

ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC BULLETIN

Registered by Australia Post PP 225170/0019

JULY 2009

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REPORT ON THE JUNE MEETING (10/6/09)

Mrs Nancy Rooke, Wiradjuri elder, brought a welcome to country to open the June meeting of the Society. Nancy was congratulated on her award of the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the Queen's Birthday Honours list. Jan Marsden presented Nancy with a bouquet of flowers in recognition of her achievements. Later in the meeting presentations were made to two other recipients of the OAM, Dr Bruce Pennay and Mr Doug Hunter.

The meeting was held in the Albury Council Chamber in order to mark the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of the Municipality of Albury on 4 June 1859. The mayor of Albury City, Councillor Patricia Gould OAM, was the guest speaker. A DVD that was made to mark the 60th anniversary of the proclamation of Albury as a city in 1946, was played. The DVD featuring interviews with a number of Albury residents who grew up in the 40s, 50s and 60s in Albury.

Jan Hunter spoke briefly on the election of the first woman to Albury Council, Alderman Ivy (Bobbie) Derkenne in 1971.

At the conclusion of this part of the proceedings, the Annual General Meeting of the Society was conducted. Chris McQuellin was elected president of the Society for the next twelve months. The position of treasurer was left to the committee to resolve. Subsequently Michael Browne was appointed to the position with Chris advising on methods the auditor requires.

Chris is a keen and active local historian and will no doubt bring fresh ideas and energy to the leadership of the Society. He looks forward to working alongside the committee and in assisting all who are researching the history of Albury and district. He

NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY

8 JULY 2009

7.30pm at Granite Hall

Dellacourt Hostel

Nicholson Place

West Albury

Speaker: David Nicholson:

"My experience as a chemist in Albury."

Please bring plate for supper.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

For whom is Dellacourt
named?

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ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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Vice-Presidents: Joe Wooding, June Shanahan

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Committee: John Craig, Jan Marsden, Jill Wooding, Doug Hunter OAM, Ray Gear and Carole Whitbourn.

Journals & Stock: John Craig

Membership list & Bulletin dispatch: Ray Gear

Bulletin Editor: Doug Hunter 02 6021 2835
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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

is keen to be made aware of projects others are pursuing.

Helen Livsey was re-elected as secretary and public officer, and will continue as research officer. Joe Wooding and June Shanahan were re-elected as vice-presidents and Catherine Browne as minute secretary.

Doug Hunter did not seek re-election after five years in office but was elected to the committee and will continue as editor of the *Bulletin*. John Craig, Ray Gear, Michael Browne, Jill Wooding and Jan Marsden were all re-elected to the committee.

The meeting approved the recommendation of the committee that the annual subscription remain at \$22 individual, \$30 family membership and \$50 corporate membership.

150 YEARS OF ALBURY

Talk by Councillor Patricia Gould OAM Mayor of Albury City

It is of course very timely to be looking back on the past, given that only last week we celebrated Albury having been proclaimed a municipality, 150 years ago.

There is a lot of colour and



TREE PLANTING AT ALBURY BOTANIC GARDENS 4 JUNE 2009

As part of the 150th anniversary, the mayor, Councillor Patricia Gould OAM planted a tree at the Botanic Gardens on the morning of 4 June 2009.

Right: Cr Gould planting tree.

Above: Cr Gould with representatives of James Fallon High School, Alex Keith and Caitlan McConnell.

James Fallon was the first mayor of Albury.

fun in the memories that milestones like this evoke. There are also some fabulous stories from 150 years ago that it is timely to revisit.

One of my favourites is that surrounding how Albury celebrated back in 1859 when news came from Sydney that we had officially become a municipality.

Bonfires were lit, there were fireworks from the balcony of the Exchange Hotel and burning barrels - filled with tar - were rolled down the road making for an exciting night for the whole community. Back then, we had a population of about 600 people. Now of course, it is more like 48,000.

When it came time to elect Albury's first council, the population had 28 candidates to choose from.

Local people were encouraged to vote for men, of course, and in particular those with qualities such as sobriety, intelligence, education and experience. It was seen to be an advantage if they could read or write.

It will not be news to you that James Fallon won the poll with 65 votes and was duly elected mayor. He was joined by Jones, McLaurin, Kidd, Wise, Horsley, McGall, Roper and Davis.

I am told, and Howard Jones, you may know better whether this was true - that the results of the election were leaked to the then *Border Post* prior to the meeting. Not something that would happen in this day and age, of course.

Of course this was all back when swimming was banned during daylight hours and it took 27 hours to get to Melbourne on the mail coach.

It is those kind of things, of course, that help to bring his-

tory to life and give a sense of what life was like. Continuing on that theme, I would now like to show you a short DVD that Albury-City commissioned in order to celebrate our 60 years of being a city in 2006. I am sure you will recognise many of the local identities who share their stories about Albury in the 40s, 50s and 60s.



LAVINGTON 100 YEARS

By Jan Marsden

The people of Lavington really made the 100 year Celebrations an historic event. On 15 June, the hall was filled with young and old and the children of the Lavington School, formerly Black Range School, gave a very realistic presentation of the Progress Association's meetings which resulted in Black Range becoming Lavington on 15 June 1909.

In a relaxed atmosphere all the formalities were observed, from our Mayor, Councillor Patricia Gould's welcome and residents' reminiscences. The Lavington Family History Group gave a brief outline of their aims and launched their book *Moments in Time*. (Available for a gold coin donation.) The school choir sang our National Anthem. A cake, decorated to honour the early settlers who came for the gold and remained to form a community, was then cut.

How proudly Mrs Eveline Cooper, a centenarian, together with our Mayor, cut the cake. Happy Wetmore was equally proud of his 1959 School Captain's Medal which he presented to the present school captain. It will remain with the school into the future.

A touch of the days of Black Range was a kerosene engine, beautifully restored, which worked a crusher and was set up to demonstrate how gold bearing rock yields its treasure to the gold pan.

In true community style all attended were invited to share a light lunch and over a cuppa lots of memories were exchanged.

MRS BOBBIE DERKENNE, FIRST WOMAN IN ALBURY COUNCIL 1971

By Jan Hunter

In 1959 Mrs Bobbie Derkenne first stood for election to Albury City Council. Her given names were Ivy Constance, and her husband's name was not Bobbie. The first woman nominee for council was Dorothy Helena Prossor, a life-long West Albury resident, who first stood in 1953. Although nominating several times Helena was never elected. Derkenne was not successful in 59 and it was another 12 years and six tries before she was elected as Albury's first woman councillor. Bobbie Derkenne was very active in political and local affairs. She was private secretary to politicians, D G Padman and Sir David Fairbairn, and to the headmaster of Albury Grammar School. She was a member of the Regional Promotion Council, the Good Neighbour Council and the Concert Hall and Industries Committees. She was President of the Women's Liberal Club.

Derkenne's first advertisement, in 1959, with a photo of her in a hat, assured the ladies that "The Voice of Women" of Albury will be

heard in Council if they "Vote 1 Derkenne." She suggested to the "Gentlemen" that the women of Albury are anxious to do their part in helping them attain more effective, progressive local government. If the gentlemen give her second preference that would at least indicate that Albury's men have confidence in their womenfolk. "Derkenne for the Women of Albury." was her slogan.

When first nominating, Bobbie felt that it would be an advantage to have a woman on council when matters having a bearing on home life were discussed. But also "women are well aware that any threat to industry is a threat to employment and that is a threat to families..." By 1971, Derkenne was not emphasising the women's line. She refused endorsement by a Civic Reform Group as "I would undertake local government responsibility on the behalf of the community honestly and without any leaning to any particular affiliation," she said. The photo accompanying these comments was captioned - "Mrs Ivy Derkenne in her garden, independent but feminine."

In 1971, Derkenne saw the promotion of the area through the tourist industry as vital. Her advertisement urged Albury to vote for "Independent Ivy". At last, after 12 years, Ivy Derkenne was elected. A woman had made it! I was reminded of the views of the time when, just a couple of years ago, I was interviewing a retired plumber about his life. He was 100. In his conversation he said... 'you remember that first woman on the council? We called her Glamour Puss.. what was her name again?'

Three years after Bobbie Derkenne, Robyn Cain and Patricia Gould were elected to council and women have played a role in Albury's Local Government ever since, with two women serving mayoral terms, one being the current mayor.

MORE PRESENTATIONS FROM THE PIONEER CEMETERY WALK

JOHN, ANNABELLA & JAMES HUNTER

Compiled by Doug Hunter

John Hunter was my great-grandfather. I have no idea whether he was called John or possibly Jack. I only ever heard him referred to as Grandfather.

John Hunter was born at Morang in the Yan Yean District just north of Melbourne in 1862 where his parents, Peter and Roseanna Hunter (nee Fitzpatrick) were farming. He was the 8th and youngest surviving child in the family. He

died at Albury District Hospital in 1933.

Annabella Wells was born at Woodend Victoria in 1866. She was the 9th surviving child of James and Mary Wells (nee Underwood). James Wells occupation was listed as farmer. She died at Albury District Hospital four years earlier than her husband, 1929.

They are both buried in the Presbyterian section of the Pioneer Cemetery, as are two of their sons Peter and James. How the family became Presbyterian is uncertain. John's parents Peter and Roseanna were married at St Francis Roman Catholic Church Melbourne in 1847.

John and Annabella were both first generation Australians, their parents having migrated from England, Scotland and Ireland.

The couple married at Shepparton in 1885. Two children were born while they were at Thoona, a settlement between Shepparton and Benalla. I believe they spent some time at Rutherglen before moving to Bulgandra between Walbundrie and Rand.

At Bulgandra, John Hunter had a blacksmith shop and a wine shanty on the Urana Road. Bulgandra was in those days a gold mining settlement. He also had a reputation as a bush carpenter and built several houses at Bulgandra using pise or rammed earth construction. When the railway line from Henty to Rand opened in 1920, Bulgandra withered. It seems likely John and Annabella moved to Albury about that time and lived in Carrington Street. My father Ken lived with his grandparents in Carrington Street while he attended Albury Rural School.

My father had some memories of Grandfather at Bulgandra. One in particular was watching him clean the two revolvers he had. Just what was the purpose of the firearms I never found out. Perhaps to keep order in the wine shanty if things got out of hand. The other story was that my aunts hated going to see Grandfather because he insisted on kissing them and he had a huge handlebar moustache.

Both John and Annabella died before I was born, so unfortunately did my grandfather John James Hunter whose grave is next to his parents. He died in 1926, aged only 38, leaving a widow and four children of whom my father Ken was the oldest at 13.

Jim, as he was called, was born at Thoona in 1888. He married Euphemia McInnes at German-ton (Holbrook) in 1913 and lived at Bulgandra. He worked as a shearing contractor in partnership with Arthur Leslie.

During the off season he worked loading wheat onto rail trucks at Ferndale Siding. Wheat in those days was bagged on the farm then brought

by wagon to the siding and placed in large stacks. Rail trucks were dropped off at the siding to be loaded.

Following Jim's death my grandmother moved to Albury where she believed there would be greater opportunities for her children. She lived nearby at 839 David Street till close to her death at 103.

As I said I never knew my grandfather, however I have something written by my father in 1995.

JIM HUNTER: My father and some of my memories of him.

Written by JK (Ken) Hunter in 1995.

First of all it is 69 years since he passed away and I was only 13 years old.

My most vivid memory of him was as a little boy and he was the strongest man in the district or in the world.

He was a top class shearer. I used to go to the shearing shed at Bulgandra Station and watch all the shearers. In the summer dad worked as a wheat buyer and lumper at Ferndale Siding just north of Rand.

As this job was mainly through school holidays he used to take me with him.

All the wheat was brought to the Siding on horse drawn wagons. The wheat was all in bags and had to be unloaded and stacked by the railway line and at a later date loaded onto the trains for transport to the big cities where the flour mills were.

[Men picked up a bag on their shoulder and walked up a plank on to the rail-truck. As the pile of bags got higher the plank was raised. My father loved to pick up the last two bags to complete a load, tuck one under each arm and trot up the plank.]

He used to love fishing and when I was quite young he would take me with him. It was great fun, I used to love it.

Charlie, my younger brother, came sometimes but had no patience and wanted to go home after half an hour. We fished in the Billabong Creek and caught mostly blackfish and sometimes a Murray Cod.

He took me to the Murray River at Howlong once. Alison, my sister, was with us. I caught a nice redfin and put it in a bucket. Alison came along, picked it up; it kicked and she dropped it and back into the river it went. Dad looked at me and said, "You will have to catch it again."

He played fullback for Bulgandra football team with three of his brothers. He had five brothers [including Maurie who played with St Pats in Albury and Richmond.]

But I remember Dad mostly as a cricketer; a fine bowler and also a good bat. He once took all 10 wickets in a grand final against Walla Walla. I did not see the match, or don't remember it, but

heard the story from my uncles after.

I remember him buying a motor car in 1928. We all thought it was great (a Dodge Tourer). Later in the year he became very ill and was told by the Drs he only had 3 years to live. He was then 35 years old.

Early 1926, January or February, he took us, Mum, Alison, Jean and I to West Wyalong and with two other families we went on a tour of the Riverina up as far as Bathurst and Orange. Dad and I and the other men fished in the Lachlan, Murrumbidgee, Lake Cargelligo and Burrinjuck Dam. While at Wyalong, Dad and 3 other men went out one night to fish in the Bland Creek. I was very put out when I was to stay home being classed as too young to stay out all night.

They came home next morning with a bag full of catfish.

In later years I was to cross the Bland Creek many times and there never seemed to be enough water to catch anything.

Towards the middle of 1926, Dad got sicker and sicker and finally passed away on the 13th of October.

In such a short time he taught me to tie on fish hooks, to be patient when fishing and the most likely spots to catch fish.

Dad's father John and brothers Carl and George built the house we first lived in at Bulgandra and later they built several more houses, [all of] 'pise' construction.

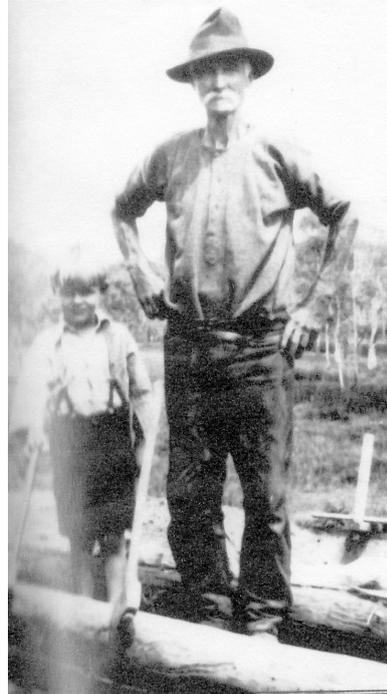
I was born in the house at Bulgandra.

Dad was 6ft 1inch tall and weighed 14 stone, and had red hair, but I can only remember him as in the advanced stage of baldness.

WILLIAM MONTE

Compiled by Kevin Monte

William Monte was born at Sheepwash Creek near Bendigo on 6 July 1862. He married Anna Maria (Annie) Hintz at St Matthews Church Albury on 22 August 1899. He died at Albury District Hospital 19 July 1940.



Champion Axeman, William Monte and son Ned

I can recall some events concerning my grandfather as I was 10 years old when he passed on.

He was a champion axeman during his younger years. It was not unusual for him to walk from Bonegilla to shows at Bethanga, Tallangatta, Wodonga and Albury to compete then walk home again.

He worked as a miner at Sheepwash Creek then later at the Bethanga mines. He and my father

worked on the Hume Weir construction together. After that my grandfather was classed as a wood-cutter & fencing contractor working in the Ebden-Bonegilla-Hume Weir area.

The family house was located at the end of Smiths Lane, Bonegilla. All the offspring occu-

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ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP

APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

Please complete the reverse and forward it with your subscription to the:

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Albury 2640

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pied the house, but grandfather occupied a slab, bark and iron hut beside the main dwelling. An orchard surrounded the house and I was always presented with a bag of fruit during my visits.

I knew little of my grandmother, Annie, as she passed away on 23 July 1923, well before I was born. I tried to find out more from the only living son, Edward Rupert (Ned) Monte, but he has little knowledge of his mother. She died when he was 2 years old.

My grandfather loved a beer. I can clearly remember the pit he dug to store his bottles. They were always covered with a wet bag.

I am told his favourite watering hole was the Blazing Stump Hotel on the way into Wodonga. My father had a story of the time grandfather won Champion Axeman at the Wodonga Show. On this occasion he was travelling in a horse and gig (sulky). On the way home from the Show he stopped at the Stump and made the mistake of having one too many. On leaving the Hotel he fell and broke his arm.

Some mates put him in the gig, smacked the horse on the tail and it took him home. When he arrived, the girls saw his plight and had to turn round and drive him back to Wodonga to the doctor. His arm was set in plaster and he was driven home again, this time straight past the pub!

I have other memories of my grandfather, but in 1938 my father joined the RAAF. Then war broke out in 1939 and we moved around. I don't think I saw my grandfather again before he died. I didn't attend his funeral.

GUNDAR SINGH

An interesting funeral reported in the local newspaper Monday August 5th 1907.

Compiled by Chris McQuellin

Yesterday the remains of a Hindu named Gundar Singh, who died on Saturday 2nd of August [1907] in

the Albury Hospital, were cremated in the Indian Section of the Albury Cemetery.

The corpse was conveyed to the funeral pyre by Mr A Harris, the Manager of James Nelson Undertakers and Embalmers of Kennedy's Building in Olive Street.

The event excited some interest amongst the townspeople and quite a number proceeded out to the cemetery to see the unusual event.

The corpse was handled only by his countrymen and they alone were allowed to touch the body.

At about 10 a.m. the cavalcade set forth and the body was placed on a heap of firewood and covered up with more firewood. Upwards of three cords of wood (A cord measures four feet by four feet by eight feet (1.21 by 1.21 by 2.43 metres) were used in constructing the funeral pyre.

The body had been previously anointed with the best factory butter and a large quantity (about 14 or 15 pounds (6.5kg) was placed upon the dead man's chest.

After the pyre was lit, prayers and incantations were continued at intervals by a number of the deceased's countrymen and a number of Europeans also visited the ceremony during the day.

The fire burned for hours and when the ashes had cooled a search was made for the small bones, teeth etc which were collected, placed in a box and forwarded to the deceased native country and thrown into the sacred waters of the River Ganges.

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Answer to June Question of the Month & Journeying through the Journals carried over to next month.

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Tip from the National Archives.

If you are writing on the back of your old photographs, write lightly and use a *2B* pencil only.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

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