

Albury & District Historical Society

June 2018

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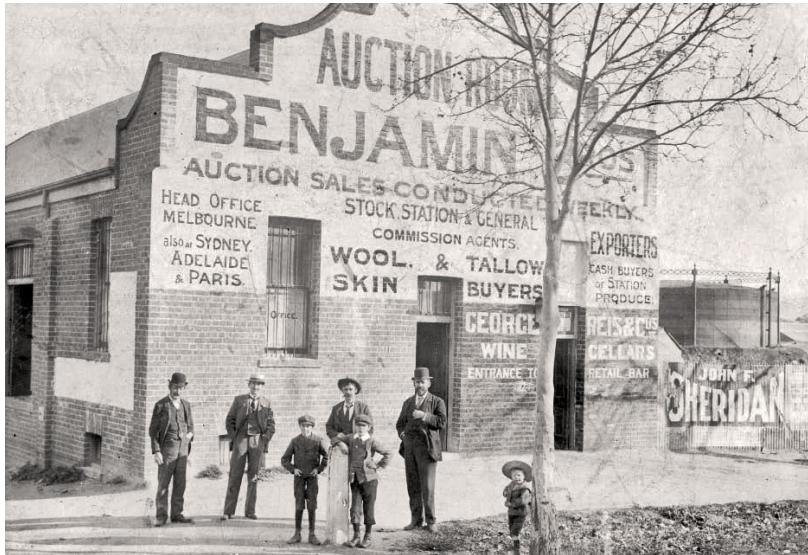
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'Such was the popularity of wines from the Mungabareena Vineyard, that the Reis Bros, found it a necessity to build a large and commodious store for the storage of wine, and the Riverina wine stores now form one of the business places of the town, and testify to the commercial thrift and business capabilities of the Reis Brothers.'

Albury Banner & Wodonga Express 30 March 1900. This building stood on the South West corner of Kiewa and Smollett St. Photo Courtesy: Albury LibraryMuseum Collection

Next Meeting AGM

Wed 13 June

7.30pm Commercial Club

The Girl Guide Movement in Albury

Speaker: Beverley Halburd

LAVINGTON LIBRARY

LAVINGTON VOICES:
TALES TOLD BY
LAVINGTON LOCALS

9 JUNE – 11 AUG 2018

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REPORT ON MAY MEETING (09.05.2018)

The May meeting was well attended with a talk by Roy Thompson on the Reis family in Albury attracting a number of descendants keen to hear about their ancestors. Ray's presentation was compiled by his niece Tracee Doyle. Arriving in Albury in 1852 the hard working Reis family built up an impressive portfolio of farming land and businesses. Sadly many of the buildings have since been demolished but some remain, the most recognisable being the "Model Store" on the corner of Wilson and Guinea St.

Victoria Cooper from the Albury LibraryMuseum brought us up to date with current and planned exhibitions. "Family Business: Albury Families" is open until the 24 June. Featuring the Dallinger, Farrah, Lee Tet and Knight families this exhibition highlights the legacy they left behind and their connections to Albury buildings and streets. Victoria would like about nine members to choose a small item from the LibraryMuseum collection to be used in "A Few of Our Favourite Things" display in the Council foyer. In January next year the history of viticulture in Albury and district will be featured in a major exhibition. Border Mail journalist Kate Benson thanked all contributors to the history articles especially Greg Ryan who has coordinated the column, finding writers and sourcing photographs. Readers have responded in a very positive fashion to the Community news feature in social media and on the website. Soon there will be a dedicated history section on the website. The Squatting Map of Victoria, Port Phillip District, New South Wales (1858) donated by Chris DeVreeze to the LibraryMuseum was displayed for members. Doug Hunter's quick quiz rounded off the evening testing members knowledge on a wide range of topics including the water level of the Hume Dam in April 1968 which was 4%.

I have been given the privilege of presenting an account of the influence of our mother's ancestors, the Reis family, in the Albury area.

Firstly, I'd like to thank my niece, Tracee Doyle, for her energy, dedication and expertise in researching so much of the information presented tonight.

Tracee acknowledges the assistance of Greg Ryan, Richard Lee and Howard Jones of the Albury Historical Society and the Trove and Ancestry websites.

Secondly, credit must go to my mother, Jean Thompson, (nee Reis), for her love of history and devotion to family, evidenced by her admirable memory and extensive collection of photographs, newspaper clippings, diaries and books on local history.

The first connection with Albury occurred in 1852, when Johann Georg (George) Reis, his wife, Barbara Katherina (Catherine), and two children, Catherine (6) and Conrad (4), arrived by horse and dray from Sydney.

They had sailed from Hamburg, Germany, on the ship 'Peter Godeffroy' as steerage passengers, having originated from Kafertal, near Mannheim in Baden. They came to pursue a new life in an area that was reported to have available and adaptable land, often sold off through Government land sales. It should be noted that a number of German families (Frauenfelder, Rau and Schubach for example) had already settled in Albury in early 1852. We are not aware of the exact nature of underlying political or religious motivations behind the migration of the Reis family and their compatriots, but there has been persecution of both German Catholics and Protestants at various times in history, necessitating flight to safer places.

They covered only ten or twenty kilometres a day as they walked the horses for several weeks after their arrival in Sydney Harbour, camping at night under canvas. The young family (George was 38 and Catherine was 31) purchased their first plot of 40 acres of land at the corner of Sydney and Gerogery Roads, which formed the nucleus of the Mungabareena property.

They had three more children and gradually added more land, leading eventually to 250 acres, becoming a Model Farm and vineyard. Further purchases were made of grazing land on what became known as Reis's Island, opposite the site of the pumping station at the Albury Waterworks.

The property, situated 3 miles from Albury had a frontage to the Sydney road and another to the Gerogery road. The farm comprised a wine vault and dairy as well as a home, described as a "handsomely finished Brick Villa, with wide halls running through, rooms opening out to the left and right of each hall. From the pantry, a stone staircase leads to an underground cellar. In the grounds beyond the home was a smokehouse, stables and the outhouse. On the 13-14 acres of land on the other side of Gerogery Road was the milking yard, sheds and another homestead, where, when of age, Mr George Reis, the younger son, resided and managed the farm, vineyard & grazing properties." From 'Our Country Surroundings' 1895



The growth and success of the Reis family business meant larger premises were required. In 1912 the Model Store was built on the corner of David and Wilson Street to accommodate the increased amount of produce and supplies on offer.

THE REIS FAMILY

Presenter: Roy Thompson

The Reis children, from a young age, helped work and establish the thriving property. At 27 years of age Conrad Reis married (both Conrad and George married Godde Sisters) and purchased land and a store in Wilson Street and so began the produce business. Produce from the farm was distributed near and far. The creation of many small communities outside of Albury, brought about by the discovery of gold in Victoria, provided a ready market for the produce and goods on offer from the farm. (On the 27 October 2002, a plaque was unveiled at the Albury Airport to commemorate 150 years since the Settlement of the Reis family in Albury.)



1885 or 86 –Conrad & Theresia Reis outside their Store.
L to R –Arthur Percy, Larry Buckley with bike, George
Reis on Bike, Tre Hannon, Kit Hamilton with bike,
Christina Horan on verandah.

George Reis senior died in 1883 aged 69. As mentioned, Conrad Reis had arrived with his parents as a 4-year-old, while his brother George (junior) was born on the farm in 1855. There were also three sisters, one of whom, Catherina, died soon after arriving in Albury.

Both sons grew up working the property with their father. While George junior eventually took on the operation of the Mungabareena farm, vineyard and grazing enterprises, Conrad soon moved into town in 1876 to establish a grocery and produce store (and later residence) on the NE corner of Wilson and Macauley Streets. (This building is currently occupied by Centacare Services).

"The Store was established to sell produce farmed at the families' properties and diversified to sell all manner of goods from grocery items to glassware and later clothes and homewares. The business prided itself on being the manufacturers and distributors of a 'horse and cattle spice which has been patented and which is said to be incomparable for the purpose of fattening. Conrad also 'gained an enviable reputation for his coffee and that is as it should be, since he buys his berry in bulk and having a grinder on the premises, prepares only such quantities as he can dispose of through the day is not surprising.' Our Country Surroundings 1895. George Reis junior was responsible for starting a wine wholesale and retail business on the SW corner of Kiewa and Smollett Streets, but he died shortly after, in 1896 at the age of 41. Conrad, his mother and sisters, carried on working and growing their businesses.



Conrad Reis and his wife, Theresia (nee Godde) had five children – three daughters, Christina, Barbara (Kit) and Theresia, and two sons, Charles Conrad and George Christopher. After Conrad's death in 1900, Charles and George took on the Reis and Co businesses. Charles had undertaken two years of business training in Melbourne prior to his father's death. In 1912 the brothers built the Model Store, on the NE corner of Wilson and David Streets, to cater for their increasing produce and supply business. This building is currently occupied by Elk's Hunting and Fishing. The C & C Stores in Olive Street (and later in Dean Street) was also established as a specialty department store by the brothers about this time.



THE REIS FAMILY

They also branched out into transhipping local produce by rail, building sheds and a siding beside the Albury Flour Mill. This allowed them to transport their produce to Victoria and NSW, a task enabled by the close proximity of rail lines of both state gauges beside the shed. The office for the Reis and Co transhipping business was built on the NW corner of Wilson and Macauley Streets. This building is currently occupied by Staffpower. Charles Reis successfully managed the Reis and Co businesses until his sudden death at the age of 49.

Following his brother's death, George Christopher (my grandfather) took over management responsibilities.

When George died at the age of 59, we assume the various business enterprises and buildings were sold, but, from our point of view, there is some mystery as to how and why this eventuated and what exactly happened to the proceeds!

George Christopher Reis was born 3 January 1884 in Albury NSW, Son of Conrad Reis and Theresia Godde. Brother of Christina, Barbara, Charles and Theresia. He married Annie Regina Loughry (Queenie). Father of Edward (Ted), Jean and Brian. Local Businessman, committeeman and President of the Albury Racing Club, one of the founders of the St Patricks Football Club and North Albury Tennis Club, Member of the Albury Bowling Club, Committeeman of the Albury Chamber of Commerce and a prominent member of the Catholic Community.
He died 21 December 1943, in Albury NSW.

Apart from the commercial businesses mentioned, there were a number of impressive homes built and/or occupied by various Reis family members over the years.

Glenisla: 443 Wilson St built for Conrad and Theresia Reis. (Demolished April, 2018)

Roseta: 483 Wilson St. Roseta was designed by Louis Harrison with a Californian bungalow style and built by Logans in 1920 for Charles Reis, a local merchant. The SS&A Club demolished the house in the 1970s to make way for car parking.

Sylvania: Fallon Street owned by Conrad Reis.

Roma and Bellefonte: Wilson St built in 1920 by George Christopher as letting cottages.

Presenter: Roy Thompson



Brian & Queenie Reis

"I used to help out at the rail siding at busy periods (pictured here with mum). It was hard work, transhipping truck loads of potatoes and onions." "I have many memories of weekends, using the huge shed as a roller skating rink with Jean and Ted (sister and brother)" Brian Reis 2018



THE REIS FAMILY

Presenter: Roy Thompson



Milton, on the South East corner of Guinea & Macauley Streets was built in 1914 for Christina Reis, to be used as a letting Cottage.

In 1915 her brother George Reis and his new wife Annie Regina Loughry (Reis) moved in to the home. (Waiting until the war ended to build their own home in the next block).

Having "fallen in love with their corner position" by wars end they bought "Milton" from Christina and it remained in the Reis (Thompson) family until February 2012.

Milton was built by Charles for his sister, Christina, but bought by George Christopher and became our family home.

Milton was then sold by our family in 2012 and is the only one of the above homes still standing.

The Reis Family have a long and proud history in Albury. Their love of the town, contributions to business and devotion to the community is well documented across the generations.

Although the businesses and land are long gone and forgotten by most, some of the buildings built for the family remain today.



Photographs Courtesy: Reis Family Collections

Reis Ladies

Susan Parer married Charles Conrad Reis.
Annie Regina Loughry married George Christopher Reis.
Theresia Reis married Jim Hannan.
Barbara Catherine (Kit) Reis married Robert Hamilton.

Thompson

John William Jean Loughry (Reis)
08/06/1913 - 03/05/99 22/11/1915 - 16/04/2013

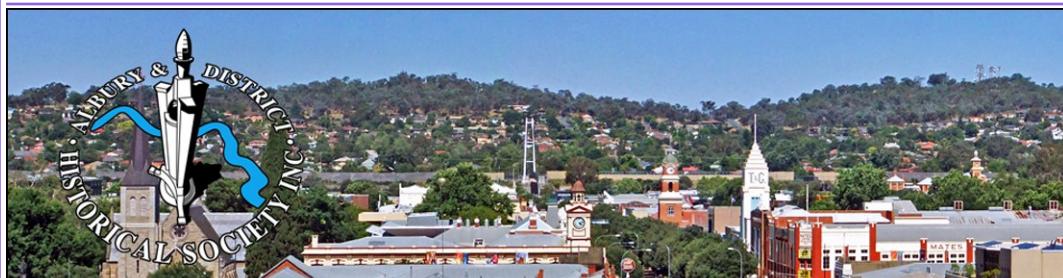


A Voice from the Past :

Address from Mayor Cleaver Bunton to Albury, Surrey, England, 1947

Mayor Cleaver Bunton recorded a message from the people of Albury, Australia to the people of Albury, Surrey, England on the occasion of Albury, Australia being declared a city in 1947.

Listen via our website at <https://alburyhistory.org.au/resources/downloads/>



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2017/2018

As the Society's 56th birthday passes, we reflect on our past year. Sadly, it included the passing of Doreen Widdison, Arch McLeish, Geoff Hamilton and John Craig, but we recall their contributions.

Members have enjoyed a smorgasbord of topics, including Frank Zaknich on Albury's Waste Programme, Paul Grover with History in Schools, John Vogel on Albury Cemeteries, a memorable night with Joan Fairbridge's World War II code breaking memories, Chris de Vreeze and Bruce Pennay on our Deep Past, Tony Brandt on the Albury Club, Dirk Spennemann on the Indian Hawkers and Roy Thompson's presentation on the Reis Family.

A number of members have also contributed. These included Greg Ryan, Richard Lee, Eric Cossor, Doug Hunter, Howard Jones, Jan Hunter, Ray Gear, Chris McQuellin, Ralph Simpfendorfer and Ron Boadie. Our October meeting was a visit to the Jindera Museum, preceded by lunch at the hotel.

In March, Noel Jackling was invested with the Order of the Oranje-Nassau by the Government of the Netherlands for his work on the Uiver collection.

The support given by our Corporate sponsors is greatly appreciated. The Commercial Club provides our monthly meeting facilities. Albury City and the Library Museum staff from Carina Clement down, give us marvellous assistance, including the venue for Committee meetings. Sweethearts Pizza, Coxtech and Lester & Sons round out our Corporate sponsors.

Your Committee has been exemplary and a pleasure to work with. Greg Ryan's roles as Vice President, Web Master and History Column Co-ordinator has been invaluable. As Secretary, Research and Public Officer, Helen Livsey wears each hat admirably. Few would realise Helen was elected as a Life Member after 25 years of service in 1992 and has not stopped since. Her greatest accolade is just "Ask Helen". Ron Haberfield, as Treasurer, has been concise and accurate, and a pleasure to work with. Jill has filled the roles of Minute Secretary, Publicity and Meeting Greeter without a hitch. As Bulletin Editor, Marion Taylor very competently provides us with a stream of information, sometimes running into 10 pages. As a Past President, Doug Hunter has provided a wealth of knowledge. Richard Lee with his research, the Time Line and Bulletin distribution has been a great asset. Eric Cossor's input at meetings and his 50 Years Ago segment has been most welcome. Ralph Simpfendorfer's role as Speaker Co-ordinator and his Journeying through the Journals snippets proved popular.

The year's only downside has been the slow pace of our application for Trove funding. Despite the extraordinary efforts of Bruce Pennay, Helen Livsey and her son David in compiling this document, we patiently wait.

As my term as President comes to a close, sincere thanks is offered to all for making the past year very pleasant.

Joe Wooding



Joe Wooding

Photo: Mark Jesser Border Mail

Snippets from the Committee

Any members who are interested in a tour of the Albury Club please meet outside the Club at 10am on Monday, 18 June.

Representatives from the A&DHS attended the 75th Anniversary Memorial Service for the Wodonga Train-Bus Crash on 8 May at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery, Albury and also the Dedication of the Albert Borella, Victoria Cross Rest area at Mullengandra on 14 May.

A little bird tells us three new microfilm readers will be arriving at the Library Museum from the German manufacture some time in June.

50 YEARS AGO MAY 1968

Compiled by Richard Lee

The Vietnam War dominated the papers of the time. A modest hero, Corporal Gordon Tredrea with the 7th battalion, aged 23, returned from Vietnam after twelve months. He was mentioned in dispatches and awarded a citation for valour under fire. He lived in Hanel Street.

The Albury Gold cup created a bit of furore. The Cup had a half day holiday in place and at 12.45pm that day the Stewards cancelled the meeting due to the 'track being unsafe due to wet weather.' If you were to visit the movie theatre 'The Sound of Music' was featured, it had won five Academy awards. If you couldn't get out, well stay at home beside your new 'Wonder Heat 500' oil heater. The page advertisement featured twenty five benefits to the new heater. Aerial photos of now and then showed how low the water level was at the Hume Weir. You could see the actual water course of the Murray River. They stated that the level was the lowest since 1945.

From the Editor; A need to expand the twin towns. The NSW Minister for Decentralization was in town, it was described as a fishing expedition. It was rather unfortunate that Albury didn't put forward a plan on decentralization, as it didn't have one. CWA celebrated 41 years and Mrs A C Sellers presented a long service medal to Mrs R Oliver. Land was approved for the Hume Public School and a rain deluge offered some relief after the summer drought. T H Mates had their 118 year anniversary sale. Captain Harper & Butsey (from AMV 4 , the Children's Television actors) would be in attendance for the children. The Turks Head Museum was expecting more exhibits to arrive from the Sydney Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences. Foundation work on the first two houses for the housing commission had commenced, fronting Logan Road. DC & R Vanderpol were the builders. The article stated that the 'Rathburn' style of suburb was being used. The best I could come up with to describe this style was a bunch of curvy streets with cul-de-sacs leading off them and the start of the 'Kentucky Fried Chicken' houses that were built in Glenroy. Late in the month council was warning Albury people to 'boil their water' due to the low water levels but Wodonga people didn't have to. Mr & Mrs H Nowik won Albury House of the year in Yambala Avenue. Henry Nowik came to Australia and set up Uncle Ben's (Mars Incorporated in 1967) and selected Wodonga as the first site to make pet food.

AGM AGENDA

Opening and welcome to AGM

Apologies.

Minutes of previous AGM.

President's Report.

Treasurer's Report and audited accounts.

Special Business.

Setting annual subscription – Committee recommends it remains unchanged for coming year. Single \$25, Family \$33, (These to include surcharge of \$10 for posted Bulletin), Corporate \$100. President declares all positions vacant.

Appointment of Interim Chairman:

Mr Douglas Hunter to be verified by members to conduct election process.

Office Bearers Nominations received :

President – Greg Ryan

Vice-President – Joe Wooding

Secretary – Helen Livsey

Minute Secretary – Jill Wooding

Treasurer - Simon Burgess

Committee Nominations received:

(General Committee of up to 7)

Marion Taylor

Howard Jones

Eric Cossor

Chris de Vreeze

Interim Chairman invites incoming President to address the members and close the AGM.

QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH

On 3 April, 1907 the Union Bank opened on the corner of Dean and Olive Streets. Who was the builder, what set it apart from all other Dean Street buildings and what is its significance today ?

ANSWER TO THE MAY QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH

Where and when was the first electric lift installed in Albury ?

What is the oldest building in which a lift is currently operating ?

Mates Building, Dean and Kiewa Street corner in 1930, during renovations of basement and construction of 1st floor.

The old Mates Building (C1850), corner Hume and Townsend Street.



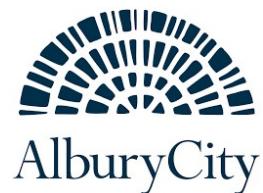
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Please click on the logo to visit their respective websites.



Special thanks to the Commercial Club Albury Ltd for supplying a meeting room for many years and also for their continued support.
Please click on the logo to access their website.

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Patron: Patricia Gould OAM

Honorary Life Members:

Howard Jones, Helen Livsey,
June Shanahan, Jan Hunter.

President: Joe Wooding

Vice-President: Greg Ryan

Secretary: Helen Livsey

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Treasurer: Ron Haberfield

Minute Secretary: Jill Wooding

Publicity Officer: Jill Wooding

Public Officer: Helen Livsey

Committee: Richard Lee, Marion Taylor,

Eric Cossor

Bulletin Editor: Marion Taylor

marion.taylor7@bigpond.com

Publications & Stock Officer: Ray Gear

Bulletin dispatch: Richard Lee

Meeting Greeter: Jill Wooding

Web Editor: Greg Ryan

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 5 pm at the Albury LibraryMuseum.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Single: \$25 Family: \$33

Corporate: \$100

Note: There is a \$10 surcharge for mailed Bulletins.

Research undertaken, \$25 first hour. Enquiries in writing with \$25