

# Greenfield Park

*Jan Hunter*

When you next go past the rugby league ground at Greenfield Park, take a look at the walnut trees on the Alma Street side.

They are the remaining evidence of what was known as Greenfield's Paddock, where a farm produced a steady stream of prize winning vegetables, flowers and fruits exhibited in local shows from 1911 to 1927.



Some of the 20 houses built in Alma St in 1942

Thomas Greenfield, a monumental mason became a partner of Mr George Ballantine in 1884, setting up in the vicinity of West End Plaza, Kiewa Street and also High Street, Wodonga. When Ballantine left for Melbourne, Thomas continued providing gravestones, as well as foundation stones for many churches and buildings, establishing a display yard and workshop. After WWI he designed and built St Matthew's memorial obelisk, which was unveiled in front of the church in 1920. He also designed and built the memorial fountain at the showgrounds for George Mackay (1907), and built the Charles Dight Memorial Fountain (1916).

Greenfield, who married nurse Eliza Smith in 1888, knew great sadness. Their six-month-old twin boys died in 1890 and Eliza died of tuberculosis in 1901, after giving birth to Frank only weeks before her death. Thomas crafted the Greenfield gravestones for his mother, his sister, his "wee lads" and his first wife, in the Albury Pioneer Cemetery.

Thomas was involved in Albury political movements, held office at St Matthew's Church and was a founding member of the Albury Horticultural Society. He served on council in 1903.

In 1912, Thomas married Margaret Ann White, of Stonehurst, Bungowannah, and she joined him in successfully exhibiting flowers, bottled fruit, jams and craft.

Thomas Greenfield died in 1927 and his land was later used as an extension of Billson Park. In 1942 the government built 20 tiny houses for munitions workers in Alma Street. Sheltered by the remains of Greenfield's trees, they were promptly nicknamed "the walnut shells". Greenfield's Paddock was resumed by council and became Greenfield Park in 1949.