

## Albury Butchers have tea with Dutch Queen

*Noel Jackling*

On the early morning of October 24, 1934, at around 1am, many people drove motor vehicles to the Albury racecourse and with their headlights, illuminated a landing strip for a lost Dutch aircraft.

This action saved the KLM Royal Dutch Airlines Douglas DC-2 'Uiver' and its four crew and three passengers. The aircraft saw the landing strip and came in for an extraordinary but safe landing.

The mayor at the time was Alfred Waugh, who with his wife Ellen, operated a butchers' shop on the corner of Townsend and Smollett streets, Albury.

In August 1935, the couple went to Holland at the invitation of the Dutch government and KLM. For 17 days they toured the Netherlands and were treated like royalty.

But they could not see the Queen of the Netherlands, Queen Wilhelmina, because she was on holidays at St Fillans, Scotland.



Ellen and Alfred Waugh pose in the clothes they wore to meet the Queen of the Netherlands, Queen Wilhelmina, in 1935

On August 20, 1935, the Waughs returned to London, and caught a train to Scotland. They reached Perth the next morning where they received a telegram from Queen Wilhelmina inviting them to an audience with her at 4pm that day.

The Waughs got a chauffeur-driven car to the Queen's residence, arriving just in time. They enjoyed their afternoon tea with Her Majesty, who asked them to convey her thanks to the people of Albury for their prompt actions on the occasion of the landing of the 'Uiver'.

Waugh promised to do so and thanked Her Majesty for making him an Officer of the Order of Oranje Nassau.

The Waughs departed for London, where on August 22, they lunched with Sir Philip Game, a former Governor of New South Wales, who had gone to Albury in April 1932 to present the Albury Gold Cup to the owner of the winning horse.

That afternoon the Waughs boarded the S.S. Narkunda at Tilbury for the return journey by sea to Australia.

The Waughs disembarked at Port Melbourne on September 30, 1935 and proceeded to a photographic studio, where they had their photograph taken in the same clothes as they wore when they went to see the Queen.

The gloves, spectacles and fox fur worn by Ellen Waugh are all held by the Albury Library Museum, but Alfred Waugh's original medal was stolen from his hotel room in Melbourne in March 1936.

Alfred Waugh kept his word, and on 17 October 1935, he emerged on the balcony of the Town Hall in Dean Street (now MAMA), addressed the people of Albury and conveyed the Queen's message.

That is the remarkable story of how the butchers from Townsend Street got to have afternoon tea with the Queen of the Netherlands.