

ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN

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MARCH 2009

488

REPORT ON THE FEBRUARY MEETING (11/2/09)

The first meeting of the Society for the new year was well attended, papers presented were of a high standard and participation generally was keen.

The Question of the Month revealed the activities of ants, currawongs, kookaburras, and the appearance of the moon and clouds, sunrise and sunset all have a place in predicting rain. Well, so folklore would have us believe.

Patricia Strachan brought us an entertaining and thoroughly researched history of Albury's 128 year old legal firm Kell Moore Solicitors Pty Ltd. Ray Gear added to our knowledge of Black Range, tracing the last decade before the name was changed to Lavington, and Joe Wooding gave us a brief look at heat-waves and high temperatures in the district since 1860. Howard Jones paved the way for next month's meeting by showing a copy of the recently published history of the Arnold's family business.

During the President's 5 minutes the following matters were mentioned: Members visit to the Library-Museum Storage facility at Thurgoona and the need for volunteers to assist with museum activities; the excellent "A Street named Tobruk" exhibition currently at the Museum; the final two papers in the A&DHS 2008 series have been lodged at the NLA: "Hotels of Albury & District 1840-1899" by Ray Gear, and "Reading Block 19 Bonegilla" by Bruce Pennay. The latter is a guide for secondary school teachers wishing to conduct visits to the Bonegilla Migrant Experience Heritage Park. It is available to be downloaded from the Society website.

NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY

11 MARCH 2009

**7.30pm at Commercial Club
Albury**

Speakers:

**Louise Arnold : "A history of
Arnold's Fruit Market"**

**Chris McQuellin: "12 Squad-
ron Air Training Corps
RAAF 1940-46"**

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

**Who brought the fruit and
vegetables we eat today to
Australia, and when?**

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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 LibraryMuseum.

A&DHS website:

www.alburyhistory.org.au

KELL MOORE SOLICITORS

Talk by Patricia Strachan

If you've read Joe Wooding's book "150 Not Out" then you already have a potted history of the firm and an excellent biography of John Wilkinson. If you haven't read it, you should. It was Bill Kell senior who told me the story of the Colonel, playing cricket at the Sportsground, when he hit a six which landed in the garden of Mate's two storey house "Ranelagh" on the corner of Wodonga Place and Hume Street, where the car sales business is now.

I can't improve on that biography, so I won't try. I found it interesting, though, that his wife's second name was Affleck and his mother-in-law's second name was Affleck. I assume there must be a connection to Thomas Affleck, who grew mulberry trees at Glenmorus and, in 1881, received an award in Sydney for the quality of the silk he produced.

I don't remember John Wilkinson. He died in 1941. I remember his grandson, Peter, the son of Maynard Wilkinson. The family lived round the corner, in Park Avenue, and Peter had a Shetland pony. Boys in the neighbourhood occasionally got a ride on the pony, but us girls never had a chance. Following Peter's death, I met another grandson, Jeffrey Wilkinson, son of Dr. Jeffrey Wilcott Wilkinson, who died in 1944.

But to get back to the firm- John Wilkinson was articled to Albury Solicitor, Joseph Dwyer, and ultimately he was admitted to practise in NSW, and later in Victoria. There's no doubt about Joe Wooding, he has a photographic memory. In no time at all, he produced a copy of an advertisement in the Border Post of 21 September 1881, stating that John Wilkinson would commence practice on 1 October, 1881 at Day's Commercial Buildings in Dean Street.

We had no sooner discussed where that might be than Joe produced a copy of an item in the Albury Banner of 13 February

1885 about Mr. C.L. Griffith purchasing from Mr. G. Day for the sum of four thousand pounds, "the valuable property in Dean Street from the boundary of the Bank of NSW premises westward to the corner of Townsend Street." If we can assume that the Bank of NSW had by this time moved from Townsend Street to the present site of Westpac, then we could be looking at the site of Beehive Chambers, which was the home of the firm until 1965.

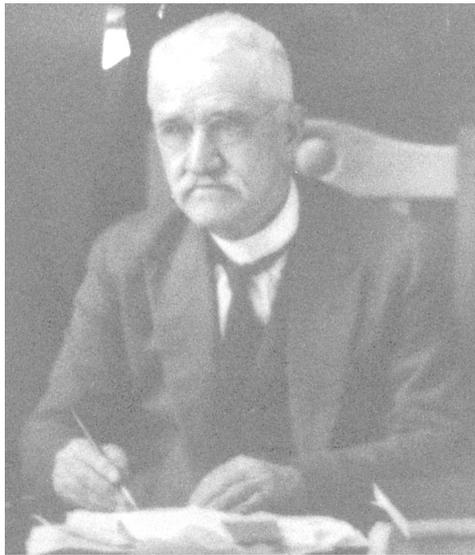
John Wilkinson took his brother, Charles Maynard Wilkinson, into partnership on 1 October 1888 and the firm became known as Wilkinson and Wilkinson. Charles Maynard Wilkinson was certainly back in Sydney in 1904 and from records we have, it looks as if they had some difficulty sorting out who owned what.

John Wilkinson's son, Charles John Wilkinson, was an articled law clerk. He died in 1927. The next partner to arrive on the scene was Henry George Twomey, known as Harry. He had been articled to John Wilkinson and was admitted to partnership in 1926, when the firm became Wilkinson and Twomey.

WILKINSON AND TWOMEY

Harry Twomey was a bachelor and lived with his mother in the old home in David Street. I remember him very well. He was a quiet, pleasant man and I was always fascinated by the five piles of papers he had lined up on the front of his desk. They were each about eight inches high. In the course of a conversation, he'd say, "Yes, I've got a letter about that". He'd reach forward to one of the piles and pull out that particular letter. Jim Purvey remembers that, too. He tells me that Harry's Secretary, Lola, could do the same thing.

Anne Twomey describes Harry as a bohemian - a funny, innocent, gentle, generous, lovely person, who adored his family. About a week before Christmas, he used to turn up at the home of his nephew, Brian Twomey, with the car full of presents for Brian, Anne and the children.



John Wilkinson who founded the firm in 1881. Died 1941.

Mechanical things were quite beyond Harry and apparently it was nothing for Harry to turn up at Bockman's, further along David Street, complaining about terrible noises, whereupon Maurice Schnelle would have to supply, oil, water and petrol and try to explain the need for them.

Harry was an enthusiastic painter and he often had well known artists visiting and using his home as headquarters for painting expeditions. Alfred Coleman was one and another was John Eldershaw. His particular arty friends included Cecil Sheppard, Jack Dallinger and the Misses Wallace.

Harry loved his work and when he retired from the firm in 1965, he continued to do some estate work from home. I remember that when he died in 1971, Brian Twomey brought his files to Bill Kell senior and asked him to sort them out. Taking over an estate file *in media res* can be tricky and having seen how old Bill dealt with one tricky file, I knew what to do when Jim Purvey inherited one similar and asked me to deal with it.

WILKINSON, TWOMEY AND KELL

In 1937, Wilkinson and Twomey became Wilkinson Twomey and Kell. Bill Kell senior, known to us as IGK or old Bill, was actually named Ivan Gilbert Kell and his daughter Judy tells me that in Sydney he was always "Ivan". He went to Sydney Grammar School and became an articled clerk. He was said to have been the youngest person ever to complete the Solicitors' Admission Board course.

The depression was still making it difficult to get work in Sydney, so old Bill bought a practice in Holbrook in 1934. His mother came to live there, too. His friends included Gordon Mackie and Mary and Monty Montgomery. Somehow, he was enticed to go to a ball at the Jingellic Hall, where he met Tup Paton. They were mar-



**Henry George (Harry) Twomey.
Partner 1926-1965.**

ried on 4 January 1938. They had decided that Albury would be a good place to bring up children, so they moved here before their first child was born. Bill retained the Holbrook practice and went out there, regularly, on a Friday.

Ivan Gilbert Kell was no ordinary mortal. He had a brilliant brain and if anyone had ever tested his IQ, they would have had to invent a new scale. I was his assistant for the last 10 years of his life. He needed more time to devote to his wife, the Peninsula Golf Club and his Legacy widows. Those were the days of death duties and we used to

scheme how to make sure that an estate didn't have to pay one cent more than necessary. Our aim was always to draw our documents so exactly that the Commissioner of Stamp Duties couldn't issue any requisitions, thus ensuring that estates were dealt with as quickly as possible. He knew more about the estates of persons who made wills and I knew more about the estates of persons who died without a will, so we made a good combination.

IGK was in the RAAF during World War II and served in New Guinea. He told me once about the retreat from Lae, how important it was to get all the planes away, rather than have them fall into the hands of the Japanese. Also important was the stock in the bar at the Lae Club. Fortunately they were able to get it on the last plane to leave Lae.

Old Bill's father, James Kell, was the second Governor of the Commonwealth Bank. He treasured a 10/- note with the signature "J. Kell" printed on it. Unfortunately, one weekend, two very young thieves wormed their way under the rafters and into the Swift Street premises. They took all the "small" money they could find. A \$10 note was left in Jann's drawer because it was "too big". We

might never have known who the thieves were, if the little girl hadn't told her mother. I think she was about seven. But Bill never got his 10/- note back.

I can't remember IGK ever mentioning politics, but his daughter, Pat, tells me that he was one of the people who attended the meeting in Mates lounge when the Liberal Party was formed.

Bill senior had an elder brother, Ralph, who didn't like the name Ivan. His daughter, Pat, says that her uncle Ralph was responsible for calling him Bill.

IGK was a terrific person for whom to work, as Valerie Garland can testify. She had been scared by one of the staff who told her that his previous secretary had left because she developed high blood pressure. When she met him for the first time, she was very nervous and admitted that it was 16 years and 4 children since she had last worked. He said, "Well, I'll have to be patient, won't I?" and he was.

Val was his last secretary. She remembers that he loved the music of the War years and often she used to hear him whistling a Glen Miller tune as he worked on some big case. When he knew he was dying, in 1980, one of his last actions was to visit all his Legacy widows and say goodbye to them.

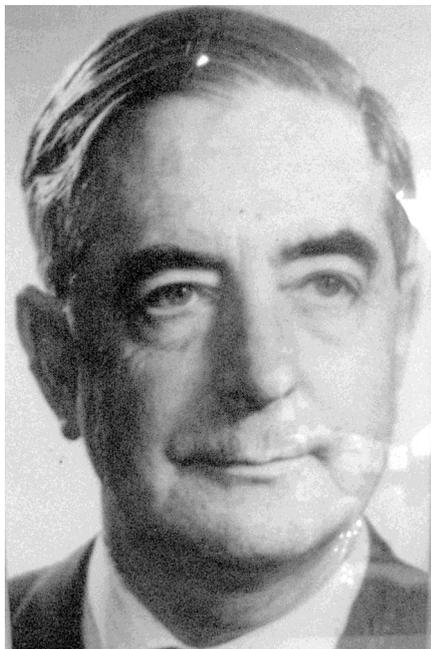
KELL AND MOORE

Don Moore came down from Sydney in 1953. He had been working at the Crown Solicitor's Office and came to handle Court work. Harry Twomey retired in 1965 and Don came into the partnership. The name was changed to Kell and Moore. Don has sent us 12 pages of fascinating notes and a stack of prints from his large collection of slides.

Don has recorded how the business modernised in the 12 years since he and Margaret and baby Bruce arrived in Albury. The firm had gained extra premises with the

retirement of Cleaver Bunton. The receptionist who had been there originally had been replaced by Rosalie Duncan, whom he describes as "well educated, personable and very efficient". We know her now as Rosalie Martin.

One of Don's memories is of a client subdividing his farm at Little River, now known as Killara. Don prepared contracts on the instructions of the estate agent and wrote to each of the intending purchasers asking them to come in and sign the contract "on and after Monday, the". When he arrived at work on the Monday morning, he found 15 new faces waiting for him. He admired these people who were so keen to make a go of it in a new land and when one of them, a young widow, asked him to be her executor, he thought nothing of it, except that she probably had another 40 years ahead of her. A year or two later he received a phone call at 9.00pm one night, to say that she had died and "what do we do with the children?" It was no use explaining that it was not the duty of an executor to do anything about the children, he was the person in authority and the neighbours naturally turned to him. Having made sure that the children were settled for the night, Don went



Ivan Gilbert Kell known as "IGK" or 'old Bill'. Partner 1937-1980.

out next morning and found that the neighbours were quite happy to foster the children, aged from 4 to 12 years. Occasionally, though, during the next 14 years, he was consulted about the welfare of the children.

Don didn't mention that two children of a farmer client, now dead, were great friends of his two eldest children. When the children reached school leaving age, the father told them that they had to leave school and get a job. They were devastated. They wanted to matriculate, so Don and Margaret invited them to stay with the Moore family during their last two years at High School.

Don regards the Holbrook Bushfire case as one of the biggest and most important the firm ever had. In January 1952, some railway workers did some burning off beside the railway line at Ladysmith and in no time



Donald Moore. Partner 1965-1984

a huge fire was racing towards Holbrook. The devastation was enormous. I remember that my own family were driving home from a caravan holiday and could see the smoke and fire ahead. We were pulled up by a fire vehicle - I think a ute - and the driver shepherded us right through the danger area. The landowners got together and instructed IGK to sue the Commissioner for Railways. Eventually liability was admitted and all claims were settled.

At the time when Don came into the partnership, the firm moved to 530 Swift Street, a house which Tup had bought from Ron Phelps and the firm was still there when Don retired in 1984.

VANDALS & A FIRE

The night of 12/13 September 1983 is one which none of us will ever forget. Vandals broke in through a window, couldn't find any money and amused themselves by lighting fires in waste paper baskets. Only in the photocopying room, where all blank paper and forms were stored, did the fire take off. Fortunately for the firm, Border Morning Mail employees were taking a smoke-break, saw the smoke from the fire and called the fire brigade. They then started calling us. By the time I arrived, the fire was under control and the partners were standing in a row, along the footpath, looking at the building. I have never seen such long faces. I went over to thank the BMM em-

ployee who had called me and when I returned, I found that the partners looked a lot better. They had realised that they had proper fire insurance and that a large part of the first floor of Farrer House was vacant. We simply moved in there for several months. It wasn't ideal, but it was better than nothing.

We were lucky that the fire was mainly restricted to the photocopier and blank paper and forms. No files or deeds were lost, but everything was covered with sooty smoke from the burning of the plastic photocopier. My admission certificates had survived the Tietyens fire in 1963 and they survived this one, too, though a little smoke damaged at the edges.

Don's retirement was due to the fact that he was a type 1 diabetic and the stress of work was apt to send his blood sugar level soaring without warning. He and Margaret built units in Thorold Street, Don took up piano teaching and Margaret continued with teaching violin. Only a few years ago, they moved to Grafton, to be near their daughter, Heather. Margaret died a few months ago.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN BULLETIN 489, APRIL 2009]



Which building has this foundation stone?

A clue: it is in the Albury CBD. Come along on Sunday 15 March and enjoy the guided walk. See page 8 for details.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Do you know any folklore indicators that it is going to rain? There is a ring around the moon; red sky at dawn, for example.

This brought forth a plethora of answers. Many remembered sayings of grand-parents predicting rain. Nowadays we rely on the media for weather

forecasting. Satellites track storms likely to influence cricket matches. Forecasts of overnight rain and a heavy track are a factor in the bookmaker's odds.

A selection of sayings:

- Currawongs, kookaburras or plovers calling, alternatively, all birds quiet except currawongs;
- Crescent moon upturned holding water;
- Seeing a black snake on the track;
- One's bunions or rheumatism playing up;
- Ants building a wall around nest;
- Red sky at night, shepherds' delight, Red sky at dawning, shepherds' warning;

There were many more. One would have to say statistically some must have been right some of the time!

BLACK RANGE VILLAGE – ITS LAST DECADE

by Ray Gear

A map in the *Albury Border Post* of 31 August 1900 shows Black Range, south of Kaitlers Road being part of Albury's "bid to host the Federal Capital site." This site was not to make the final list of sites for consideration which saw in late 1908, Canberra selected as the Federal Capital.

Black Range Village was centered in 1900 around, where the Public School had shifted to in 1882 shown on the map at the intersection of the Jindera Road (now Urana Road) and Bungambrawatha Creek. Within the district the Government boring operation that was commenced in 1898, to determine if deep leads existed, was nearing completion. Carrying on prospecting operations during 1900 were: Messrs Moffitt, O'Donnell, Polkinghorne, Strang and the Wealands brothers.

On the 30 June 1900 the Black Range Goldfield area was expanded to 20,500 acres. Two weeks earlier the first game in the Swain Trophy, a three team football competition between Jindera, Thurgoona and Black Range, who were known as the Rangers, was played. At the end of the allocated games Black Range and Thurgoona were tied, but in the playoff for the trophy the Rangers were defeated. Players who represented the Rangers included: Chant, Clark, Collins, B, F & H Danes, Dow, Franklin, B Kelton, Livermore, Morton, C Pearsall, Reid, Shields and Strang.

Dry weather that began around 1897 was in 1901 still generating concern and was to ex-

tend into 1902. As a result of the long running dry, and because of water shortages, assistance from the government was sought for constructing dams and sinking wells. One grant received was "fifty pounds to construct a dam for the mining camp." Dry periods were to be experienced also in 1907 and 1909. Also experienced, in April 1901, was an earthquake that left a fissure "about a quarter of a mile" long.

Following the completion of the Government deep lead boring operation, which proved "encouraging", Crown land was offered for lease in 1901 to mine the lead area. These leases were not taken up due to cost and restrictive lease conditions. They were again advertised four years later with the same result. While mining "took a small stimulus in 1904 when Scholz and party struck a vein on the May Day line", first discovered in the early 1870s, mining activity generally continued to decline while the area under vines and orchards increased.

By 1904 the population of the area was said to be steadily increasing. In June, Peter Henry Carsten announced that he would apply for a Colonial Wine License "for a four room house, four miles from Albury fronting the Albury to Jindera Road." This application and a second application later in the year were refused on the grounds, "that the license would interfere with the good order of the district". The applicant claimed there were some 600 people within a two mile radius of the house, but this was questioned by the Licensing Court "as the electoral roll showed only 180 adults, and 150 children attended school".

Between 1904 and 1908 the various churches serving the growing congregations in the village sought to consolidate their presence. In 1904 St Mary's Catholic Church was built on land today known as 28 Carsten Street. Erected by J S Adams, it was opened by the Rev Father Griffin on 19 June. In the same year, members of the Anglican population, "said to be about forty families", sought also to build a new church. Following this decision land was secured at 468 Urana Road on the corner of Schneider Street. The Methodists in the following year also "purchased for fourteen pounds" land at 472 Urana Road for a future church. To help raise funds for the building of these churches, and for vari-

ous other purposes, a number of events were held which also contributed to the village's social life and feelings of community. These included: concerts, continentals, fetes, harvest festivals and sports days.

St James Anglican Church, that was designed and built by Messrs Frew and Logan, was opened by Venerable Archdeacon Simpson on the 1 December 1907. Eleven months later, the Presbyterian Church purchased land on the opposite corner at 464 Urana Road as a church site for £12, however it appears this land was never used for its intended purpose.

On the 30 September 1904, a Black Range Cricket Club was formed with Walter Corbett, who immigrated to Australia from England around 1876, elected President. Later in the following week the Club joined the Albury Cricket Association which was formed at a meeting held on the 3 October. Other participating teams in the Association were Collegians, Railway, Union, Waratah and Wodonga. This association appeared however to last only one season with Black Range withdrawing from the competition at the end of the first round. Players representing Black Range during the season included: Clark, L Colquhoun, Danes, Fitzgerald, Hague, J Hall, Hoffmann, M Mills, T Miles, Mitchell, Muller, Perryman, Sawyer, Semlitzky, Wealands, Weissel and Williams.

In 1906 Black Range became part of Hume Shire Council which held its first meeting on the 5 December. One of the earliest matters that council was called on to deal with was a collapsed well that catered for the village's domestic requirements including some fourteen families living in bark roofed dwellings which did not have the ability to collect roof runoff. At a cost of just under £24 another well was sunk.

The prospects of the area's fruit industry, commenced in the 1890s, were seen in 1907, "as great". Orchardists mentioned in newspapers included: P A Buchhorn, J Fleming and, John Frauenfelder. Born in Baden, Germany in 1836, John Frauenfelder immigrated to Australia at age 8 with his parents, Johann Peter Frauenfelder, a vigneron, and Barbara (nee Kolb) Frauenfelder. A well known viticulturist, Frauenfelder on moving to the Black Range in the late 1880s, became a "pioneer fruit grower". In particular, he devoted himself to the growing of prunes. His

'Frauenfelder Prunes' became highly sought after and were marketed in "three States". He died in 1918.

The last month of 1907 saw also, confirmation that Phylloxera had reached Black Range and was affecting a small vineyard of some one and a half acres. To combat this pest, Bisulphide of carbon was injected into the ground and the vines destroyed. Unfortunately the pest "believed to have been brought to the district with rootings from Country Cumberland, Camden, or Victoria," continued to spread.

Mining in the Albury District was reported by the *Albury Banner* of May 14, 1909 to be "on the wane". A month earlier the *Border Morning Mail* submitted that "while many experts consider the whole country around Albury contains gold and other minerals, there has never been capital available to sink for the reefs". Names of parties or people working at Black Range mentioned in newspapers of the previous years included: Danes & Neil, Thomas Miles & Party, Moffit & Party, O'Donnell and Strang, Scholz and Party, G Wealands & J Baird, George Wealands & Polkinghorne and the Wealands brothers.

Frank Wealands, the eldest of four brothers working in the district, died aged 48, in January 1905. He was born in Goulburn in 1857, the son of Sydney born Thomas Wealands and Mary (nee Gallagher) Wealands. "Identified with mining work for some thirty years," was an active member of the Anglican population holding over the years various positions in the local church including clergyman's warden in 1885, and joint secretary in 1904 with Messrs Miles.

On November 18, 1908, a public meeting passed a number of resolutions seeking for the village, "a dedicated recreation reserve, a telephone connection with Albury and a renaming of the village" because of conflict, with the name Black Range and similar named localities in Australia. Names initially discussed included Lynton, Rawson and Clinton. In addition the meeting called for a Progress Association to be formed. A week later a committee was elected with Frederick Wells elected President. Wells of Wagga Road was a councillor in the first Hume Shire

Council formed in 1906. He became president of the council, three years later.

Wells was born in Buckland, Gloucester, England in 1861, the son of Stephen Wells, a farmer, and Elizabeth (nee Wisdome) Wells. He immigrated to Australia around 1885 and arrived in Albury via South Australia and Victoria. It was in Victoria, in 1891, that he married Elizabeth Berrill. Wells died in 1945.

Following various representations by the Progress Association, the Postmaster-General approved the name Lavington as a substitute for the name Black Range in May 1909. On the 14 June 1909, Black Range as the name for a village north of Albury was, according to a local newspaper, "officially at any rate, a matter of history".

Principal Bibliographical Sources: *Albury Banner & Wodonga Express, Albury Border Post, Albury Daily News, Border Morning Mail,*

MYSTERY ITEM AT THE MUSEUM STORAGE FACILITY IDENTIFIED

The *Border Mail* of 17 January 2009 showed two mystery items and asked for help in identifying them. One has been identified as a lamb marking cradle. But any ideas what this other one might be?

The handle pushes bars of wood down through sharp metal blades. One suggestion



was that it was used to slice apples or carrots for baiting rabbits.

Any informed ideas out there?

Library-Museum Volunteer Information Session

Tuesday 3 March 2009

3.00-5.00 p.m. at the
Albury Library-Museum.

This is an opportunity to find out how you might help the Cultural Services Team in the task of maintaining our Library-Museum, its storage, exhibition and research facilities to perform at the highest level.

PEOPLE & BUILDINGS OF THE CBD

**A CONDUCTED WALK ON
SUNDAY 15 MARCH 2009
2.30-3.30 p.m.**

**Starts and finishes in the
forecourt of the Library-
Museum, cnr Kiewa & Swift
Streets.**

**Speakers: Howard Jones, Ray
Gear, Bruce Denny, Joe Wooding
and Doug Hunter.**

All welcome

**PIONEER CEMETERY WALK
SUNDAY 19 APRIL 2009**

2.30-4.00 p.m.

**Starts and finishes at the
lychgate, northern end of
David Street.**

**Coordinator: Chris McQuellin
BYO thermos afternoon tea at
the completion of the walk.**