



# ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN

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474

## REPORT ON THE OCTOBER MEETING (10/10/07)

Members were treated to an interesting and varied evening. Graeme Hicks shared some of his experiences when he joined a 50-strong group to walk the Kokoda Track earlier this year. Many in his group were young people, some sponsored by organisations such as the Albury SS&A Club. The Track had an evocative sense of place that the walkers found stirred patriotic emotions.

The question of the month brought a wide range of answers: Royal visits in 1983 and 1988; centenary of the Albury Railway Station 1981; Keith Browne riding Dazzling Duke took out the 1985 Base Hospital Cup (Keith was Michael Browne's father),

and Jill & Joe Wooding were married in 1980.

To round out the meeting, Pauline Harbick presented a fine report on her research into Lester & Son Funeral Directors and other early undertakers in Albury.

### VALE AUDREY SUMMERILL

The Society respectfully records the death of Mrs Audrey Summerill of Lavington on 16 October. Between July 1980 and December 1981, Audrey compiled a transcript of all the headstones in the Albury Pioneer Cemetery. She carefully copied all the personal details from the memorials and compiled an index. A copy of her hand-written work is in the History Collection at the Albury Library|Museum. Audrey was a member of the Wodonga Family History Society and contributed to other projects undertaken by that group, but her commitment to family history research was cemented seven years prior to a local family history group being started.

## NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY

14 NOVEMBER 2007

7.30pm at Commercial Club  
Albury

Speakers: Mrs Lillian Coleman  
"St Matthews Parish Albury"

Jan Hunter: "Recognising 150  
years of the Albury Show Society."  
Mystery object: Michael Browne

### A&DHS

## CHRISTMAS DINNER

Friday 14 December

at Commercial Club

6.30pm for 7pm meal.

Cost \$28 pr head

**RSVP with money to June**

**Shanahan asap.**

Please bring wrapped gift to the  
value of \$3 for the lucky gift game.

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## ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

PO Box 822 ALBURY 2640

**Patron:** Harold Mair OAM  
**Public Officer:** Helen Livsey  
**President:** Doug Hunter  
02 6021 2835

**Vice-Presidents:** Joe Wooding, June Shanahan  
**Secretary:** Helen Livsey 02 6021 3671

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**Committee:** Helen Pithie, John Craig, Carole  
Whitbourn, Jill Wooding, Howard Jones and  
Ray Gear

**Journals & Stock:** John Craig

**Honorary Auditor:** tba

**Membership list & Bulletin dispatch:** Ray  
Gear

**Bulletin Editor:** Doug Hunter 02 6021 2835  
djhjrhlaptop@bigpond.com

### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Single: \$22

Family: \$30

Corporate: \$50

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

Committee meets 3rd Wednesday of  
the month 5.15pm at Albury  
Library|Museum.

A&DHS website:

[www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/librarymuseum/  
research](http://www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/librarymuseum/research)

**WALKING KOKODA 2007**

Edited talk by Graeme Hicks. Full talk available from Editor.

How did SS&A Club get involved in the Kokoda Trek.

Some years ago RSL Clubs & the Returned Soldiers League of NSW created the idea of sending youths considered "at risk" on the Kokoda Trek for a life changing experience.

The SS&A Board and Management team, in line with the SS&A Vision has sent two youngsters in need of support each year now for 3 years. This year we chose youngsters willing to embrace the challenge of a lifetime. We felt confident that they could conquer the physical and mental challenges of the Owens Stanley Ranges and the tropics.

Andrew Cottrill from Telstra Country Wide and I also joined the Youth Trek. This provided a great opportunity for me to assess the benefits of the program. It is the challenge of a lifetime. Remember the Kokoda Trek is considered the second hardest trek in the world after Mt Everest.

This year the group included 21 youth Trekkers aged between 16 and 21 from all walks of life who would be challenged for the next 10 days. Some might have had difficulty with the law, some might just not accept authority, and some might have just failed to recognise their own worth in the community. Our two kids had none of those problems but the SS&A Club and their schools felt that this opportunity

could enhance their life skills.

Our tour leader was John Nalder from Adventure Kokoda. John has a passion for the Kokoda Track and the village people of Papua New Guinea. He has completed around 50 Kokoda Treks and has an outstanding relationship with the villagers. He has a great group of 30 native carriers, a good feel for the medical requirements and

the issues likely to arise on the Track. The carriers carried the tents, prepared the food and looked after



**Tree roots forming the track near Templeton's Crossing.**  
(Photo taken 1972)

our safety. When John briefed us on our first night he banned the use of one word, can't.

Included in this trek was a crew from the ABC Television show *Compass*. They were there to follow the steps of Ali Ammar the young guy involved in the flag incident during the Cronulla riots. Ali was sent for one of those life changing experiences.

But the trek turned out to be more about the adventures of the group, the highs, the lows, the building of a team, and about the camaraderie that would be built and challenged in 10 days of pure hell in the tropics. The

change of diet will be a huge struggle, the toilets will test you, the tropics will certainly test your health, the chances to catch malaria, typhoid and hepatitis are greatly increased on such a trek. The terrain is so incredible it's impossible to describe. Neither words nor pictures adequately describe it. It is more like ten days of climbing both up and down mountains rather than trekking.

On our 1st day we went from Port Moresby to Kokoda.

From a hanger on the edge of the airport we took a 20 minute flight to Kokoda airfield!!!! an airfield, more a clearing in the jungle. There is no fuel, so there are no mowers, let alone a tractor or a truck, the airfield is

cleared by machete, and is as rough as most country paddocks. There is no navigation tower. The place is so damned hot and the humidity horrendous.

Kokoda was couple of kilometres on from the airfield, and a significant starting point for us. We headed out of Kokoda and passed the \$2.4 million hospital built by Rotary in 1992 that today does not even have a Pa-



**Mortar bipod near Brigade Hill**  
(Photo taken 1972)

nadol in the cupboard. On through a rubber plantation was the Elementary School of Kovelov. No chairs, no power, no teacher's desk. They all sit on the floor. Just the English alphabet on the board wall and the numbers 1- 100. It was a strong walk but nothing like we were going to come across as we followed the Japanese advance. We stayed the night at Hoi Village, enjoyed our best shower of the trek- in the river.

Day 2 From Hoi Village to Isurava

The terrain starts to get much tougher as we left Hoi village. The strain and the pain, the exhaustion start to tell on the group, a number in tears as the heat and humidity take their toll. The malaria tablets increase the sunburn and things become more uncomfortable, and taken at the wrong time can make you mighty crook.

We came to Isurava which was the site of an amazing battle and an equally amazing and inspiring memorial built by the Australian Government. The memorial comprises four granite pillars each inscribed with a single word: Courage Endurance Mate-ship Sacrifice.

Those words make you proud to be an Aussie. This is the spot where the 24 year old Private Bruce Kingsbury raced into the open shooting at the swarming enemy, once his magazine ran he stopped to replace it, and was shot dead. He was later awarded the VC. The question was asked of our young trekkers "if Kingsbury was to look at you guys as the example of young Australians today, would he think it was all worth it"?

[On the days that followed, the trek went on through Aburari, Templeton's Crossing, to Naduri via Myola, Kagi, Efogi, Mission Ridge, Brigade Hill, Menari, Ioribaiwa Ridge and finally to Owers Corner.]

On reflection, the Owen Stanley experience shows that you should see problems as challenges, and if you can conquer Kokoda you can achieve most things in life...All I can say is the Sacrifice of the soldiers in 1942 is our inheritance and we should always respect that. Since walking Kokoda, every time I hear the National Anthem sung, or hear the Ode read, my mind will wander back to my family, my friends whose sacrifice on the Owen Stanley Ranges, the four words at Isurava, the 62 mounds at Brigade Hill, the war cemetery at Bomana and the feelings I have

for those forgotten fuzzy-wuzzy angels.

# # #

#### ANSWERS TO QUESTION OF THE MONTH

*What were the notable happenings in Albury during the 1980s?*

Michael & Catherine Browne came up with some lesser known happenings during the period:

1980 Albury Racing Club Admin Offices and Jockey Rooms constructed.

1981 Although there had been a civic art collection since 1947, the Albury Art Gallery opened on the present site.

1983 Charles & Diana attended church at St Matthews Church. Also in that year moves to develop Block 19 as a migration commemorative centre began.

1984 Thurgoona Country Golf Club Resort was designed by Peter Thompson and Mike Wolveridge. At 6,368 metres it is one of the longest in Australia.

1985 Albury Gang Show produced its 21st show.

1987 Sprinkler system installed in lawns at the Albury Botanic Gardens, and Bob Van der Weyde was appointed Parks Superintendent.

1988 Ian Glachan won the seat of Albury in the NSW Parliament. He had stood in 1984 but was defeated by sitting member Harold Mair.

1989 The Newcastle earthquake was felt in Albury.

# # #

#### LESTER & SON AND OTHER EARLY ALBURY UNDERTAKERS

Talk by Pauline Harbick

The earliest records show that Albury undertakers included:

1840s Luke Everitt

1850s Field & Mason

Maitland

JH Kirkpatrick

George Thomson

1860s Thomas Allen who built courthouse, hospital, gaol

Clement Negro

1870s FA Selle

J Walsh who built Builders Arms on site of Star Hotel

Fuller & Boyes

1880s Coffin Jones built Albury Public School, was mayor 1877-8

Joseph Adams

1890s W Haslem & Co

1900s James Nelson (1904-1909) previously manager for FA Selle,

James Swain

Frew & Logan (1898-1909) built St Mathews & St Davids & rebuilt Kia-Ora after fire.

All of these people carried on mainly building or carpentry businesses and undertaking was an extra service that they provided. Some of the above were agents for the larger undertakers and hired a hearse and funeral attendant staff as required.

The term 'furnishing undertaker' was used in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to describe those who provided funeral service and provided supplies to other undertakers. From 1900 this title disappeared from use although the practice of hiring vehicles and staff to agent undertakers seems to have continued until around 1919.

Sections of the cemetery were run by the churches and the church sexton was responsible for issuing burial permits and keeping records. Burial grounds were originally at the south end of Olive Street but in 1862 were moved to the David Street site.

There was no crematorium in Albury until the early 1970s. Cremations were performed in Melbourne with staff driving back and forwards, sometimes twice a week. Deaths sometimes occurred away from home and the deceased was often returned to Albury on the mail

train.

There have been many names come and go through the undertaking industry but the two enduring ones are Adams and Lester and this is where my research has been focussed.

### **LESTER & SON**

February 1907 - Trappold & Lester commenced business as undertakers, cabinet makers, furniture polishers and repairers. The owners were Joe Trappold and Harry Lester who used premises in Kiewa Street next to Lester & Allen coachbuilders.

Joe, originally from Wooragee, had worked for both FA Selle and James Nelson undertaking businesses for 18 years. He was also a keen fisherman and footballer and according to the *Border Morning Mail* was "unrivalled" as a centreman. Harry, originally from Moorwatha, had previously worked as a cabinet maker and joiner for FA Selle and for Fred Wright of David Street. He was an active member of the Albury Town Band and was the first treasurer of the Plumpton Coursing Club and a committee member of the West Albury Football Club. He was a member of the Albury Base Hospital board and after his death, his family erected a memorial front gate in his memory. The gate has been demolished but the plaques have been restored and will be placed in the grounds of Lester & Son.

In their first year of operation T&L conducted around 20 funerals. In 1910 this had grown to 63. The carpentry side of the business was quite substantial with ledgers showing work carried out for the Albury Club, Arnolds grocers, TH Mate & Co, Union Bank as well as many other residential and business clients.

February 1909 - Trappold & Lester took over the undertaking business of James Nelson and

moved to premises in Olive Street (Dr Kennedy's house near where Centrepont Plaza stands today). Also in 1909 they took over the undertaking business of competitors, Frew & Logan (who had previously taken over FA Selle in 1904).

1923 - Joe Trappold died and as he never married, Harry Lester inherited the business which continued to trade as Trappold & Lester until 1926 in Albury and 1933 in Wodonga.

Bill, son of Harry, joined the business in 1923 and worked there until his death in 1954. Bill played and umpired football. He was a foundation member of the Albury Umpires League, official at the Albury Football Club for 17 years and Vice President of the Ovens & Murray League for 10 years.

1926 - The name Lester & Son appears to have first been used on 1/12/1926 in a funeral notice for Dumbrell. It was during the 1920s that the term 'undertaker' was superseded by Funeral Director.

1936 - Harry died and the business then became solely a funeral business. It was then run by his wife Alice and son, Bill. His youngest son, Charlie, came to work there during the 1940s. Charlie was a keen golfer and served on the committees of Albury Golf Club and Albury Football Club. He also served in the Army during WWII and was at Cowra POW camp during the Japanese breakout.

1946 - Lester and Son moved to rented premises at 548 Olive Street owned by Arnolds (currently Spiders) and stayed until the 2/1/1959 when they moved to 552 Olive Street (currently Bliss). This building had previously been Payne's grocer and the sale was vendor financed by Bro Payne.

Allen Henshaw joined the business as a casual in 1946 and came to work full time in 1951. He had previously worked on the railways and also owned a

taxi business. He lived on site at 552 Olive Street from 1970 until he retired in 1995 after 49 years of service.

1971 - Charlie sold Lester & Son to Mike Egan and retired although he still did some occasional casual funeral work for Lester & Son. Four months after he retired, he was an attendant at a funeral on the day before he went on a golfing holiday. The very next day he died suddenly in Dubbo and never made it to his holiday destination.

Mike and Mary Egan bought the business on 1/6/1971 after coming to Albury from a dairy farm in Victoria. They subsequently purchased other local funeral businesses, John Birnie & Son (1978), J S Adams & Sons (1/7/1984), Riddingtons Tallangatta and Corryong (9/11/1990) and Culcairn Funeral Parlours (1991). They operated these businesses until their retirement in 2002.

2002 - New premises were purpose built at 359 Wantigong Street, North Albury. The firm was bought by Mike and Mary's daughters, Pauline and Julie and their husbands Andrew Harbick and Darren Eddy.

### **J S ADAMS**

Joseph Adams arrived in Albury from Germany in 1868. He was a cabinet maker and joiner who had served in the Prussian guards where he earned two medals for bravery. On his arrival in Albury he worked as a carpenter for Jones, Frew and Hartley, leading builders of the day. He worked on the convent, post office, railway goods sheds and St Patricks church. From 1886 he began contracting on his own behalf and trading as an undertaker. He was a member of Albury Municipal Council from 1894 to 1897 and lived on Pooles Hill until his death, aged 86.

His eldest son, JS, took over the business in 1899 and built



Football team marked 'Albury 1897' but unnamed.  
 There appear to be 14 players, four 'officials' and a strapper. Five players are in plain guernseys and the others in stripes with deep v-collar.  
 Can anyone supply names or additional information?  
 (From Lester & Son Collection)

many buildings for the Catholic community including additions to the convent, the Catholic Presbytery, St Patricks hall and Christian Brothers Monastery. JS Adams' office and home was located at 443 Dean Street where Taco Bills stands today and the Adams family still has land holdings at that end of town. JS was heavily involved with St Patricks Football Club and died while attending a football match in Melbourne. According to the *Border Morning Mail* he attended a Carlton vs Richmond match and collapsed and died before quarter time. He was supposed to meet a friend at the game but did not manage to do so. There was a problem in identifying him as he was there by himself.

Henry and Jack Adams took over the business after the retirement of their father. Henry served as an alderman on the Albury Municipal Council from 1934-37 and was also heavily involved with the Catholic Church being a representative on many committees and a trustee of the Catholic portion of the Albury Cemetery. He was

keenly involved with St Patricks Football Club, was president of the O&M and a committee member at Albury Racing Club, St Patricks Racing Club and Albury Greyhound Racing Club.

Jack was also an alderman from 1950-59 and is remembered as an all round sportsman who won fame at cricket, football and tennis. He was an A grade pennant tennis player for 40 years, represented Albury in cricket (often as team captain), won four successive O&M pennants with St Patricks Football Club and was president of the Albury and Border Cricket Association until his death in 1966.

JS Adams & Sons was owned for some years by Tony Wilson who then sold it to Mike Egan in 1984.

#### FUNERALS

We have photos of several funerals held in Albury over the last 100 years. They include Peter Mullavey in 1903 who was a grazier and landholder, Mark Sheehan (miner/pro prospector) in 1914. Both of these used a horse drawn hearse. JD Lankester (winemaker) in 1937 who

was Albury's oldest resident aged 100 had a large funeral procession as did Sgt Spence (NSW police force) in 1956. Frederick Higgins (young motor vehicle accident victim) in 1961 was a nephew of the Blacklocks and was an apprentice at Blacklocks. The procession passed by the workshop where the staff formed a guard of honour.

A notable funeral was that of JC King in 1961 who died one month after being elected mayor. The funeral was held at St Patricks Catholic Church and the casket was borne by 6 aldermen, the town clerk and the town engineer. There were 8 pallbearers representing major organisations in Albury.

The cortege left St Patricks Church and travelled west on Smollett Street, then to Kiewa, Dean, Olive and Guinea Streets. A large procession included the Albury City Band; members of the North Albury, Albury and Wodonga Football Clubs; city councillors and senior staff; and 10 city taxis. Town Hall staff formed a guard of honour in Dean Street and many shops were closed during the morning. The *Border Morning Mail* reported that there was a line of wreaths 25 yards long at the cemetery.

Some interesting incidents that have been recalled. One is the time in the 1940s when Bill Lester was returning from a funeral near Wangaratta and was involved in a motor accident where the hearse was hit by a train. The hearse was written off and they had to borrow one from another funeral director until a replacement arrived.

Another story is about the time Charlie Lester and Allen Henshaw went to collect a new hearse that had been con-

verted from a standard vehicle. When Charlie tried to get in the front seat he could not fit as the seat was too close to the steering column. They had to come home without the new hearse and wait for it to be adjusted.

We still have a few puzzles that we are working on. One is the picture of Albury Football Club from 1897 – what is the significance? Another is the Lester & Son ledgers from the 1920s which were kept in books that had previously been used by other businesses in the 1880s and 1890s – apparently one of the soap factories and also either a stock & station agent or insurance company of some kind.

[Lester & Son held an Open Day on Saturday 27 October at which pictures and memorabilia were displayed.]

# # #

### **GARDENS AND GARDENING IN ALBURY**

by Bruce Pennay

The Australian Garden History held its Annual Conference in Albury mid-October 2007. About 200 conference delegates were taken by bus to see gardens with the permission of the owners at *Karinya* (Len and Wendy Hogan, Bethanga); *Thurgoona Park* (Lisa and Gordon Slater); *Woomargama* (Margaret Darling AM); *Dunraven* ((Janie, Jamie and Annie Snow); and *The Elms* (Elizabeth and John Newton, Walla Walla). Paul Scannell showed the delegates over the Botanic Gardens.

Those who stayed for an optional extension day went to Kergunyah (Jan and Rod Waddington); Gundowring Homestead (Sarah, Stephen and James Crooks); and *Bontharambo* (Mary and John Paul).

Prue Smith spoke about and showed pictures of several gardens including *Forest Lodge* (737 Fellowes Crescent); *Noorla* (Thurgoona); 711 Yambla Place; and *Mulberry Hill* (Thurgoona).

The conference was reminded of Lady Jane Franklin's efforts in 1839 to disseminate pastures on the Port Phillip route by planting white clover in the trenches around her tent near the Robert Brown crossing place.

The conference was also reminded of Margaret Browne's efforts in print and at 642 Olive Street to persuade people in the 1890s that the family that gardens together stays together.

### **GOWNS OF YESTERYEAR**

Our thanks to the St Matthews Ladies Evening Group for a copy of the DVD *Gowns of Yesteryear* showing 234 images of weddings mostly held at the church between 1899 and the present. The slideshow runs for an enjoyable 27 minutes.

### **JOURNEYING THROUGH THE JOURNALS**

By John Craig

*Richmond River (Lismore) HS Bulletin*: Sep 2007

1. Review of local environmental plan of heritage items listed on plan.

*Wagga Wagga Historical Society Newsletter* Aug/Sep 2007.

1. All things Tichborne at Museum of the Riverina: The Tichborne trials of 1873/74.

*Insites: Historic Houses Trust of NSW Magazine* Spring 2007

1. Convict hulks: Life on prison ships.

2. Rouse Hill House and Farm: planning for the future.

3. Calendar of events Sep-Nov 07.

*History: Royal Historical Society Magazine* Sep 2007

1. At home in the bush: park ranger and pioneer Karamoana McKean.

2. Duntroon and Canterbury: Campbell and Blacket connection.

*Argyle Bulletin: Goulburn HS/ FHS Journal* Aug 2007

1. History of Imperial Hotel (demolished 1966) and licensee John O'Brien.

## **INVITATION**

Society members are invited to a gathering at Commercial Club, 2 December at 2.30 pm, at which Harold Mair OAM is to launch Jan Hunter's book:- *Building the Neighbourhood: Central North Albury 1920-1950*. RSVP essential by 26 Nov. (02)6021 2835 or [djhjr@bigpond.com](mailto:djhjr@bigpond.com)

*Links 'n' Chains: Liverpool GS Journal* Aug 2007

1. Voyage of Arthur and Barry Cleveland to Melbourne 1867 (cont.)

2. Members' interest directory 2007.

*Muster: Central Coast FHS Journal* Aug 2007

1. Tribulations of a £10 Pom.

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### **A&DHS MEMBERSHIP LIST**

The following is a list of financial members. If your name is not here and you have paid for the 07/08 year, please check with the treasurer.

If you have decided not to renew we will cease sending further *Bulletins*.

**Corporate:** Lester & Son (P Harbick)  
**Life:** H Jones, N Douglas, W Chambers, B Duck, A Davies, H Livsey, B Webb.

**Families of:** G Hamilton, D Hunter, S Judd, K Monte, N Reid/L Rayner, K Scholz, P Whitbourn, J Wooding.

**Single:** R Boadle, M Bollenhagen, A Brennan, J Boullivant, V Colley, M Committi, E Cosser, J Craig, R Freeman, R Gear, H Glachan, D Hennessy, J Henwood, F Higgins, A Holloway, L Howard, T Jelbart, A Kelso, B Kurdian, H Leggatt, M Leithead, D Lindner, J Lynch, H Mair, J Marsden, B Martin, J McKenzie, C McQuellin, D Mould, A Nugent, L Passant, L Porter, D Royal, M Royle, P Scott, J Shanahan, F Stevenson, B Stewart, P Strachan, V Symons, G Trampusic, V Wharton, B Williams.