

Albury & District Historical Society

March 2018

No 587

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www.alburyhistory.org.au

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Next Meeting

Wed 14 March,
7.30pm Commercial Club

History of the Albury Club

Speaker: Tony Brandt

**ALBURY
LIBRARYMUSEUM
FAMILY BUSINESS:
ALBURY FAMILIES AND
THE LEGACIES THEY
BUILD**

SAT 5 MAY - SUN 24 JUNE

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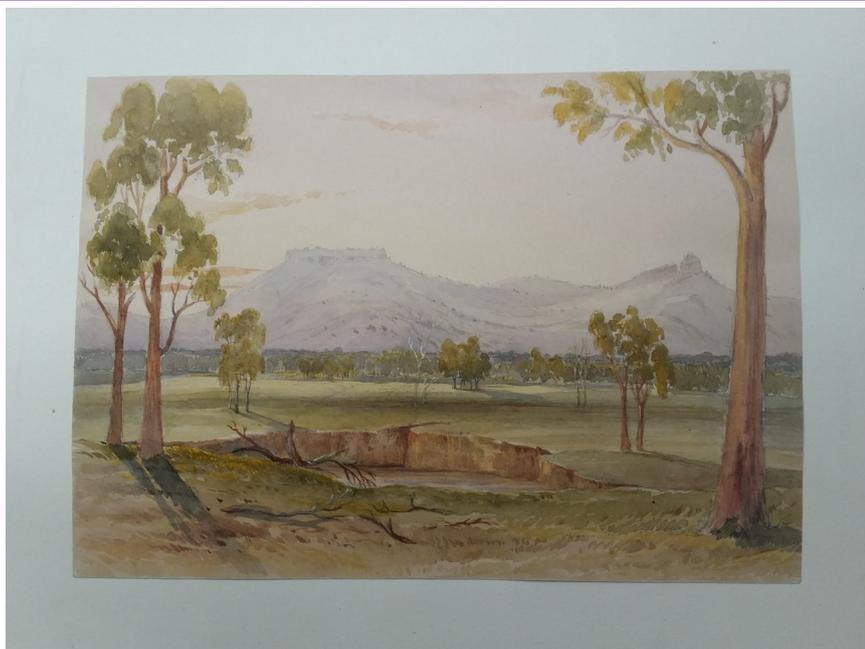


Table Top Mountain 1885 by James A.C. Willis, a sketcher and surveyor.
The Mitchell Library holds an album of thirty-one of Willis's watercolour views of rural New South Wales.

REPORT ON FEBRUARY MEETING (14.02.2018)

Chris de Vreeze gave an intriguing address on our deep past by pointing to evidence of the separation of Gondwanaland and Australia's inland sea, citing for example Table Top Mountain, The Rock and the Bunya pine.

His discussion of mountains, hills, rocks, rivers, creeks and valleys and climate patterns narrowed to Aboriginal landscapes and to aboriginal occupation of the land. Chris is a dedicated toponymist and took particular delight in discussing place names and their pronunciation as relics of that occupation. The recurrence of common word prefixes and suffixes indicated a wide spread of different language groups: for example in, for example, Kiewa and Corowa, Bungambrawatha, Moorwatha and Barnawatha; and Talbingo, Talmalmo and Talgarno. Throughout his talk Chris touched on some of the ways people like Hume and Hovell as well as JFH Mitchell helped him and us to understand the first peopling of Albury and district. Howard Jones introduced his new book Unwelcome Strangers which highlights some of the characters and professions of the early Chinese people in the area. They were initially attracted to the gold fields around Beechworth while later arrivals often became shop keepers or café owners. Due to the anti-Chinese sentiment many eventually returned to their homeland. The drought years of 1967/68 were recalled by Eric Cossor when the building of the Dartmouth Dam was first considered as water shortages were experienced by many towns in the district. Further to Bruce Pennay's talk on Indiana Court, Heritage in My Street, a letter of support from the society has been sent to Albury City Council to help secure funding from the NSW Heritage 'Near Me' program. This will finance interpretative public artwork which will commemorate the former Indian Cemetery Reserve in the playground/ barbecue area of Jelbart Park.

THE DEEP HISTORY OF ALBURY & DISTRICT

A Conversation between Chris de Vreeze & Bruce Pennay

Table Top Mountain (named Battery Mount by Hume & Hovell) is a significant point in our local topography, we think of land being stable, we have surveyors measuring it but latitude and longitude are not constant. Table Top was once the floor of an inland sea. It has been tilted and for a very good reason. During the post Gondwanaland split the Eastern portion sank to form New Zealand and New Caledonia and the Western portion stayed where it was. However there was a buckling of the plate that the Great Divide now rests on. We see evidence of that upheaval now in Table Top Mountain, The Rock and the Galore Hill. They are classified as undifferentiated sedimentary conglomerates. The evidence of Gondwanaland is contained in fossil records and the discovery of different species of pines including the Bunya and Dorrigo pines having relatives in South America. We now have a temperate Mediterranean climate and the last of the glacial episodes occurred about 20,000 years ago. Climate change was extreme, moving from an arctic climate to a moist climate with voluminous river flows. The river systems would have had floods then that would make floods today look like a trickle. After the floods settled down we have been left with extensive fertile plains. The Western plains have been inhabited for a very long time. Skeletal remains recovered from Lake Urana in a sand quarry have been dated at a similar age to those found at Lake Mungo.

Chris has collected different stories from many aboriginal elders including Uncle Fred Dowling, Eddie Kneebone, Pastor Cec Grant and Mum Nancy Rook. Apart from evidence of early inhabitants at Albury there are stories of fixed habitation at Urana. Initial meetings involved sharing of clothing, handshakes and mutual curiosity. Hume and Hovell followed aboriginal pads or trails and noted the existence of small family groups. The extended family of Elizabeth Mitchell were decent people who co-existed with the tribes who had connections in the area. JFH Mitchell wrote a valuable book published in 1906 titled *Aboriginal Dictionary (Woradgery Tongue) of Birds, Beasts, Fishes, Etc., Weapons and Timber, Also Customs and Ceremonies of the Tribe*.

Mungabareena, now gazetted as an aboriginal place by the NSW Government is not the exact location of the camp which was on higher ground towards the airport, away from the risk of flooding. Greenfield Park was another camping area. Big and Little Budginigi Hill at Table Top were women's sites and should not be climbed.

Toponymy is the study of place names, their origins, meanings, use, and typology.

For example the names Talbingo, Talgarno, Talmalmo, Tallangatta and Tallandoon. These towns all overlook rivers and TAL means camping place. In aboriginal language the before and after words are qualifiers. Bungambarwartha, Barnawartha and Moorwartha were associated with the Bangerang tribe. In Mungabareena the "areena" is the call of the quail. The names have all been interpreted in various forms from the spoken aboriginal word which has resulted in ongoing arguments today over the pronunciation of town names. Some people say Kiewah some say Kiewar! Is it Bone-gilla or Bona-gilla?

Jindera was named after the Jingerra lagoon just before Splitters Creek near Wonga Wetlands.

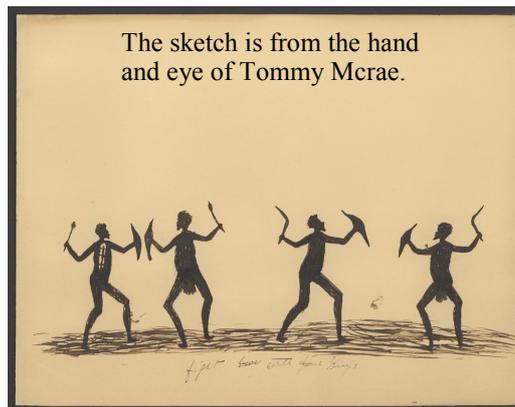
EXCERPT FROM HUME & HOVELL'S JOURNAL 1824

Saturday, 13th November. All day, except about sunrise and two hours before sundown, the weather has been very hot and sultry and, of course, travelling is very fatiguing, but more so for the cattle than for ourselves. A little after sunrise we proceeded on our journey and stopped for breakfast beside some ponds of water. This distance we had gone by 9 o'clock. Here we remained till 3 o'clock, and again started, we passed between an opening of two hills, from which a mountain (being the south end of a range) came into view, which, from its exact resemblance to a fortification, bulwarks, platform, and the short trees, or bushes, here and there appearing like men standing on the top of the wall, I thought we could not give it a better name than "Battery Mount." All the distance we came yesterday, as well as to-day, has been fine open forest country, and from what we can see from the highest hill near us, the whole of the country from north to west appears the same; but what we passed through this afternoon may be compared with the best of the cow-pastures. In some places you might fancy yourself on the very spot—the soil, the sloping hills covered with an excellent coat of grass, the box tree, and

others peculiar to that part of the country, but not quite so thick, but all combined assists to fix the mind more strongly on the imagination. As it appears there has not been any rain for a considerable time in this quarter, the ground is rather parched, but the grass has a fine healthy appearance, and the creeks are rather low.

Sunday, 14th November. In the middle of the day there was every appearance of rain, as a thunder squall passed over us about 10 a.m. We did not proceed to-day as the cattle were too much fatigued from yesterday's journey. As Battery Mount is only about two miles west from us, myself and Mr. Hume went to the top, and on arrival there, the view amply repaid us for our trouble. There is one continuation of forest from S.W. to west and from that round to N.N.E. with scarcely anything more than gentle sloping hill, here and there rising; but to the west as far as the eye can reach, not a hill to be seen, after fifteen or twenty miles from us. But from N.E. to east, and from that to nearly S.W., particularly S.E., is one continuous line of irregular mountainous country, apparently with no passage between. By the smoke we saw rising S.W. to west, there is little doubt that there are plenty of natives. This means fresh hopes for us, as where they resort there is little doubt but the country is passable and contains plenty of food. I before stated that when we first saw this mount it had a very singular but pretty appearance. We found it equally so, and more interesting, when we began to examine it more closely.

It appears that between the very end of the range, and about one mile northwardly, two parts of the range have slidden out, leaving a piece in the middle, about 100 or 150 feet high, and about 50 or 60 feet thick, the width, or rather length, probably half a mile. This appears to overhang, consequently it is not possible to get to the top (where there are bushes growing). It therefore resembles a regularly built wall, particularly when you compare it to some of the old walls at home, built by the Romans and Danes, its materials being evidently rolled, irregularly sized stones, held together by a sort of cement so firm that it is with difficulty we could separate it. But there is little doubt that it falls to pieces very fast when there is much rain as there are large cracks from top to bottom, every moment to fall upon fallen from the top, all the side, as from what I saw of which it had separated, the on the east side, and, of say, about fifteen degrees. excellent, dry quality. The end is much larger, and took notice as we that, in many parts of the leaving two sides



which appear to threaten you. Except for what had earth had gone to the west an adjoining mount from highest part of the strata was course, falling on the west, The soil below is of an piece which is standing at the accessible on two sides. We approached them yesterday range, pieces had slidden out, perpendicular.

“Observations on the Urana skeleton suggest that it is similar to the Lake Mungo I female dated to approximately the same period (Thorne 1976). The finding of fully modern human remains of this age and gracility at Lake Urana is given added significance due to the rarity of Pleistocene human remains in this part of the Riverine Plain. There is no other example of such an ancient site within the Wiradjuri country of Australia. TL dates on beach and lunette deposits at Lake Urana show that the period between about 30 kyr and 25 kyr was associated with a full fresh-water lake providing resources capable of supporting human occupation and similar to those that existed during the Mungo lacustral period at the Willandra Lakes. Abundant lake side food sources would have included marsupials, reptiles, emu eggs, mussels and fish of the same species that presently occur in the Murray and Darling Rivers.” Australian Archaeology. Jan 1994

HELP WANTED

Margie Wehner is organising commemorative plaques around Jindera for the 150th celebrations later this year. There are some gaps in information relating to some business entities in the town. If anyone has records or associated information that could help Jindera find additional information please contact Margie by email at mjwehner@bigpond.net.com or Ph: 0408409842.

JINDERA INFORMATION

INDIANA COURT LAVINGTON

HERITAGE IN MY STREET

In his contribution to the society's series of talks on 'my street', Bruce Pennay explained how Indiana Court was developed and named. He showed how Lavington grew strongly in the post-war years as a home to newly arrived migrants. However, the East Lavington of the former Murray Valley Vineyard did not begin to flourish until the mid-1960s.



Much of a new three-street subdivision, off Dick Road, was, in 1967, designed, built on and marketed by three men - Harry van Galen, an architectural draughtsman; Jack Jacobs, a builder; and John O'Shaughnessy, a real estate agent. Van Galen had spent eighteen months in America before he migrated from the Netherlands to Australia in late 1954. He heard the words 'Indian Reserve' used for the Indian Cemetery Reserve which is now Jelbart Park and named the streets after American Indians. The Indian cemetery, however, was for Punjabi hawkers who were familiar of the area and who had formally arranged to dispose of their dead there. Van Galen was often to tell this story of the 'wrong Indians' against himself.

Bruce went on to explain that Albury City Council is considering ways of providing a more suitable reminder of the Indian Cemetery Reserve than siting a barbecue at a former Sikh, Hindu, Muslim cremation and resting place. Today about 11% of Albury's Indian population lives near Jelbart Park. That makes it a good place to prompt public memory, not only of the early hawkers, but also of other waves of new residents from overseas. It is a place for telling stories of the marginalisation and inclusion of the newly arrived from overseas at the neighbourhood level.



Cremation at the Indian Cemetery Reserve.
Albury LibraryMuseum Collection



QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Where were Popp's Lane and Strawbridge Lane ?
What did they have in common?



ANSWER TO THE FEBRUARY QUESTION OF THE MONTH

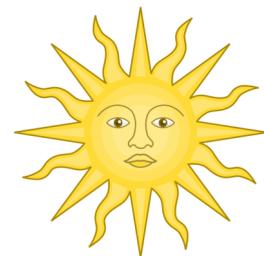
In the 19th century, the four seasons had specific commencement dates. The seasons revolved around the Equinox.

Spring began on the 23 September.

Summer began on 22 December, the longest day.

Autumn began on 20 March.

Winter began on 21 June, the shortest day.



UNWELCOME STRANGERS

Howard Jones spoke about *Unwelcome Strangers, The Early Chinese Experience in Albury-Wodonga*, and how Thomas Chong was a well-known member of the Chinese community from 1910 to about 1940. Thomas Hooey Chong was born in Canton (Guangzhou) in 1878 and migrated to Melbourne when aged nine. In 1910 he and his wife Henrietta, nee Mahlook, sold their business at Benalla and opened a café in Olive Street, installed a soda fountain and made icecream. By 1915, Chong's brother, Willie Chong, and his wife Maria, nee Goon, also came from Benalla, and opened the Canton Cafe and a fruit business in Dean Street. Thomas Chong later took over the Canton Café from his brother and ran it until he retired in the late 1930s. In 1923, Chong was probably the first Chinese elected a member of the Albury Racing Club. In 1931, police caught several men smoking opium in the camp, but Chong was acquitted after saying he had just called in to say goodbye to his mates before leaving for China next day. In 1938, he made a collection among the Chinese community and donated 14 guineas to the district hospital. At the outbreak of war in 1939, Chong registered as an alien as he had never been naturalised (however, his children were British subjects). The family moved to Melbourne and he died at Richmond in 1950, aged 72, survived by his wife and children: Madge, Arthur, Dulcie and Doreen. *Unwelcome Strangers* is an Historical Society paper and is available from the Albury Library Museum and Dymocks at \$20.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
MELBOURNE
APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION
Name in full: CHONG, THOMAS HOOEY
Nationality: Chinese
Date of birth: 22.2.1878
Place of birth: Canton, China
Date of arrival in Australia: 1897
Place of arrival: Melbourne
Occupation: Retired
Signature of applicant: T. H. Chong
Date: 12/2/39
Number of certificate issued: V6925
Date of issue: 12.2.39
Issued by: J. S. ...
Date: 12/2/39
CHECKED
DIST: ...
DEAD INDEX

50 YEARS AGO

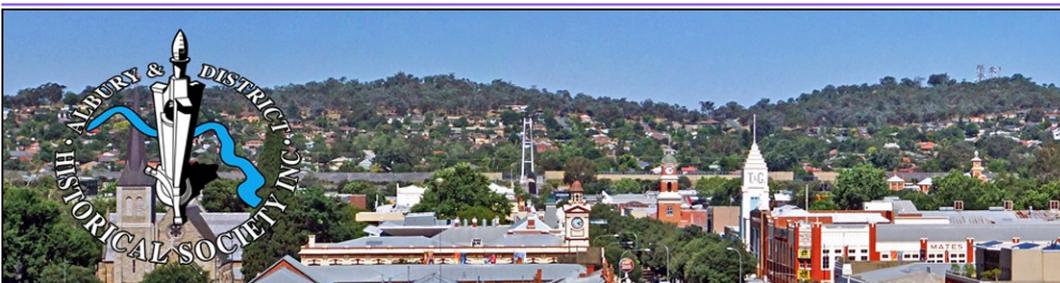
FEBRUARY 1968

February 1968 was in a drought year. There were water shortages at Jindera and Chiltern and there was a possibility they would run out of water. On top of that the Hume Weir was very low. Early in February there were three consecutive days of 110 degrees which nowadays is 43 degrees centigrade. Because of the very dry years of 1966 and 1967 governments decided there was a need for more water storage. There were 4 sites under consideration for another dam and Dartmouth was chosen, Mitta Valley residents were all in favour of the location. There was to be a new fire station to be built on the corner of Parnell St and Prune St to cater for the rapidly expanding North Albury and Lavington area. There are Funeral Directors in that building now.

On the sporting scene North Albury bowler Brian Hodge took all 10 wickets against the SSA, he finished with figures of 10 wickets for 45 runs.

Then on the 7 February, Captain Albert Borella VC, MM, passed away at the age of 86. He was granted a full Military Honours Funeral which was held on the 9th of February at St David's Church. After the service his coffin was taken on a gun carriage from St David's church with an escort of 100 soldiers on slow march down Olive St, East into Dean St then North into David St. He was then laid to rest in the Presbyterian section of the Albury Cemetery.

Compiled by Eric Cossor



Visit our website for photos of old Albury, history articles and much more. Go to: <https://alburyhistory.org.au/>



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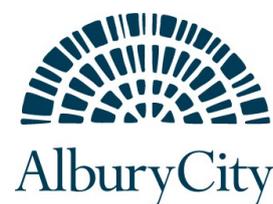
Albury LibraryMuseum has produced two short videos with transcripts and with investigative materials as an e-learning resource on the topic:
Fighting the Battle of Ideas About Conscription: The Albury Wodonga District During the Great War. Check it out and watch the 5 minute videos at:

<http://www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/leisure-and-culture/libraries-and-museum/teachers-and-educators/online-resources>



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Bulletin Editor: Marion Taylor
marion.taylor7@bigpond.com

Publications & Stock Officer: Ray Gear

Bulletin dispatch: Richard Lee

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Meetings: Second Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm usually at the Commercial Club Albury.

The Committee meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 3 pm at the Albury LibraryMuseum.

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