Albury's "Most Imposing Structure"

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Major banks established relatively early in Albury in the nineteenth century and it was not long before they built impressive banking premises to show off their brand and attract customers.

The most imposing building was the premises of the Australian Joint Stock Bank on the corner of Dean and Kiewa streets. The bank bought the land in 1876 for £1,800 on a site known at the time as "Day's Corner."

In May 1877 the *Border Post* reported a "rather novel sight of a pugilistic encounter on the scaffold of a two-story building in Albury … the combatants were two bricklayers engaged in creating the new Australian Joint Stock Bank … the first sign of hostilities was the knocking down of one of the men by his mate with a bricklayer's hod … the injured one rushed on his aggressor, and a rough hand-to-hand combat raged, both men in imminent danger of falling headlong into the street below … they were forcibly held until they had calmed down, and exhibited tokens of being amenable to reason."

The bank building in the early 1920s – by then it had become the premises of
the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney

The building opened in December 1877 with the *Sydney Morning Herald* reporting "The splendid building is by far the handsomest structure of the kind in Albury, and would compare favourably with many of the metropolitan banks. The worst of it is that it makes all other buildings in the street appear terribly 'dumpy'."

The bank had first appeared in Albury in May 1857 in Day's Commercial Building, Dean street. Mr A H McKee was the first manager and he still held the position over 20 years later.

In 1909 the Joint Stock Bank became the Australian Bank of Commerce. They sold their Albury premises to the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney in June 1911. The *Border Morning Mail*

reported that the price paid for the "massive and palatial structure, with two storey residential quarters ... would constitute a record in Albury."

The CBC Bank had first opened in Albury in May 1859 on the corner of Townsend and Smollett streets. In 1893 that building became the Criterion Hotel, later re-named the Gloucester.

The bank building pictured was demolished in March 1937 and in December 1937, the CBC Bank opened a new building on the site.

With the merger of the CBC and National banks in 1983, the National Bank moved into the building.