



# ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN

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## REPORT ON THE MARCH MEETING (12/3/08)

Fifty-seven members and friends attended the March meeting at *Adamshurst*, the heritage house in David Street. The owner, Garry Morgan, treated the gathering to a conducted tour of the building followed by supper. It was pleasing to have members of the Wodonga Historical Society join with us on the evening.

Thanks to Jill Wooding for organizing the outing. Thanks too to Bruce Pennay for a summary of the history of the building handed out on the night.

### RESTORING ADAMSHURST

Talk given by Garry Morgan

Most of you will have been to *Adamshurst* before. As you can see we are dealing with a heritage building and that isn't the same as dealing with a normal building. There are certain requirements that have to be met.

*Adamshurst* began as a residence, altered and extended several times, an Albury High School Girls' Hostel, and finally a NSW Dept of Health facility. Each user made some changes.

A lot of the girls that stayed here in the school hostel days carved their initials on top of the cupboards.

When the Health Department moved its operations to the Mercy Hospital complex, *Adamshurst* was boarded up for a couple of years then sold at auction to yours truly and a start made, in close consultation with the National Trust, on restoring it to its former glory.

*Adamshurst* has a lot of history, so when it was to be auctioned the Health Department set out some guidelines for prospective buyers so there was no misunderstanding as to what had to be done with the premises. Bruce Pen-

## NEXT MEETING SUNDAY

13 APRIL 2008

2.30pm at Pioneer  
Cemetery

David Street Albury

Gathering at the

Lychgate for a conducted  
tour of the cemetery con-  
cluding with a BYO  
thermos & sandwich af-  
ternoon tea.

Guests very welcome  
Limited parking off David  
Street; more parking off Waugh  
Road

## QUESTION OF THE MONTH

See page 3

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## ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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**Minute Secretary:** Jan Marsden

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Whitbourn, Jill Wooding, Howard Jones and  
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### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Single: \$22  
Family: \$30  
Corporate: \$50

**History Meetings:** Usually 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.alburyhistory.org.au](http://www.alburyhistory.org.au)



Gas heater fitted into fireplace, restored mantelpiece and tiled hearth at *Adamshurst*

nay put together history of the building and a report on the condition it was in before it was sold. [This report is available at the *Albury Library-Museum*.]

The Government owned the residence for over 50 years. In the last 15 years there was no maintenance done on the building whatsoever. Beyond mowing the lawns, the gardens were not properly maintained. There seems to be one set of rules for the government and a set of rules for private enterprise. The garden had to be stripped back to the way it use to be. Two years on, the project is still not finished. Of course the drought hasn't helped.

The ceilings couldn't be

touched – there was one metal ceiling that was totally rotted out because the bitumen roof on top of the building had leaked. Apparently at one time the roof was used for entertaining. As the bitumen hadn't been maintained, it cracked and leaked. The Health Dept took the easy way out and put a metal tray roof all the way through. The way we do waterproofing today is entirely different from back then.

It would be nice to have it the way it was with a stair case to the roof and to be able to sit up there and have a drink and look over the gardens the way it was intended. Maybe that will happen down the track, but it costs money

to be able to restore it to original condition.

The large function room has been made bigger by taking out a wall between the two front rooms and it now seats about 80 people. This has made it viable. We are hoping down the track with council approval to build a large function room at the back of *Adamshurst* in the same style as the present room: pressed metal ceilings, leadlight and mahogany.

With the renovations we came across many problems: white ants, rising dampness from the garden sprinkler systems that had been installed in the wrong place, plaster and skirting boards falling from the walls. The lead lights were another problem.

Lead lighting in the building, at a guess, would be worth about \$100,000. All of it had to be repaired. The bullseye had to be totally redone, the front door had been broken by vandals and you can imagine the damage they did.

In the hallway above the entrance the leadlight was missing, so when it opened up as Betty & Muriel's there was a lead light panel installed inscribed Betty and Muriel. It has been replaced with the name *Adamshurst*. It is sad that the original restaurateurs did what they did to the people of Albury. They had everything here, the only problem was that they had problems in the way they treated people and staff. The rest is history anyway. The team that we have here now have done a wonderful job seeing that they had to overcome what was before them. Hopefully now we have all over-



**Question of the Month:**  
Where about in Albury is this and who put it there?

come that.

The main function room had a lot of rust in the ceiling. It had to be patched with plaster. We couldn't cut out the rusted piece and replace it because the chances of finding another bit of ceiling to match would be very rare.

The paint was another problem, it had to be matched with paint that was made about 1907. The painter had to keep mixing paints till he came up with the right colour. It was difficult and time consuming.

When we took over the building we found all the fireplaces had been covered up and Vulcan heaters installed. We removed the heaters and installed gas heaters that would compliment the building. Wood fires wouldn't warm the house, it being so large.

When the Vulcan heaters were put in the tiled hearths were covered with masonite. When it was stripped back you could see all the original tiles. Some were broken, some were missing, but we were able to replace them and

get one complete hearth to match. All the wooden fronts on the fire places had to be taken down in pieces, repaired, French polished and put back.

There is a beautiful 1½ inch thick murray-pine floor throughout the building. It too had been covered with masonite and then carpet laid on top of that. The white ants travelled through the building via the masonite, going wherever they wanted to go, attacking everything in their path. They didn't touch the flooring. The large function room where the wall was removed was where the bulk of the white ants were. When the Department discovered they had a termite problem, the inside woodwork was paper thin. Bait stations were attached to the walls to kill the white ants and when we pulled out the wall it took six barrow loads to remove the nest.

Where the bar is there were three long narrow impractical rooms. The council and the heritage people agreed that

the walls could be taken out so the area could be made into a bar.

The hallways are basically the same all the way through, there has been nothing done to them, except for the paint work. A heritage paint consultant was used for the painting of the building.

Air conditioner units have been moved from the front of the building. Evaporative cooling has been installed because there was nowhere to put the number of refrigerated units needed.

There is still a cellar under the building. It is accessible from the outside entry that originally was used for deliveries, but the stair to the kitchen has been floored over. The dishwasher sits there now.

The kitchen is much the same as it always was. The original old stove that did a lot of cooking over the years for students, day-care centre and meals-on-wheels was pulled out about 6 months

ago as it caught fire. It was a very old stove that had reached its use-by date. It is the only item that has been replaced.

An external problem has been the stones on the outside of the building and the pebbles on the outside of the chimneys falling off, but we now have that under control.

The two small dining rooms have had little done to them. The front one with the marble fireplace was only touched up, although the marble fireplace was in pieces and had to be put back together. The other room was totally repainted.

The main restaurant area had a timber wall and a fire place as well. There was a problem there. They had pulled the wall out and put two metal cornices together with no wall in between them, so they didn't look quite right. When you walked in you could see this cornice that ran to nowhere. So columns with a wall and an arch all the way through was added and metal cornices were taken off and refitted to look as it does now.

*[Garry Morgan applied for Heritage Grants to help with the restoration and at this present time he is applying for a grant to have the front fence to the property restored to its original state. It will be a picket fence with an iron gate. Hopefully this will be completed before Xmas.]*

*Garry nominated Adamshurst for the NSW Heritage award in 2007 and was successful in taking out best for restoration up to one million dollars category.]*

# # #

#### **ADAMSHURST**

##### **A Timeline**

- 1862 George Adams acquires the *Albury Banner*
- 1872 Adams builds brick Printery in David Street
- c 1891 *Adamshurst* built
- c 1907 major additions to *Adamshurst*
- 1946 alterations for hostel use
- 1947-1975 used as AHS Girls' Hostel
- 1978 Day Care Centre opens
- 1986 property title transferred to NSW Dept of Health
- 2004 Health Dept vacates building
- 2005 Purchased by Garry Morgan and restoration commenced.

[Reference: *Chronology in Conservation Management Plan: "Adamshurst", Albury* by David Scrobie Architects with Bruce Penney Historian c 2005]

#### **A&DHS WEB SITE**

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

The society web site is up and running. It has an attractive format and gives:

- a brief history of Albury and the Historical Society including when and where we meet and how to contact us;
- details of our publications including a comprehensive bibliography of Albury & district history (this list will surprise you);
- an Albury time-line from 25000BC to the present day (not all inclusive of course!);
- historical attractions and web links to Library-Museum, Army Museum Bandiana, Border Mail and CSU; and
- Society news: highlights of last year and details of future meetings.

## **Invitation**

**to**

### **"A History of The Border Mail"**

Wednesday 16 April 2008,  
7.00pm for a 7.30 start.

Wodonga Football  
Clubrooms  
Martin Park  
Wodonga

Entry \$5 includes supper.

Chris McQuellin and Howard Jones have worked with web designer Dallas Sargeant to bring the project to fruition.

#### **REMAINS OF THE DAY: Signs of Albury's Past**

This was the title of a PowerPoint presentation and talk given by Jan & Doug Hunter on behalf of the A&DHS at a seminar conducted by the ANZ Bank on Thursday 27 March.

#### **GRANT TO DIGITIZE PHOTOGRAPHS**

Members will have been pleased to read that the Albury Library-Museum has received a grant of \$16,840 to be used to convert many of the images in the AlburyCity collection to digital format. The grant was one of a number of NSW Government grants announced by the member for Albury Greg Aplin MP.

#### **REMINDER**

**April Meeting A&DHS  
Sunday 13 April 2.30pm  
Albury Pioneer Cemetery  
BYO thermos arvo tea**