



ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN

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480

REPORT ON THE MAY MEETING (14/5/08)

The meeting was well attended and heard two entertaining and informative talks about very basic industries in Albury: road transport and bread-baking.

Arch McLeish was born at Albury but spent his childhood and school days at Walboundary 40 KM north of Albury. Following his discharge from the Royal Australian Navy, Arch purchased a truck and embarked on a career in road transport spanning 39 years. During the period he saw many changes to vehicles, regulations and business structures.

Industrial change was also a theme running through Eric Cossor's talk on his experience in the baking industry in Albury. Eric began his career in baking as an apprentice at McGillivray's Bakery, one of many small bakeries in the town. Eric saw the emergence of larger companies and the

centralizing of bread production into one factory in Wodonga. Finally that too closed and bread for the cities now comes from Melbourne.

Both speakers spoke of the anomalies arising from the interstate border and the measures companies took to take advantage of Section 92 of the Australian Constitution guaranteeing free trade between States.

QUESTION OF LAST MONTH

Carried over from the Cemetery Walk.

Several members contributed to the answer. The tree in the photo (Bulletin 478 p.3) is a seedling grown from the Lone Pine of Gallipoli and it is located adjacent to the War memorial in Waugh Road opposite the War Cemetery. From the plaque it seems it was planted there in 1965, but by whom? Legacy is a strong possibility, however what is the significance of diamond shape to the plaque and the colour patch?

NEXT MEETING

Annual General Meeting

WEDNESDAY

11 JUNE 2008

7.30pm at Commercial Club
Albury

Speaker: Horrie Polkinghorne
"A history of roller-skating in
Albury."

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Who was Dan Morgan
and who was the district
squatter with whom he
had a bitter feud?

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ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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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.alburyhistory.org.au

A HISTORY OF ROAD TRANSPORT IN ALBURY

Talk by Arch McLeish
Transcribed by June Shanahan
Edited by Doug Hunter

I was born in Albury but spent my childhood at Walbundrie 40 km north of Albury. We rode our horses to school. I use to ride my horse to Walla Walla to get it shod at the blacksmiths shop. My family moved into Albury in 1943 and I got a position with Beaurepaires Tyre Service until I joined the Navy early in 1945. I came back to Beaurepaires when I was discharged and it was through that, rather by accident, I happened to get involved with the road transport business. There was a chap by the name of Lindsay Robinson who used to have his truck serviced with the company. He purchased a newer and bigger truck and traded the smaller one in so I got the idea that it wouldn't be a bad industry to be in. I was always interested in mechanical things, so with the assistance of my brother Len, who was working at Mates and who had been in the RAAF during the war, and with his deferred pay and my deferred pay and a £500 loan from Dad we purchased the truck. From then on the road transport industry became a big part of my life.

BEGINNINGS

I started in 1949 with a second hand White prime mover and in 1953 I purchased a Federal followed by an International in 1956. I purchased a number of trucks from Graham Turner of Riverina Implements. We purchased all sorts of trucks: Mercedes Benz, three Whites, ten tandem Internationals, four Macks and two Kenworths.

In the early 1980s we had 26 trailers, 10 long haul prime movers and 4 others called yard prime movers. They were light haul ones; we had one in Melbourne and three in Albury. We

had 6 tray bodies, 4 utilities, three cars, 6 forklifts and 35 employees. It was a fairly sizeable business for the 1980s.

MOVING WITH DEMAND

We were the first trucking business in Albury to have extendable trailers; they are the ones that stretch out for long loads. We purchased the first one to cart long roof trusses for AB & MA Chick and then we needed a longer one, so we got a 42 footer that extended out to 70 feet.

We were also the first to run a truck prime mover Albury Melbourne Albury on a regular daily basis. The driver left Albury at 3am and, if he had easy pick ups in Melbourne, he would be home by 5pm. We would have another trailer loaded here so they would go back to Melbourne again. Sometimes we had four trucks a day going to and from Melbourne.

SPECIAL JOBS

Some of the special jobs that we did: we carted the *Uiver* from Bankstown to Albury for the West Albury Rotary Club. There was one long load, two wide loads and one general load. We carted most of the material for the *Cumbaroona*. We brought the flag pole in Australia Park down from Sydney for the Albury Rotary Club. These jobs were all done free of charge to the community.

Alan Stow, Timber Merchant in Albury, used to purchase a lot of oregon from J. Wright & Son, a Melbourne firm. Their representative was at Stows and I happened to be there at the time. He asked me if I had any trucks in Sydney, I told him that I had two up there. He said that they had two loads of oregon that were needed urgently in Melbourne so

prop up the collapsed King Street Bridge. My drivers in Sydney loaded the oregon and brought it to Albury another driver and myself took it on to Melbourne, so it took just 24 hours from Sydney to Melbourne.

MAJOR CLIENTS

Major clients I served in Albury were Chicks, Stows, Farmers and Graziers, Stuart and Lloyd, the Shell Company, Clifton Bricks and Safeway.

I was again in the right place at the right time: I was in Brambles Melbourne office when this fellow said to me, "Hammond Palmer have the Newsprint Mill job in Albury." Hammond Palmer had their office in South Melbourne so I went around and saw them. Being first in, I was fortunate to form a joint venture partnership with Hammond Palmer carting all the materials for the mill.

LOCAL NAMES IN TRANSPORT

Some of the local names in transport in the early days: HR (Dick) Hanel had a fairly large fleet of Red Internationals and his brother Les had 3 Internationals. In 1949, Merv Dandridge, Rayron, Pincock and Bishop, and I, started.

Merv McIntosh started in Walbundrie in 1960 mainly carting grain. He moved into Albury in 1970 and built up a sizeable business. On the death of his eldest son his transport business went down hill and he wasn't there to sort of push it along so



Extendable trailer transporting long roof trusses for AB & MA Chick c.1964



International low profile pantechnicon on the daily Albury-Melbourne run carrying newsprint to Melbourne, returning with general freight c. 1987

he wound it down and went back to his all-grain business in Walbundrie and Rand areas.

Merv McIntosh has an excellent collection of restored vehicles in Boronia Street. He has a display on a wall of all the owner-drivers of transports that started carting in Albury. It is well worth having a look at.

O'Brien's, another large enterprise, was started by Matt O'Brien (snr) who purchased the business from a local carrier FM Esler in the early 40's. Esler carted goods from the railway yards to all the places in Albury. Matt's sons Matt and Graham (know as Grumpy) carried on the business. They had the Carlton and United Breweries contract. Matt (jnr) retired and Grumpy and sons have a very large transport and distribution enterprise featuring the light green trucks that you see around town.

Hume Transport owned by Stan and Jenny Elliott, mostly travels interstate and does work for Toll Transport. It is now managed by their son Glen.

Bill Pickles started in the mid sixties with one truck and built up a fleet of about 10 units and diversified into heavy haulage and crane hire. His son Robert now manages the business operating about 12 trucks.

Greenfreight originated in Myrtleford carting logs for the paper mills. Fred Green moved

into Albury about 30 years ago carrying general freight and it is now managed by his sons Tony and Richard. They purchased my business in 1988. They run all over the eastern seaboard of Australia.

The largest company in Albury, Border Express, was started in 1952 and was originally a small operation run by Pincott and Bishop. It was

later owned by J.D Phillips and finally purchased by the Luff family.

BIGGER OPERATORS

Some of the out-of-town big names in the early days were Mayne Nickless, Brambles, Toll Chadwick from Newcastle, Brambles. Colliers transport were Melbourne based but they went 'Section 92' and opened up and became Collier Ring in NSW and Collier Garland in Victoria. Gilpin's Store that use to be in Albury had their own trucks carrying their own merchandise before the war. They tell me that Oliver Gilpin only employed drivers that had a big strong wife that he would get two for a price of one.

When the Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation came to Albury some of the big names came in: Brambles, TNT, B.J. Ahern and a couple of others, they only lasted four years and disappeared. TNT returned 20 years later.

The Albury business community gave the local fellows, which included me, preference. They didn't like these big blokes from the city coming in and we were very grateful for that.

REGULATIONS

Regulations in the early days were something that concerned us all. In Victoria we had Country Roads Board which controlled us with permits, the CRB weights, speed and all up load;

the police covered all of them. Permits had to purchased from the CRB for every trip for the cartage of certain cargo. No transport was allowed to move on Victorian roads on a Sunday, however in NSW there was no restrictions.

In 1953. the Victorian Road Transport Association took on the State Governments arguing that Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution states that trade between the States be absolutely free. The Australian courts rejected the argument, so the Association took the case to the Privy Council in London which overturned the Australian decision. It was a very important ruling for the road transport industry.

The States imposed many forms of road tax as they tried to prop up the railway system. One of them was 1/3 of a penny a ton a mile for all up weight, so whether you were empty, or loaded, you still had to pay the full amount.

THE OLD CABBAGE TRICK

The only good thing about it was that perishables were exempt. So one ruse was to get a load of steel then go to the markets and get cabbage leaves and have them hanging out under the tarp. Some fellows told me it worked for a fair while.

All States had many variations of road tax that they changed from time to time. In the mid 70's we were advised by our Associations to pay these charges under protest. I had a rubber stamp made and when I paid my road taxes monthly I would put the stamp on the cheque. After a couple of years the tax was declared invalid and we got a sizeable amount back. The various States got together and said that they would

abandon all the road tax charges, but would add it onto the registration so Federal registrations went up, but we didn't have the bother of filling out forms.

Truck and trailer specifications and load limits were slowly becoming uniform after ceaseless lobbying by the industry; not a bad effort to get it fixed up after 60 years.

In the early days trip cards were required. You use to buy them at the newsagent and you would fill one card up and then throw it way and start a new one; there was no record kept at all. They then brought in time books. You could also buy them at the newsagents, so you could have one at home and perhaps two with you. That was all stopped in the late 1960s. I believe log books are here to stay for a bit longer, but when IT becomes adaptable to our industry log books may be superseded by some other method.

* * *

BAKERIES IN ALBURY

Talk by Eric Cossor

Transcribed by June Shanahan

In 1956 there were six bakeries I can remember that were baking and delivering to the door by either motor van or horse and cart. There was the Urana Road Bakery, owned by Hank Groendyke; Jack Downing's Bakery in Parkinson Street; Don McGilivray's Regent Bakery in Dean Street; Arthur Worsley in David Street South; Charlie Thiel's in Macauley Street and Jack Brooks in Townsend Street. They all had brick ovens that could take around 200 loaves at a time. Theil's and Worsley's had two ovens.

Thiel's was the biggest bakery in town. It operated in a two story building; the dough was made upstairs then dropped down a chute onto a table below where it was divided and tinned up. During the war they supplied



AJ Brooks Bakery in Townsend Street between Dean and Smollett Streets, demolished 1963. Site now covered by West End Plaza.

Photo from *Good Old Albury* H Jones 2002.

bread to the Army Camp at Bandiana and after the war, to the Bonegilla migrant camp. Alan (Acky) and Keith (Kanga) Thiel were Charlie's sons who worked in the bakery at the time. The next biggest bakery was Worsley's where Les Holt and Pat Armstrong were the head bakers. Also because of the war and a man power shortage, each bakery had a designated delivery zone.

STARTING IN THE TRADE

I was an apprentice at McGilivray's Bakery. A funny thing happened while I was there: our driver ran off with a lady customer. He left in the middle of a delivery round, just abandoned the horse and cart. I was sent to finish the round, and then got his job as delivery man as well as doing my stint, baking.

I would leave home on my bike at 4.30am and ride to the paddock near Greenfield Park and pick up the horse. I'd ride bareback to the bakery, tie up the horse and put her nosebag on while I did a four hour shift in the factory. Then I would do the bread round. Old Dolly knew the run to a tee. She would stop for me to grab my basket and run to

the house. As soon as I dropped the basket back on the van she was away and if I didn't have my foot on the step I was left behind. Unfortunately, one night Dolly got out of her paddock and was hit by a car near the High School and killed.

Just a side note I believe Rupe Crowley was the last horse and cart baker in Albury. Sunicrust let him continue to do this till he retired because he never learned to drive a car. It was an example of the loyalty between employer and employee in those days.

During the 1950s you were not allowed to start baking bread before 5.30am so we used to bake buns etc., before the bread to get an early start.

In Dean Street there were several cake shops which made small goods and some fancy breads. They included Eric Wynne in Dean Street, Harley Thiel in Olive Street and Ricardo's at the western end of Dean Street.

INDUSTRY CHANGES

In 1960 the baking industry changed. Bunge bought Thiel's, Downing's and Brooks in Albury and Hall's Bakery in Wodonga. They shut the smaller

ones down and produced everything from Thiel's.

About the same time, Wise Brothers' Mill from Narrandera and Grant's Mills from Yarrawonga acquired the Urana Road Bakery, McGillivray's and Worsley's. They baked all their bread at Worsley's until they built Sunwise Bakeries in Wagga Road.

Modern machines, travelling ovens, bread slicers and wrappers, were installed in both bakeries. It was the beginning of the end of the high tin and devon loaves because all the brick ovens were made redundant.

Sunwise centralised production at Wagga Road, closing down Culcairn, Urana, Henty, Jerilderie and some other smaller bakeries. Bunge had acquired bakeries at Cobram, Deniliquin, Wangaratta and Goulburn.

In 1972, Bunge bought Sunwise and formed Sunicrust. They built Sunicrust Bakery in Chapple Street Wodonga. It was one of the most modern, fully automated bakeries outside the capital cities. Bread production for the region was centralised there.

In Victoria, it was illegal to transport bread over 75km, so to get around this, Sunicrust rented a shed in South Albury known as Southern Border Bakeries. Bread from Wodonga was transported to Albury in semi-trailer loads of 10,000 units. It was unloaded and placed in the shed. A docket was written out and the bread was reloaded and was free to be sent back over the border and sent to Melbourne if need be. This manoeuvre complied with Section 92 of the Australian Constitution allowing free trade between States.

But all is not lost. Albury-Wodonga is now well served by hot bakes and boutique type bakeries as well as a variety of cake and pastry shops that all produce speciality breads.

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ANNUAL REPORT

July 2007-June 2008

By Doug Hunter (President)

It is interesting that in a year when the Society and its members published more written material than ever, we have moved into the digital age, establishing our own web site and purchased a computer with email access for use by the secretary and research officer. The two media are complementary of course, but it will be a new experience learning to exploit their symbiosis.

We have continued our lively monthly meetings at the Commercial Club interspersed with an outing to the recently restored Adamshurst house and a guided walk through the Albury Pioneer Cemetery.

We are thankful for the eight guest speakers who have given of their time to address meetings on aspects of Albury's past. They have been ably supported by members of the Society who have shared the results of research into personalities and events.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SUPPORT

Again I acknowledge the generous support of the Albury Commercial Club who provided the comfortable venue for our monthly meeting; to Albury City Council for general support including the venue at the Library-Museum for our committee meetings; and to Lester & Sons for the provision of PA equipment at the Cemetery Walk.

SPEAKERS

Guest speakers have included Rowan Borella, Ron Ahern, Phillip Shanahan, Graeme Hicks, Lillian Coleman, Warwick Jones, Garry Morgan and Arch McLeish. Society members who have spoken were Pauline Harbick, Jan Hunter, Ann Brennan, Pam Palffy, Val Symons, Ray Gear, Howard Jones, Kevin Monte, Eric Cossor, Chris McQuellin and Rupert Paech. Michael Browne provided mystery items and numerous mem-

bers contributed to Show & Tell meetings.

PROJECTS

The Albury Base Hospital archival material and memorabilia has been listed, repacked and stored in a more satisfactory location at the hospital. Brian Haynes generously gave of his time to design a data base program, and work has begun to enter the information on to a catalogue. The Society has been involved in negotiations to transfer some items held in the Albury City Collection to the University of NSW Training Facility in Borella Road. One of the items is an Iron Lung used at the isolation ward at the old Albury District Hospital during the bad old days of Polio.

PUBLICATIONS

On 21 November 2007, we witnessed the launch of Joe Wooding's book, *150 Not Out: 1858-2007 Cricket in Albury-Wodonga*. Steve Rixon, former Albury cricketing star, Australian test player and international coach, launched the book at the Library-Museum.

On 2 December, A&DHS patron and former North Albury resident, Harold Mair OAM, launched Jan Hunter's book *Building the Neighbourhood: Central North Albury 1920-1950* at the Commercial Club.

Both books have proved popular and the authors are to be congratulated for their contribution to Albury's history. Both received favourable coverage in the *Border Mail* as did Doug Hunter's more recent publication, *The Albury Battery: Albury's citizen soldiers 1903-1940*.

Chris McQuellin's work on the Air Training Corps in Albury is nearing completion and will be published later

this year.

The Society obtained an ISSN for short local history papers. Seven papers have been lodged with the National Library of Australia and registered on its catalogue. I hope more of these papers can be finalised in the coming year. It is a very inexpensive method of getting wider coverage for our researchers and writers. Our *Bulletins* for the year recorded a substantial body of Albury history; more than 30,000 words, the length of a small book.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Members of the Society attended the opening of the Library-Museum in July. *Bulletins* have been distributed to High Schools in Albury. There were two requests for speakers: Doug Hunter spoke at James Fallon High School Anzac service; and Jan & Doug Hunter spoke at ANZ Bank evening for investors. Howard Jones was one of the speakers at the History of the *Border Mail* evening hosted by the Wodonga Historical Society.

COMMITTEE

Attendance at committee meetings has exceeded 90% for the year demonstrating the commitment and interest of the members. All have contributed well and the work of *ad hoc* sub-committees that organised the Cemetery Walk, the Adamshurst visit and the establishment of the web site was outstanding.

STATISTICS

Membership details are: Corporate 1[1]; Hon & Life 7[9]; Family & Individual 71[67]. Average attendance at regular meetings: 24[24] with 5[4] apologies. Attendance at Adamshurst visit: 55, and Cemetery Walk 100 est. Finance remained healthy. We have finished with a lower balance than last year, but capital expenditure has been of the order of \$2,500 and it has not been necessary to touch our Investment Fund.

FUTURE

The Society is well positioned to continue to do the usual things we did well in 07/08 and there is an enthusiasm to try new things following on the well received extramural activities held this year. Managing the web site will be a learning experience, and we have access to sound advice and assistance. Gaining more members is important for 08/09. Increased membership will improve finances marginally, but more importantly will give the Society a stronger voice on heritage issues and greater participation in projects and research.

I thank the office-bearers and committee for their work throughout the year, and the members generally for their support. Their ongoing curiosity about the past and wish to preserve a record of it is what drives our Society. Long might it continue.

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JOURNEYING THROUGH THE JOURNALS

By John Craig

Descent: Society of Australian Genealogists (SAG) Journal, March 2008

- Changes to access NSW Dept of Lands;
- City of Sydney property rate assessment books 1845-1948.

The Muster: Central Coast (Gosford) FHS Journal, April 2008.

- Central Coast FHS signs agreement with Ancestry.com.au

AGM AGENDA

Note: Proceedings will be suspended at 7.50pm to introduce Guest Speaker, Horrie Polkinghorne, and will resume after his address and question time.

Minutes of the AGM 13.6.2007

President's Report

Treasurer's Report & Audited Accounts

Appointment of interim chairman to conduct election.

Election of Office Bearers:

Nominations in []

President [*Doug Hunter*]

Vice-presidents (2) [*Joe Wooding, June Shanahan*]

Secretary [*Helen Livsey*]

Treasurer [*Chris McQuellin*]

Minute Secretary [*Jan Marsden*]

Committee of 6 [*Ray Gear, Carole Whitbourn, John Craig, Jill Wooding, Howard Jones, vacancy*]

Appointments

Public Officer [*Helen Livsey*]

General business:

Setting of annual subscription

[*Recommendation: Single \$22; Family \$30; Corporate \$50*]

Meeting closure

Mansfield HS Newsletter, March 2008.

- James Pilkington Campbell, 1865-1935 WWI War Photographer.

Ances-Tree: Burwood and District FHG Newsletter, March 2008.

- James Barnett: Colonial Architect 1827-1904;
- Immigrants to Australia from Dodenau and Reddighausen in Hessen.

History: RAHS Magazine, March 2008.

- The incorrect naming of Mt Wambelong (Warrumbungle National Park);
- Calendar of events 2 April-6 August 2008