

## EARLY BAND MUSIC IN ALBURY, 1855-1925

*Edited talk by Greg Ryan (presented at A&DHS General Meeting, October 2015 and reprinted from A&DHS Bulletin No 562)*

The story of early band music in Albury is an interesting one with lots of “twists and turns” along the way and several very interesting personalities.

### **The Earliest Recorded Brass Band in Albury**

The first references to band music in Albury were reported in 1855. On October 2, 1855 the steamer *Albury* was the first riverboat to reach Albury from South Australia. Four days later, Captain Johnson took 300 Albury people several miles upstream while “a German band on board discoursed excellent music.”

Then on November 17, 1855, reported in the *Goulburn Herald* “Mr Brown’s Brass Band,” led a procession to celebrate the lifting of custom duties across the Murray. But is this Robert Brown, Albury’s first European settler? The article leaves the question unresolved. We are told that the band started in “Mr Brown’s amphitheatre,” that there were “200 horsemen, besides 10 or 12 gigs or carriages” involved, that Brown’s brass band had eight musicians, they moved to Wodonga, crossing the Murray by punt then returned with a dray loaded and “brought back in triumph without payment of dues.” With “tremendous cheering,” the party proceeded to the Hume Inn for refreshments. Then we are told that the “talented company left town for the diggings.”

### **Entertainment in the Middle 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

As the gramophone was not invented by Edison until 1877, and with no radio, entertainment was provided by family and friends around the piano and by community bands etc. Traditional forms of music/entertainment were brought by settlers from their homeland. Much of this was music, often in a military style, played by German and British settlers. Every town in England and probably Germany as well, had their own band and even factories, coal mines and so on had their own bands.

The population of Albury in 1856 was 645, but obviously there was some musical talent in the 645. We find many references in local newspapers to events in Albury that included band music: bands marched in the streets and on show grounds, at sporting events, at church functions, performed from balconies of hotels, played in bandstands, theatres, concert halls, and in funeral processions.

### **Non Brass Band Music**

Before looking at brass bands, a quick look at other music providers. In March 1857, a German String Band arrived in Albury and in May the following year, a German Harmonic Society was formed with 25 members.

**ALBURY.**

On Thursday the 1st instant, a procession was formed by a committee got together for the occasion of celebrating the entire abolition of customs' duties on the Murray River, and by the time they started from Mr. Brown's amphitheatre, (the place fixed on) there could not have been less than 200 horsemen, besides ten or twelve gigs and carriages, and as they were headed by Mr. Brown's brass band of eight musicians, followed by the whole of his large equestrian company, the horses being richly caparisoned, the whole caused an excitement we never remember to have seen displayed in this our usually remarkably quiet town. The procession moved by punt to Wodonga, where a dray was loaded with goods and brought back in triumph without payment of duty and was greeted on the Sydney side with tremendous cheering; after which the whole cavalcade proceeded to the Hume Inn, where refreshments on the most liberal scale had been provided for one and all, at the conclusion of which Mr. Brown was called for, who after receiving the thanks of the committee for the generous manner in which he had contributed to the day's amusement, was greeted by the populace with three cheers. In the evening, according to previous arrangement, the performances at the circus were under the patronage of the acting committee, who had generously given £20 to allow the children of the town to witness the entertainment, and by the time the performances commenced the amphitheatre was so crowded that there could not have been less than 1000 persons present. On the following morning the whole of the talented company left town for the diggings; and we can only hope they may receive the same liberal encouragement they met with from the good folks of Albury.

*Goulburn Herald*  
November 17, 1855

There were fife & drum bands in Albury, but they seemed to struggle. In an article the *History of Albury Town Band*, in the *Albury Banner* of November 2, 1923, it was reported that:

At functions such as sports gatherings, the music was supplied by Hugh Stewart's Fife and Drum Band.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/99440494>

An article in the *Border Post* reports a Fife and Drum Band in February 1869 and this was probably Hugh Stewart's Fife and Drum Band. A letter from William H Plummer, who was born in 1862 and writing to the *Wodonga & Towong Sentinel* in January 1934, supports that notion. He recalled:

The first Albury band I remember was conducted by Mr. Stewart. It was a fife and drum band with about 15 performers. My father lifted me up to see through the window of the practice room in the old Albion Hotel. It was situated about where Dr. Woods' private residence now stands.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/69614814>

Thirty years after Hugh Stewart's band, in January 1899 the *Albury Banner* reported the "debut of the Albury Drum and Fife Band" at the Botanic Gardens, Mr Joseph Helm in charge, with about 1000 persons in the audience. Then in April 1912, again in the *Banner*:

The Proposed Drum and Fife Band. — The proposal to form a drum and fife band in connection with the Albury Cadet forces has been very favourably received by both the cadets and the residents of the town .... many of the young soldiers have expressed a desire, to join the band, it is not likely any time will be lost in making a start.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/101201957/10905035>

### **Albury Amateur Dramatic Club**

In 1859, the Albury Amateur Dramatic Club formed and performed in late 1859 and into the early 1860s. Productions advertised included *Two Heads are Better than One*, and *Irish Tiger* with a "Musical Melange Comprising both Vocal and Instrumental Novelties." The "instrumental novelties" were provided by just three musicians.

### **Albury Volunteer Band**

The Albury Volunteer Band was the first organised local brass band. Dr Andrews in his *History of Albury 1824-1895* recalled:

In May 1864 we find the first record of 'The Albury Band.' Dr. Barnett was president; Geo. Day, treasurer; J. C. Garnett, secretary; and with Messrs L. Solomon and I Davis, formed the committee.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/101193579>

In *Butler & Brooke's National Directory of Victoria, 1865-1866*, it is recorded that the bandmaster Mr I (Isaac) Davis had a store, the 'Fancy Repository' in Townsend St. We are told in the *Border Post* of June 10, 1864, that their first practice attracted "14 members and one honorary member and the fees and subscriptions were paid" and "instruments were ordered and paid for." In an article in the *Ovens & Murray Advertiser* in June 1865, we are told about a fund raising concert for the band:

CONCERT IN AID OF THE ALBURY VOLUNTEER BAND. A concert in aid of the above was given on Wednesday evening last, at the Exchange Theatre, Albury, by several gentlemen amateurs. .... The programme, Part 1st, consisted of glees, songs, duets and operatic selections, and the Volunteer Band performed several pieces with exceedingly good taste under their able conductor, Mr. Davis ....

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/112912176>

### **The Albury Town/Brass Band**

It appears that the Albury Volunteer Band had folded in the late 1860s and there was no band in Albury in the early 1870s. In a letter to the *Ovens & Murray Advertiser* in May 1873 a correspondent writes:

Considering the population of Albury, to say nothing of the district of which it is the centre, it is not altogether creditable that it should have to go to other towns for a band for festive occasions. With the number of lads and young men permanently settled in the town, there ought to be no difficulty in organising a drum and fife band or even a brass band .... We would suggest that an attempt should be made to organise an efficient band of musicians, whose services would be available on all public occasions; if properly set about, it is bound to succeed.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/197047139>

It was also recorded in the *Albury Banner* that Mrs King of the Rose Hotel engaged the Eldorado Brass Band on New Year's Eve, 1872, to play for her patrons.

So when did the Albury Town Band form? Albury City Band website quotes 1867 as the year. Referring again to the November 1923 article, the *History of Albury Town Band*, in the *Albury Banner* written by 'Baritone,' he states:

It was in July, 1873, when the Albury Town Band—then known as the Albury Brass Band—was established. The first bandmaster was a Mr Gladow (the Professor). The band was numerically weak, made up as follows:— Mr Gladow, who had a small boot shop in Kiewa street, Messrs. Geo. Brunner, Edmund Walters, John Sharp, Charlie Jackson, John Connors, E Dunn, Scott and Mick Brumm.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/99440494>

Two weeks after the 1923 article appeared, a Mr J Lambourn of Spotswood Vic wrote to the *Albury Banner* pointing out that the history article:

is in parts not correct, I was a member of the original band and ought to know .... the band consisted of four members, including Mr Gladow, the bandmaster, two brothers, August Harbriecht (bass), William Harbriecht (cornet) and myself (baritone) .... we practised in a hut in the centre of Mr Stassen's vineyard, Eastern Hill.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/99439098>

Charles Gladow had been a bootmaker in Clare, South Australia (1855-59), then in 1861 was a publican in South Australia. After some time in Albury, he left in 1875 and formed a band in Benalla, then in July 1878 we hear in the Echuca newspaper, the *Riverina Herald* that "Herr Gladow, Professor of Music" was advertising for brass band members in Echuca. He died in Melbourne in March 1889 aged 73.

The Albury Brass Band was not subsidised by the town and band members were not happy as outlined in their letter of October 1874 to the *Albury Banner*. They pointed out that they have their own instruments to a value exceeding £30, and some instruments are purchased with subscription money from townspeople. However Wagga Band has instruments paid for and the bandmaster is paid is £2 10s per week. They also point out that Mr Gladow is the entire reason that Albury has a band.

The *Albury Banner* records that the first engagements of the Albury Town/Brass Band were performances on Monday and Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> November 1873 at the *Banner* office for the Independent Church. Many sources quote the railway opening as the first engagement but that was one week later when they played at the Melbourne to Wodonga railway opening on November 19, 1873.

After Charles Gladow left Albury, John Connors was the new bandmaster, then the five Helm brothers joined the band with Philip Helm the new bandmaster. The band from this time made rapid progress, and as the town grew in population, so also did the band grow in strength.

### **Border City Band or Billson's Band**

In 1881, Albury had a second band, Billson's or the Border City Band. Their first performance was from balcony of Rose Hotel, on Christmas Eve 1881. The *Ovens & Murray Advertiser* of December 29, 1881 reported:

.... until Christmas Eve, no idea was formed as to the capabilities or musical attainments of this band of performers, which surprised the townspeople of Albury by the beautiful and attractive music discoursed on the eve of Christ's nativity. The balcony of the Rose Hotel was the spot chosen for the first public display of the musical talent of the performers, and before the first tune had finished the footpaths and street were crowded by a mass of people both surprised and astounded that a band could be brought together in such compact musical form as the Border City Brass Band, and at the finish they received such an ovation as would have made the heart of a professional bound with delight.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/200457576>

Their bandmaster was Gideon Townsend – his obituary in the *Albury Banner* of May 4, 1917 recorded that he was born in Trowbridge, Wiltshire, England, he served in the Imperial Army in England, India & Canada, and was employed by NSW railways as a 'loco inspector.'

It seems that there was a friendly rivalry between the two Albury bands. The *History of Albury Town Band*, in the '*Albury Banner*' in November, 1923 refers to Albury's first band contest, held:

in 1882 at the showgrounds — the two local bands competing. The Albury Brass Band was successful. At the contest the Albury Brass Band included the following players:— Phil Helm (conductor) first cornet; George Helm, first cornet; John Connors, clarionette; Jacob Helm, baritone; Joe Helm, E Flat bass; John Helm, clarionette; Fred Kidd, first tenor; Jack Howard, euphonium; E Arthur, second tenor; Joe Eck, bass drum; R Denny, side drum. The players in the Border City Brass Band were as follows:— J D Brooker (first cornet); H Stasses, first cornet; J Barber, W H Plumber and T H Day, first cornets; J Roy, first tenor; J W Baker, second tenor; W B Wilson, first baritone; James Higgins, second baritone; M Frew, tenor trombone; G H Billson, euphonium; G Townsend (conductor) euphonium; G Gehrig, bass; J Hayhope, bass drum; G Bird, side drum. The pieces played were quick march "Dainty Darling," waltz "Kildare," and a selection from "Martha." The judges were H and C Fietz and L Iverson. Subsequent to the contest just mentioned the following players joined the Border City Brass Band: Thomas Plummer, T Everett, Fred Stassen, Phil Gehrig and Ted Plummer.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/99440494>

The *Ovens & Murray Advertiser* reported in June 1882: "united Albury Brass Bands played" at a football game between employees of two Albury factories (Selle's & Messrs Higgins and Baker's)

### **Albury Premier Brass Band**

But in time, differences arose within the ranks of the Albury Town Band. In 1884, Philip Helm and the rest of the Helm brothers left and formed the Albury Premier Brass Band. Later in 1884, Philip Helm left and started the Benalla Mechanics Brass Band, and his brother Joseph took over as bandmaster of the Albury Premier Brass Band. The last reference to Albury Premier Band under bandmaster Joseph Helm appeared in the *Ovens and Murray Advertiser* in March 1898, playing at the Bethanga Recreation Ground. In about 1890, most band members moved over to the Albury Town Band.

### **First Professional Bandmaster**

In 1886 Daniel Barret Pogson became the first professional bandmaster of the Albury Town Band. He was born in 1841 in Huddersfield, Yorkshire, England and was quite an interesting character. The story of his arrival in Albury is of interest – his obituary in the *Albury Banner* of October 8, 1909 relates the story: there was something of the romantic in the way in which he came to Australia and became associated with Albury. He was bandmaster at

<p><b>M</b> ECHANICS' INSTITUTE, ALBURY</p> <p><b>GRAND PROMENADE CONCERT</b></p> <p>BY</p> <p><b>BELLINI'S ORCHESTRA,</b></p> <p>ASSISTED BY THE</p> <p>ALBURY TOWN BAND,</p> <p>Under the Baton of Mr D. B. Pogson.</p> <p>THURSDAY, 18TH APRIL.</p> <p>The following ladies and Gentlemen Amateurs have kindly consented to assist, viz.:— Mesdames Taylor, Vipan, and Miss Watts, and Messrs Simonsen, Sims, Hindle, and Vipan.</p> <p><b>GRAND SELECTIONS BY THE TOWN BAND.</b></p> <p>Splendid Solos and Duets with Orchestral Accompaniment; also, Violin and Cornet Obligatos.</p> <p>The Hall Beautifully decorated.</p> <p>ADMISSION, 2s.</p> <p>H. J. VIPAN, Hon. Sec.</p> <p>N.B. —SEATS PROVIDED FOR EVERYONE.</p>
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Wodonga & Towong Sentinel  
April 18, 1889

Queenstown, in South Africa, when he fell in with half-a-dozen musical Bohemians, who agreed to tour the world. They set out, and arrived in Australia in 1885. They went up Daylesford way, and in due course came up through Wodonga to Albury. This was in 1886. They were playing in the street one night, when a ball was in progress at the Mechanics Theatre. Mr. Keightley, who was P. M., here at the time, was running the ball, and when he heard the beautiful music of the travelling quartet, he instructed Mr. F. Simmons (who was custodian of the Mechanics then, as now) to call them over. The players took an engagement for the function, and the upshot of the incident was that Mr. Pogson remained in Albury for seven years, as conductor of the Town Band.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/132465704>

Members of the band in Daniel Pogson's time included: W H Ashby, W Brown, James Maguire, G W Dinsmore, James Molloy, M Brumm, W Bailey, W J and Harry Lester, W Carter, H Brunner, Tom O'Connor, James Allen, Becker, Dave Doughton, W Hanna, Duckworth, G Richardson, F Clarkson, M Donovan, J Scanlan, Fred Blacklock, Stevens, A Kelton, T and P Quinlan, J McIntyre, Tom Bray, Joe Eck, John Connors and F Wise.

Over the years, the Albury Town Band competed in many band competitions. To highlight just two, the 1888 Intercolonial Centenary Band Contest was held to commemorate the centenary of Australia, held at the site which was soon to become Centennial Park in Sydney. Pogson took 26 competitors and the band finished ninth in a big field of bands from NSW, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. The *Australian Town and Country Journal* of April 11, 1891, reported:

The Albury Town Band.—This band, which has been described as one of the finest in New South Wales, on Easter Monday won a band contest, which its members engaged in at Benalla. The judge, Mr. Warnecke, of Melbourne, was especially complimentary in his remarks congratulating the bandmaster on his success, and said that he never expected to hear such a band in country town. The prize which the band won was a silver cornet and £20.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/71251329>



Albury Town Band 1887  
D B Pogson second from right, front row

In 1893 Daniel Pogson left Albury for Paraguay with the first batch of emigrants as part of the "New Australia" movement. This was a movement hoping to set up a socialist utopian colony in Paraguay. Pogson with his wife and six children left Australia on the *Royal Tar* with the first batch of emigrants in July 1893.

### **Albury Botanical Gardens Rotunda**

On Sunday, November 23, 1890, the first recital from the Botanical Gardens' bandstand was given by the Albury Town Band. In good weather, recitals were given regularly on weekday evenings and on Sunday afternoons. The bandstand fell into disrepair and was restored in late 1978 at the instigation of the Albury & District Historical Society. It was re-opened on February 19, 1979, the centenary of death of Robert Brown, but it never was large enough for the band to fit comfortably. The second bandstand on Dean Square, saw its first performance on April 11, 1913. In 1964 it was demolished to make way for Albury Civic Centre.

### **Albury Grand Orchestra**

Another interesting character was Frederick Edward Quintrell, who arrived in Albury in April 1899. He was only about 21 years old when he arrived, having been born in 1878 in Moonta, a mining town in South Australian, known as "Little Cornwell." Frederick played violin and cello and at age 19 he was a conductor for JC Williamson. Before his arrival in Albury, he had been first violinist with "Sign of the Cross Company" a theatre company that performed across Australia.

In June 1899, Quintrell formed the Albury Grand Orchestra and their first performance with 30 performers was held at the Mechanics Institute on June 28, 1899. This concert also included a vocal number by Mr Charles Schmiedt of the Albury Hotel singing "The perfect life." As the Albury Grand Orchestra was not a brass band, it was not in opposition to Albury Town Band and they did on occasions perform with the Albury Town Band.

Quintrell also formed an "Albury Harmonic Society" in 1899, "Albury Philharmonic Society" in 1902 and an "Albury Operatic Society" in 1902. Charles Schmiedt's daughter Mary, a soprano, performed at Quintrell concerts and in 1903 she became Mrs Quintrell. Frederick produced many musical comedies in Albury including "San Toy," "Runaway Girl," and "In Town."

The Quintrells left Albury in 1906. Frederick moved to America and had a successful career as a conductor in New York – he is said to have had a big role in developing cinema orchestra in America. Mary Quintrell died in Melbourne in 1921. In 1923, Frederick Quintrell was conducting in Sydney at the Tivoli Theatre "recently back from America," married to Miss Nellie Strong, an actress. He continued his distinguished career until he was aged into his late 70s, being Musical Director of the Rockdale Musical Society from 1949-1957. Frederick died in Sydney in August 1962, aged 84.

Frederick Quintrell's younger brother William was publican of the George Hotel in Dean street Albury in 1908 and a prominent musician in Albury and beyond. He was later musical director at the Tivoli Theatre Adelaide, then Melbourne and finally Sydney.

As recorded in Albury & District Historical Society Bulletin 22, March 1963, A&DHS received: "From Mrs. E. Quintrell (Sydney), silver-mounted ebony baton, presented to her husband, late Mr. Frederick Quintrell, by Albury Philharmonic and Orchestral Society in August, 1902." The baton is now part of the AlburyCity Collection.

### **The Albury Town Band after Daniel Pogson**

In 1893, after Daniel Pogson had left for Paraguay, Jack Laughton took over as bandmaster “until the position was filled” and he was still there in 1904 when he resigned – he was born in 1868 in Casterton, Victoria. In 1900 he purchased Lampitt’s foundry in Townsend St where he had been apprenticed, and he died in 1947 in Ashfield, Sydney.

In April 1904 James Drury, a New Zealander, took over as bandmaster. He had only been bandmaster in Hobart since September 1903 so I suspect that Albury folk should have been suspicious that there could be trouble ahead. Later that same year, on October 18, 1904 the *Border Morning Mail* reported a petition put to the Albury Town Band committee meeting, signed by 13 bandsmen:

We the undersigned members of the Albury Town Band regret to inform you that we refuse to continue under the baton of Captain Drury on the ground that he is not, in our opinion, capable of filling that position satisfactorily; and also to his notion in bringing unproven charges of disrespect and improper language against an old and esteemed member of the band .... Next followed a counter petition signed by 14 members .... We the undersigned ... hereby express our confidence in the ability of Mr Jas Drury as conductor, and are ready to support him by playing under his baton and assist him in every way possible ....” There was lengthy discussion of the crisis before the meeting was adjourned.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/118742159>

Four days later the *Border Morning Mail* reported on a further committee meeting:

AMICABLE COMPROMISE EFFECTED .... All were desirous of giving the bandmaster a further trial. The resolution had been passed unanimously. The bandsmen were willing to sink all past differences and unite with the bandmaster in endeavouring to bring the band up to the standard which all well-wishers of the band would like them to attain .... it was agreed that no time limit should be fixed ....

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/118744943>

James Drury resigned in February 1905, leased the Star Hotel and formed a Jindera Band.

Then a new interesting character joins the picture. In June 1905, Thomas Edward Bulch conducted for the first time – he was the new bandmaster on a salary of £130 a year. Bulch was born in 1863 in New Shildon, Durham, England and came to Australia as a 20 year old in 1883. He was one of the best known bandsmen in Australia. He was also a noted composer of band music, published in Australia, Britain and US.

### **Albury Citizens’ Band**

Then in 1905 Albury has two bands again with the formation of the Albury Citizens’ Band (also referred to as Albury Citizens’ Military Band) – James Drury was secretary, Frederick Quintrell bandmaster:

ALBURY CITIZENS & DISTRICT BAND. A meeting was held last night at Drury’s Star Hotel, Albury, to complete arrangements for the formation of a brass and military band, to be known as the Albury Citizens and District Band. Mr J. S. Drury occupied the chair, and the following playing members were enrolled: Messrs. S. Guy, H. Guy, G. Hodge, J. Rogan, A. E. Sigg, W. Bailey, H. Sigg, Bert Sigg, W. Bailey, H. Brumm, Graham, L. Hasler, G. Rossiter, J. Ballard, W. Greenwood, N. Rial, W. Smith, C. Wilkinson, C. Lewis, H. Kalbrunner, R. Royal and J. Arnold. Mr Drury proposed that Mr. F. E. Quintrell be asked to act as conductor.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/108978224>

But all was not well, there were tensions within bands and rivalries between bands. On May 12, 1905 the *Border Morning Mail* published the Albury Town Band Annual Report:

As members are aware the internal workings of the band have not been influenced by that harmony conducive to success .... the attendance of band members has been very unsatisfactory ....

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/108961668>

Five days later, a letter to the *Border Morning Mail* from Jas Drury referring to Albury Citizens' Band:

The personnel of the band is composed of several ex-bandsmen of the Albury Town Band augmented by some splendid 'outside' talent, which has recently settled in the town. These instrumentalists consider that Albury is quite large enough to support two bands, and where friendly rivalry, coupled with strong musical ardour for emulation exists, a high standard of proficiency is the usual outcome. When only one band is in existence the reverse is generally the rule. The combination, however, is not to be regarded as 'opposition' or in the least antagonistic to the existing Town Band; rather is it hoped that the presence of a second band will resuscitate the interest of many more old players who have dropped into obscurity for want of judicious handling.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/108966458>

This letter was followed three days later by a letter to the *Border Morning Mail* from Frederick Quintrell stating that the Albury Citizens' Band was not in opposition to Albury Town Band.

Then in June 1905, John Wilkinson was quoted in the *Border Morning Mail*:

with a population of 7000 or 8000 people, there was plenty of room for two bands .... the advent would institute a spirit of rivalry .... to raise the standard of band music.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/108967204>

And finally in July 1905 in a report in the *Albury Daily News*:

The surprising admission was made that the Town Band, after debating the fact that the Citizens' Band had previously arranged and announced their concert for the Newtown Orphanage, deliberately decided to put on and advertise an opposition performance. Where is the Town Band's much vaunted public spirit....?"

In 1906 an Easter Festival Brass Band Contest was held at the Albury Sports Ground. There were five competing bands — Albury Town Band, Albury Citizens' Band, Wagga Citizens' Band, Border Brass Band (Corowa), and Wangaratta Town Band. The Band Championship was won by the Albury Town Band, and the Quickstep competition was won by Albury Citizens' Band.

But still bandsmen were not happy. On January 21, 1907, the Albury Citizen's Band was advertising for bandmaster to replace James Drury, honorary bandmaster. The *Border Morning Mail* reported:

The committee of the Albury Citizens' Band is advertising in both Melbourne and Sydney papers for a bandmaster to succeed Mr. Jas. Drury, who has been an honorary conductor for some months. In the meantime Mr. H. Brumm is acting temporarily as conductor. It has been stated that the band for some time has not been a happy family and hence there were not full attendances at practices. The proposal now is to appoint a salaried conductor. The conditions specify that applicants must be first class cornet players. Rumour hath it that Mr. T. E. Bulch, conductor of the Albury Town Band, will be among the applicants for the position, and that he will probably secure the appointment.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/109034031>

In February it was announced that Mr M C Nutall of St Arnaud was appointed to the position.

Nor were things going smoothly at the Albury Town Band. On March 27, 1908 the *Border Morning Mail* reported:

At a meeting of the Albury Town Band committee on Wednesday night it was decided to dispense with the services of the conductor (Mr T E Bulch) ....

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/132488562>

Newspaper articles indicated that not all were happy with the dismissal. A letter to the *Border Morning Mail* of March 31 from "a subscriber" expressed concern:

Sir, I hear Mr Bulch has been given no reason as to why his services were dispensed with by the committee of the Town Band beyond the bare words 'on account of the condition of the band' .... the letter from the president did not reach him till after he had read the news in the public press ....

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/132478653>

Three days after the dismissal of Bulch in a letter to the *Border Morning Mail* from Harris & Wittmer, Honorary Secretaries of Albury Citizens' Band we hear:

Sir, We wish to contradict a rumour that is current re Mr T E Bulch and the Citizens' Band. In fairness to Mr Bulch we wish to state that there is no foundation whatever in the rumour that Mr Bulch is to take the conductorship of the Citizens' Band ....

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/132480766>

Then two weeks later the *Border Morning Mail* reported:

Albury Citizens' Band performed at Newtown .... this was the first appearance of the band under the conductorship of Mr T E Bulch ....

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/132478865>

Bulch left Albury in 1910 to become bandmaster for Geelong City Band before opening a music store and publishing business in Brunswick, Melbourne in 1913. In 1920 he moved to Sydney to work for Palings and died in Mascot in November 1930.

So what happened to Albury Citizens' Band? They were still going in October 1912, performing at the Albury Grammar School sports with Mr Wittmer conducting. According to the *Albury Banner* article, *History of the Albury Town Band, 1923*, Albury Town Band and Albury Citizens' Band had merged in 1912.



**Albury Town Band - South Street Band Contest, Ballarat, October 1911**

Back Row: Percy Edwards, Bill Wren, Norm Bray, Mick Abbott, George Luhrs, F Nesbitt, Harry Brumm, Norm Brumm, Alf Weatherby

Middle Row: Harry Lester, Arthur Burton, Jim Wilson, Bob Comans, Harry Selle, Jack Roach, Charlie Carter, Jack Delaney, Charlie Angel

Front Row: Harry Hoysted, J McCulloch, Bill Lester, Percy Pogson (bandmaster), Albert Chubb, Arthur Brumm, Darcy Stewart, Hugh Darke

Boy in Front: Les Pogson

### **Pogsons Back with the Albury Town Band**

After Bulch's dismissal in March 1908, Daniel Pogson was induced to return to Australia from South Africa and he took over the band. However it is reported that his health was not good even when he arrived, and he died in Albury in October 1909. His son, Percy Pogson, was born in South Africa in 1881 and came to Albury with his parents in 1886. In early 1910, he was living and working in America and he was invited and he accepted the position of bandmaster of

Albury Town Band, taking up duties in September 1910. What followed were eleven years of relative harmony within the band, and only one band in Albury after 1912.

In July 1916, the old Albury Fire Station was handed over to Albury Town Band as headquarters and the building moved from Dean Square to the corner of Volt and AMP Lane.

### **More unease within the Albury Town Band**

Percy Pogson continued to lead the band until 1921, when a disagreement occurred among some of the junior members of the band. The *Albury Banner* of September 30, 1921 reported:

The players and members of the committee of the Albury Town Band have not been a happy family for some time past, and the result has been that the band has not stood up to its obligations and the players have become indifferent.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/102447933>

One week later the *Banner* reported:

TROUBLES OF ALBURY TOWN BAND. The people of Albury are endeavouring to prevent the dissolution of the local band, which apparently has lately been dealing more extremely in discord than harmony. Following the resignation of the committee, bandmaster and bandsmen, a public meeting was held on Monday night in the endeavour to set matters straight. The Mayor of Albury (Ald Smithenbecker) said there had been a great deal of ill-feeling between bandsmen and the bandmaster for a considerable time.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/102449976>

Pogson was handed his notice and the committee resigned. A public meeting was called and a fresh committee was appointed. Applications for new bandmaster were called (Pogson's application was not considered) and Percy Copp was appointed bandmaster in November, on a salary of £5 per week. Then the *Albury Banner* reported on November 25:

The troubles of the Albury Town Band are not yet over. After holding the position of bandmaster only a week, Mr Copp has returned to Melbourne .... The former bandmaster, Mr. Pogson, has not allowed the grass to grow under his feet. He has got together a private band of sixteen performers.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/102439738>

Some of the senior members of the band left with Pogson – he had had his own 'Pogson's Orchestra/Band' since 1911. Percy Pogson died in Forbes NSW in October 1931 after three years as bandmaster of the Forbes Municipal Band.

In December 1921 Jack Jarvie, who had been bandmaster at Tocumwal, was chosen as bandmaster and he remained until September 1940 when he resigned to enlist as a sergeant in the Second AIF and he became bandmaster of the 2/23<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Band.

After Albury was proclaimed a city on December 18, 1946, the Albury Town Band became the Albury City Band.

What about Pipe Bands? The *Albury Banner* reported that on February 9, 1923 the first meeting to form the Albury & District Highland Pipe Band was held and the band formed soon after.

There is a lot more that could be said on the history of band music in the first 100 or so years of European settlement in our district. Band music was of huge importance to the people of Albury. When Albury was growing from a small village to become a large regional centre, live music played a critical role in bringing people together. Albury bands performed to support their local community. Apart from professional bandmasters, the band members all worked in a voluntary capacity. Our local townsfolk were very proud of their bands and looking through the records, it is not unusual to read reports of many hundreds and sometimes a thousand or more turning up to listen to their performances.

The full story of band music in Albury is told in *Albury City Band – 150 Years Entertaining Our Community*, available from early 2017 at the AlburyCity LibraryMusuem.



**Albury Town Band 1925**

Back Row: Pat McAlister, Jim Wilson, Sylvy Graeber, Ken Moffat, Fred Schnelle, Harry Selle, Clarie Wise (at back), Frank Bohr, Jack Pask, Oskar Schmude, Bill Small, M Sandagren  
Centre Row: Bob Carroll, Keith Howard, Dick Swanson, Phil Wittmer, ?, Ned Peacock, Jack Jarvie, Jack Phibbs, Simpy Sempendorfer, Aub Rhynehart, Fred Clarkson, Bill Newton, Tom Fuller, Tissy Bohr  
Front Row: Bill Hedges, C Davenport, Wally Hopkins, Os Ritchie, ?, Arch Henshaw, Bill Hunter, Algie Roach, Bill Swan, Bert Graeber

December 1925 – Albury Town Band members before departure to Burnie, Tasmania for a band competition.

**Bibliography Sources:**

*Ovens & Murray Advertiser, Albury Banner and Wodonga Express, Border Morning Mail, The Sydney Morning Herald, Goulburn Herald, Australian Town and Country Journal* available on the 'Trove' website at <http://ndpbeta.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/home>

*Border Post* available on microfilm at AlburyCity LibraryMuseum

*Dr Barnett and the "Irish Tiger" - 150 Years of Music and Theatre in Albury Wodonga, 1855-1985*

Albury City Band website - [http://www.alburycityband.com/about\\_us](http://www.alburycityband.com/about_us)