to the Commercial Club Albury Ltd for supplying a meeting room for many years and also for their continued support. Please click on the logo to access their website.



CURRENT FINANCIAL, LIFE & HONORARY MEMBERS

Honor Auchinleck	Dianne Groch	Rupert Paech
Julie Ann Betteridge	R. & B.Haberfield	Michele Passant
Ron Boadle	Laurie Haberfield	Bruce Pennay
Marie Bollenhagan	Ray & Judy Harrison	D. & P. Petts
Ann Brennan	John Henwood	Narda Reid
Michael Browne	Frank Higgins	Greg & Cheryl Ryan
Ray Burdack	Geraldine Hocking	Ken Scholz
Vivienne Colley	Lee Howard	Patricia Scott
Marilyn Comitti	Doug & Jan Hunter	June Shanahan
Eric & Bronwyn Cossor	H. & H. Jones	Beverley Stewart
Leo & Jan Coyle	Steve & Carol Judd	Mavis Stokes
Edward & Kay Dale	Beryl Kurdian	Pat Strachan
Norm Douglas	Grace Langmead	Irene Strang
David & Lyn Dynan	Richard Lee	Val Symons
David Eagles	Harry Leggatt	Marion Taylor
Yelly Evenhuis	Margaret Lenahan	Gloria Trampusic
Roma Freeman	Dawn Lindner	Terrence Walsh
Ray Gear	Helen Livsey	P. & C. Whitbourn
Beverly Geddes	Rochelle McEvoy	Jean Whitla
Verna Gherashe	Arch McLeish	Doreen Widdison
Helen Glachan	Chris McQuellin	Rhonda Willmet
Margaret Gleeson	Brian Moriarty	Jill & Jo Wooding
Patricia Gould	Audrey Nugent	



Bruce Pennay's new book *Picturing and Re-picturing Bonegilla* traces several of the different stories projected on to or read from the former Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre. It presents 40 themed collages of pictures drawn from the government's publicity archive, from contemporary media and from the pictures which ex-residents have donated to the Bonegilla Collection at Albury LibraryMuseum.

JOURNEYING THROUGH THE JOURNALS (AVAILABLE AT THE LIBRARYMUSEUM)

'Ances - Tree' – Burwood – July' 16.
Helen Rose Ann Crofton (nee Milman) (1857-1937)

'Descent' – Society Australian Genealogists – June' 16. – (Online)
State Records NSW produces a Now and Then e-newsletter, which provides information about new research tools and other activities taking place at State Records. You can subscribe online and the e-newsletter can be regularly sent to you.
Go to: www.facebook.com/srnsw

'WWDHS' - Wagga Wagga – June/July' 16. Aug/Sept' 16.
Dr Foon Kee – well known Chinese citizen of early Wagga.
New book published by Geoff Burch that traces the establishment of Ardlethan.

A NEW HISTORY OF ALBURY:

Your committee is considering whether to work towards producing a large-scale, definitive History of Albury by 2024, the bicentenary of the Hume & Hovell expedition. It would need to cover the indigenous history of the area, both distant and recent, and the many aspects of life here since white occupation began. Typically, city histories address settlement, law and order, education, health, transport, religion, politics, local government, industry, farming, sport, the military involvement, the Great Depression and so on. To assist with preliminary planning, Howard Jones asks for suggestions for particular subjects or themes that members think should be included before the society determines who should edit such a monumental work (requiring several writers) and how it should be funded.
Email Howard on hjones45optusnet.com.au or phone 0447165069.

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