

Albury & District Historical Society Inc

March 2020

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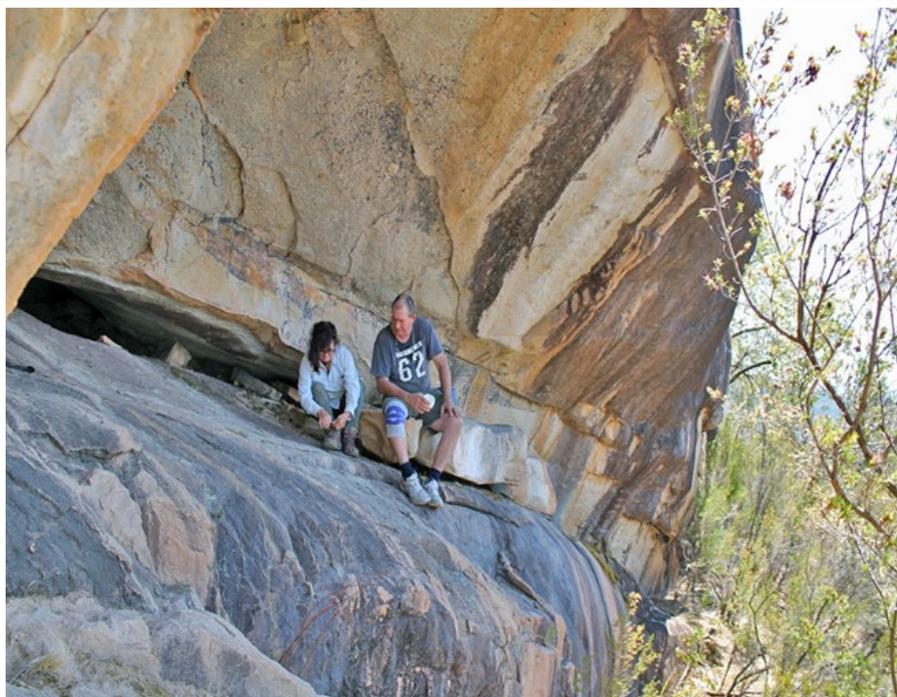
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Claire and Tom Doolan at Mt Porcupine

Next Meeting

Wednesday, March 11, 2020

7:30 pm, Commercial Club

The history of white settlement in the north-east—relationships with local indigenous people.

Speaker: Cathy McGowan

**ALBURY
LIBRARY MUSEUM
The Lynley Dodd Story
(children's writer)
Until April 26**

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REPORT ON FEBRUARY MEETING (12.02.2020)

It was a sombre start to our first meeting of the new decade with the news that Joe Wooding had died in the previous week. Greg Ryan paid tribute to Joe as a much loved member of our Society. Joe and Jill have been members since 2004. Our meetings will never be quite the same without Joe's interesting, sometimes quite obscure contributions, but always delivered in his witty style. A moment's silence was then observed as we all remembered Joe and the contributions that he has made in researching and recording our local history. An obituary appears on Page 8 of this Bulletin.

Members will be aware that the historic, *Towong Hill*, home of the late Tom and Elyne Mitchell, was destroyed in the recent bushfires. Helen wrote on our behalf to their daughter and Society member Honor Auchinleck, expressing our sorrow. Before introducing our guest speaker, Greg read out Honor's reply letter, expressing thanks to the Society for our understanding of the family's loss.

Our guest speaker Claire Doolan gave us a very informative 'virtual tour' around rock art of various sites in the North-east Granites of Victoria. She outlined modern techniques used to enhance the photographs of images – detail is revealed that is not present in our viewing of the original photo. Claire described techniques used to estimate the age of the art and clearly explained the significance of the images. Many of us went away with the urge to do our own exploration of the sites.

Greg gave us a short presentation on the birth of the banking system in Australia before going on to show photographs of Albury's first banks and brief details of their early days.

Rounding things off, Richard Lee entertained us with his always interesting and amusing '50 Years Ago.'

Claire was the second of six daughters raised on a wheat/sheep farm at Balldale. She attended the local primary school and later St Joseph's Ladies College in Albury. She has an Honours Degree in Archaeology from University of New England in Armidale, with an Honours thesis entitled: Rock art research in the North-east Granites of Victoria.

Introduction

My 2015 Honours thesis examined 14 of the known rock art sites in the North-east Granites of Victoria. This geological region, home to the Durooa people lies within a seventy kilometre radius south of Wodonga. The sites were at Mt Porcupine and Conic Rock in the Mt Lawson State Park, Yeddonba, Rocky Ridge, Long Range and Woolshed in the Chiltern/Mt Pilot National Park and five sites at Mudgegonga in the Big Ben State Forest.

The first aim of my thesis was to locate rock art sites, document and photograph the pictographs (rock art), and then compare my findings with what well known archaeologist Ben Gunn (2002) had previously identified at each site. This was done by adopting a wide range of strategies that considered the variables of each motif.

The second aim was to identify changes in the condition of the rock art from the time of Gunn's report (2002) in the hope of improving management strategies for the preservation of rock art sites across the region and provide an understanding of the potential rate of degradation.

In 2005 I was part of an extensive archaeological survey of Lake Hume and its surrounds for the Murray Darling Basin Authority. The survey identified 80 Aboriginal sites and while it was proposed the area had been inhabited by a large Aboriginal population before European settlement, it was noted that there were very scarce rock formations along the shorelines suitable for use as shelters and that the granitic surfaces where rock art might be placed were few and far between.

Rock Art Research

Research in Australian rock art currently employs a multivariate approach including studies of spatial analysis, environmental data and climate patterns, colour analysis, dating analysis, ethnographic information and ethnology, amongst other tools (McDonald 2008). If rock art research is to be constructive in the understanding of the cognitive and intellectual world of the past, archaeologists need to collaborate with colleagues in anthropology, art history, geochemistry, nuclear physics, ethnography and conservation.

Current issues in rock art studies

The study of rock art worldwide, akin to other branches of science and research, has been racked with considerable problems and differences of opinion, most notably regarding the appropriateness of various methodologies and theoretical frameworks. Key themes arousing contention include the monitoring of change at rock art sites, construed meaning, dating limitations, chronological sequences and stylistic changes.

Monitoring change at rock art sites

Rock art is the oldest and most important visual record of mankind's prehistoric past, and, once it is damaged, it cannot be recreated. Change operates constantly at Aboriginal rock art sites and it is important that site managers are aware of, understand and observe these changes (Franklin 2014).

Potential categories of harm are either natural or human related.

Natural causes of degradation include rock weathering, water, dust and mineral accretions, natural impacts, major environmental events, vegetation growth and, animal or insect damage.

Human related impacts include economic development, graffiti, vandalism, looting and theft, visitor impacts, poorly undertaken research, site protection and conservation, and damage from feral and domestic animals and plants.

As conditions change, strategies for rock art protection and management must be updated. Archaeologists have found (Franklin 2014) that paintings on granite surfaces deteriorate more quickly than those on volcanic and sandstone surfaces, this point being very relevant to the research area in the North-east Granites.

Dating techniques and DStretch technology

Dating rock art is a highly prized, much sought after pursuit amongst Australian and world archaeologists, as is dating anything to do with archaeological finds. The last twenty years or so have seen several new and exciting technical advances that can be used on pictographs which are among the most difficult archaeological artefacts to date. Traditionally archaeology relied on superimposition (superimposition assumes that the paint on top is the most recent), differential weathering, and stylistic analysis to decipher what paintings were done first or last, and radiocarbon dating to establish an approximate age. However, because ochre art lacks the high levels of organic material needed in radiocarbon processing it is deemed highly ineffective to calculate a pictograph's age.

One new, highly sensitive dating method, accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS), requires only 0.05 milligrams of carbon (the weight of 50 specks of dust) to be effective. Conversely, radiocarbon analysis requires several grams of organic material. This leads to greater disturbance and damage of the art surface.

Other technologies increasingly being used include Portable X-Ray Fluorescence Spectrometry, Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) and DStretch.

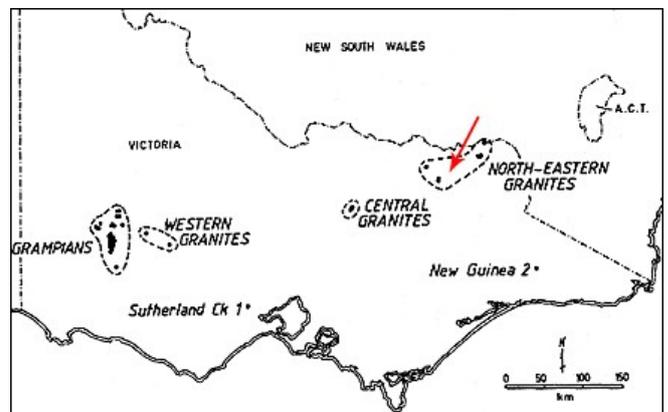
DStretch

North American rock art researcher Jon Harman developed the DStretch technology explicitly for rock art analysis. This technology uses a decorrelation stretch algorithm to enhance digital images. The contrast in the photographs is intensified and presented with false and artificial colours to bring forward images which had previously gone unnoticed.

Previous researchers of the rock art in the North-east Granites of Victoria did not have DStretch available to them and relied on superimposition, differential weathering, and stylistic analysis to establish the sequence in which paintings were done. With the aid of DStretch my 2015 research was able to confirm or question what was previously proposed.

The North-east Granites

Conic Rock or Koetong Creek was the first rock art site in the region to be archaeologically investigated. It is situated in the Mount Lawson State Park. Access is via the Koetong Creek -Mt Granya Firebrace track. Archaeologist Tugby investigated the site in 1953 and found that at least two periods of paintings seemed likely and that paintings of a quasi-human form were in general of a similar type to those of the galleries of western NSW. He proposed south eastern Australia forms a special zone of rock art extending from the Cobar Pediplain southwards to North-east Victoria and the Grampians.



The rock art is very pale and dominated by red painted anthropomorphic (human-like) motifs which are a variation of the stick figure. Notably no track motifs are present at the site. At least two of the anthropomorphic figures are depicted in a very animated stance. Close inspection of a large animal motif suggests it may be a dingo. Gunn (2002) says that if it is a dingo the site would probably be less than 3,000 years old given that it is believed the dingo was introduced into Australian mainland at about 3,500 years ago.

Long Range is set in the Chiltern-Mount Pilot National Park midway between Eldorado and Beechworth. The rock art consists of red paintings with predominately geometric form. The most significant motif is a long spine-like curved line which is not presented at any other site in the study region. This motif is however seen in other rock art sites around the world. Other motifs include tracks, lines and crosses. The rock art is considered to be in a reasonable state of preservation with little water damage, possibly due to the location of the dripline which at this present time directs the water away from the rock art.

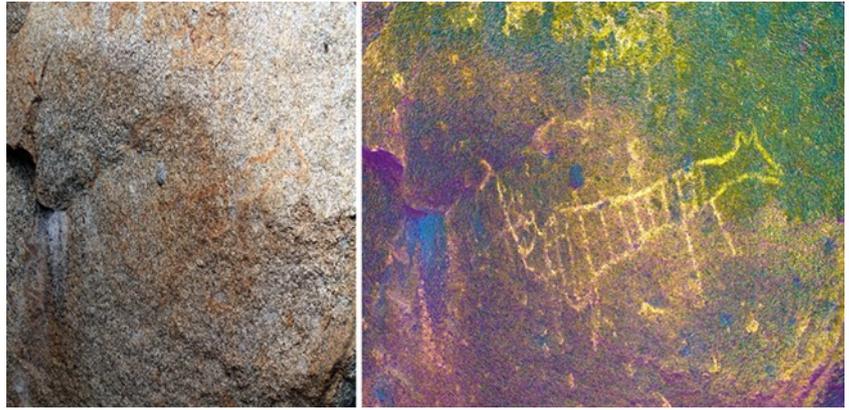
Mount Pilot Yeddonba 1 lies within the ironbark forests and woodlands of Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park. The rock art has eight discernible marks. The most notable motif is a distinctive red painting of a thylacine with outline and infill (see photos page 4). It is considered uncharacteristic in Victorian rock art.

In 1960 archaeologist Massola determined that at the time they represented the largest drawings in size in the state and differed greatly from all other Victorian examples of rock art because of their size.

Ben Gunn suggested that the thylacine has been extinct from mainland Australia for over 2,000 years. Therefore, if it be the case that the motif is a Thylacine, it is possible that the rock art at is approximately 2,000

years old or older.

Mt Pilot/Yeddonba 2 is located on the north-eastern facet of a very large granitic tor within an extensive ridgeline that overlooks Bye Creek. The most significant motifs are located on the north-western panel of the shelter depicting two animated anthropomorphic figures (see lower images right). These motifs may well be considered as solid fill but have an unusual characteristic in that they have a hollow through the centre. These motifs have tangible energy and mystery. There appears to be a child on the lap of the figure on the right the figure on the left is holding an object, perhaps a rock or stone tool.



Mudgegonga General The five Mudgegonga Rock art sites are located between Myrtleford and Yackandandah in the southern half of the Big Ben State Forest. The clusters were recorded and evaluated by Gunn (1984, 1987 and 2002) who stated the sites are of paramount importance to the local Aboriginal people, namely the Dhudhuroa. Gunn (2002) also proposed that the 271 motifs at the



Mudgegonga complex conformed to a pattern of small simple paintings that fit comfortably into the broader unified tradition of south-eastern rock art.

Gunn (2002) suggested the following:

- Numerically the rock art is dominated by red linear paintings followed by black drawings and white and yellow paintings.
- There is a tendency for anthropomorphic motifs to appear in groups.
- Animals and tracks are rare.
- Sites fall into categories of those dominated by tracks or those dominated by small anthropomorphics.
- Smaller sites are generally dominated by geometrics or tracks.

Mudgegonga 1 is the northern-most of the five rock art sites and was first noticed in the mid-sixties by Leo O’Neil, the son of a local farmer Mr Dan O’Neil and brother of Mrs Veronica Stoney.

The site was archaeologically recorded by Massola in 1966 and 1969. No excavation has been conducted at M1 and there is no evidence of permanent occupation at this present time. Massola (1966) stated that the space within the shelter would have been more commodious in past times as the floor level could have been almost five feet lower. Massola also contended that while the space is relatively small it would have been attractive to Aboriginals as it contained no dark crevices that could harbour malevolent spirits. The 31 marks at M1 range from 1cm to 25cm. The largest of these marks are two red painted anthropomorphic figures. A series of six small white anthropomorphic motifs that dominate the centre of the panel are on average 10cm in height.

The rock art is considered to be in a fair state of preservation though there is substantial smoke build-up on some areas.

Mudgegonga 2 is the most extensive of the sites. Gunn (1984) recorded 65 instances of superimposition, proposing that these sequences related to five separate phases. M2 rock art was first noted by local farmer Mr Ray Murtagh and subsequently brought to the attention of the Victorian Archaeological Survey in 1975.

Having the largest occupation deposits in the region, significantly higher number of motifs and a greater range of colours, techniques, and motif types, Ben Gunn (2002) suggested that Mudgegonga 2 was likely the focus of shelter occupation in the complex and that the lesser sites were used when greater numbers of people congregated in the area for religious festivals and Bogong Moth ceremonies.

The art panel at M2 displays many instances of superimpositioning. Drawn black lines superimposed over red paintings provide the most prolific example of superimpositioning. However, extensive salt wash over the rock art panel, natural weathering and the presence of a wasp nest all hinder the capability of clearly determining where marks have been superimposed.

A test pit was excavated in the late 1970's by archaeologist Coutts who found a rich faunal assemblage including a quartz lithic industry, an area where stone tools were made. Coutts also noted that within the first deposit depth of one metre, two major stratigraphic zones were located. Stone tools found included backed blades and Bondi points. The estimated age of the lower units was about 3448 years BP (Before Present), give or take 130 years. The rock art is faded and there is evidence of extreme weathering and degradation and the site definitely needs close monitoring.

Mudgegonga 3, 4 and 5 Mudgegonga 3 and 4 are small open rock art sites. They in very poor condition and have significant evidence of rubbing from animals, most probably feral deer.

Mount Porcupine is located in Mt Lawson State Park. It is 20 km due west of Walwa roughly 120 metres above the Murray River. This site was first recorded by West in 1970 and later by Gunn in 1981 and 2002.

The site contains fifteen red pigment marks that are dominated by bird tracks. Two hand silhouette motifs are very distinctive in so much as there is no other silhouettes that we know of in the region.

Gunn noted that this isolated site was possibly a small scale ritual centre. The art is faded but in what I determined as fair condition.

Rocky Ridge 1, 2 & 3 are among the seven rock art sites in the Chiltern - Mount Pilot National Park. The rock art at these three sites are dominated by small anthropomorphic figures and track motifs which are variations of stick figures. In general all paintings are representative of Maynard's Simple Figurative Style.

Woolshed The single anthropomorphic motif at Woolshed is depicted in an animated position. It has similar style and form to animated figures at Conic Rock and Yeddonba.

Summary

Did the study achieve what I set out to do? Yes, it was a thorough multi-variate investigation of the environment and rock art attributes of each site.

Did I find many differences in the stylistic attributes of the art? No, I believe that the stylistic variables of motifs had been accurately recorded by previous researchers. My use of DStretch possibly included motifs that had not been noticed before.

Did I find significant deterioration in the quality of the rock art and the surface? Yes, several of the sites are showing evidence of contact by animals, most probably feral deer, and this is extremely disturbing.

Did the VAHC act on my findings? One of the conditions of my research being undertaken was that the VAHC received a copy of the thesis for their archives. It is therefore very much hoped that some of my findings were taken on board.

OUR FIRST BANKS

Greg Ryan

The British Government did not supply coinage to the new colony of New South Wales, partly to keep down costs but also to remove a source of temptation to the criminally inclined, and expected the colony to be self-sufficient as soon as possible.

Trade in the early colony was conducted through barter and using a variety of coins including English pennies and shillings, Dutch guilders, Indian rupees and Spanish dollars that arrived with merchant ships. There was a constant shortage of reliable currency. As a result, trade in commodities such as cattle and rum, and personal promissory notes became common. As more free settlers moved to the colony the need for a stable form of currency became more and more pressing.

In March 1810, three months after his arrival, Governor Lachlan Macquarie recommended in a dispatch, that a bank should be established in the colony.

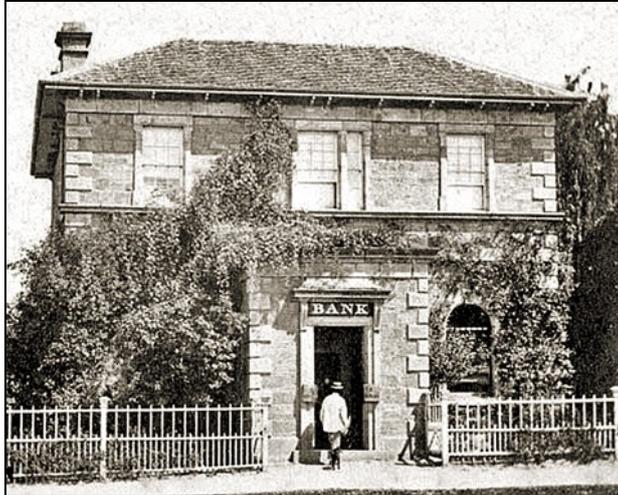
The British government did not accept Macquarie's initial proposal but, in an acknowledgement of the problem, promised £10,000 in Spanish dollars to relieve the currency shortage. These arrived in 1812 and to ensure that they could only be used within the colony Macquarie had the centre of each dollar cut out, creating what became known as **holey dollars** (pictured). The smaller centre or 'dump' was valued at fifteen pence while the outer ring was valued at five shillings.



On Tuesday April 8, 1817 at 10am, Australia's first bank, the Bank of New South Wales, opened in rented rooms in the house of ex-convict Mary Reiby in Macquarie Place.

Albury's Banks

In September 1856 Albury's first bank, the **Bank of New South Wales**, opened rent free in the old Court House at the rear of the Post Office, "about where the post office stable is." Mr John Walker Jones was manager on a salary of £400 per annum with an allowance of £1 per week for a servant and £1 per week for his horse.



Bank of New South Wales, Townsend Street

Walker Jones was required to bring from Melbourne the necessary cash for the opening of the bank. Dr Andrews wrote in his *History of Albury 1824-1896* that "the creeks were all in flood and the roads nearly impassable. He, however, reached Wodonga safely, but in passing the Wodonga Creek the vehicle was capsized and the box containing the cash sank to the bottom of a deep hole. Darkness was coming on, and it could not be recovered that night. Mr Jones had to camp near and remain on watch all night and till midday next day, when the box was recovered. Fortunately, its contents were none the worse for the immersion."

The bank purchased land in Townsend Street and famous Sydney architect Edmund Blackett was commissioned to "prepare a plan for a banking house with suitable accommodation for the manager." Costing £3,673, the building opened in June 1858. The *Border Post* reported that

"the building is completed in a very handsome style ... an ornament to the town and a standing monument testifying the value of Albury granite as a building material and Albury workmanship."

In August 1879, while Walker Jones was on holiday in England, a fire started in the Imperial Hotel next door, destroying that building and spreading to the bank. Newspapers commented that of the bank "nothing now remains but the stone walls. It was completely gutted, with the exception of the strongroom." Gold, notes, documents, books etc were recovered from the strongroom and "found quite intact."

The bank purchased George Day's house at what is now 613-615 Dean Street in April 1881 and converted it to a bank and manager's residence. In June 1899 they moved to a new building fronting Dean Street. That building was demolished for the present Westpac building, which opened in May 1938.

The **Australian Joint Stock Bank** came to Albury soon after the Bank of NSW (*Border City*, Bayley). In January 1873 the bank was in George Day's Commercial Buildings with Mr A S McKee the manager. They purchased a site on the south-west corner of Dean and Kiewa streets and the bank opened on that site in December 1877. [The premises were purchased by the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney in June 1911, the building demolished in 1937, and replaced by the building that is occupied by the National Australia Bank in 2020].

The **Commercial Banking Company of Sydney** (CBC) opened in March 1859, with Mr Swete as manager. They were on the corner of Smollett and Townsend streets in a building later occupied by the Criterion/Gloucester Hotel and later demolished for KMart. In the early 1890s, CBC moved to the AMP building in Dean St before moving to the south-west corner of Dean and Kiewa streets in 1911.

The **Bank of Australasia** opened in October 1877 at 601 Dean Street with Mr W T Norman as manager. The bank added a second storey in the late 1920s (merged with the Union Bank in 1951 to form the ANZ Bank).

The **Union Bank of Australia** opened in premises in the Beehive Building in July 1898, with Mr James Stephen as manager. Their building on the corner of Dean and Olive streets opened in April 1907 (builders Frew & Logan).

The **National Bank of Australasia** opened in new premises in November 1937 at 614 Dean Street, the site previously occupied by *Albury Daily News* and two doors from their previous premises. The National Bank merged with CBC in 1982 to become National Australia Bank.

The **Commercial Bank of Australia** (CBA) opened in Albury in 1936. They merged with the Bank of New South Wales in 1982, to form Westpac.

A **Commonwealth Bank** branch opened in September 1914 on a site previously occupied by Younghusband, Row and Co at 588 Dean Street, with Mr J R Stewart as manager. They purchased the premises from Dr Cleaver Woods in January 1928, the new building opening in January 1930.

OUR FIRST BANKS

Greg Ryan

A bill to form the 'Government Savings Bank of NSW and Rural Bank' was put before NSW State Parliament in December 1920. The **Rural Bank of New South Wales** opened a branch in Albury in May 1921 with Mr A de Josselin as manager. Their branch at the western end of Dean Street opened in January 1938.

50 YEARS AGO, FEBRUARY 1970

Richard Lee

The month is very hot! Wodonga historian Rosemary Boyes was awarded the Coat of Arms by the NSW Captain Cook Bi-centenary Commemoration Committee for her research – she has an extensive range of books, papers, articles etc in the Albury LibraryMuseum. The Civic Theatre, had Johnny Farnham and Johnny O'Keefe – both entertained “emotionally and physically.” Sarah Coventry, Wodonga’s new jewellery manufacture was opened on February 14.

The Hume Permanent Building Society displayed plans of new headquarters, opening early next year – the site of today’s Hume Bank, Olive Street. The *Border Post* newspaper had been microfilmed in 1969 and is now with Council to store in the strong room. The National Trust property, *Lakeview* in Chiltern, has just opened.

Local Member Gordon Mackie and Mr Morris, Minister for Transport, met in Albury to launch the Hume Highway Bypass project. The proposed route was roughly the one we use today, though the highway didn't open for another 37 years. Later in the month the route could be viewed at the Council Chambers. According to journalist Peter Wilson, residents of Parkinson Street (now gone for the highway) had taken the news rather calmly. One week later headlines read “Home owners in shock” and they would be taking protest action.

Albury Council had a smile on its face as the population of Albury at the June 30, 1969 census was 26,700, 120 more than Wagga.

Albury Floral Festival is to commence on March 9 with a garden party at Australia Park, Albury’s newest park, followed by a school pageant, a concert at the Civic Theatre, a Floral Festival Ball, Hampstead Heath, a novelty night in Dean Street, St Patrick’s Cup race meeting and finally the crowning of the Floral Festival Queen. The Chamber of Commerce asked traders to decorate their shop windows.

“A massive bacteria count in city water” – Albury Health & Building Surveyor, Mr Messervey, said the water could cause stomach ache, diarrhoea and vomiting. Mayor Bunton was “worried.” Letters suggested the use of bore water or chlorination of the water. Others commented that chlorination was not wanted, mothers were angry. People told to boil and freeze their drinking water. Testing was done and came back a week later – the water is clear. Then the fun begins, with the mayor saying that the press had made a “beat up,” Albury receiving bad publicity through the absence of facts. Council’s move to chlorinate water did not go down well.

After strong protests were unsuccessful, commencing in the last week of February, the demolition of *Valetta*, Dr Cleaver Woods’ Swift Street house by Mr Gibb for \$210.

Three Coming Events in 2020

- In 2020 Heritage Week will become Heritage Month from April 18 to May 19. The theme in 2020 is ‘Our Heritage for the Future.’ Heritage Week is organised nation-wide by the National Trust.
- In 2020 History Week will be celebrated in NSW from September 5 to 13. The theme in 2020 is ‘History – what is it good for?’ It is organised by the History Council of New South Wales.
- In 2020 History Week will be celebrated in Victoria from October 13 to 20. No theme has been announced. It is organised by the Royal Historical Society of Victoria.



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Joe Wooding (by Howard Jones)

Joe Wooding OAM, the Society's hardworking and popular vice-president, died on February 6, his 82nd birthday. We extend our sympathy to his wife, Jill, and the family. Joe was not only our friend but a fine local historian and, of course, a legend in sport, notably cricket.

More than 400 people attending his funeral and testified to the esteem in which Joe was held. The *Border Mail* published an obituary and its funeral report carried much of the eulogy delivered by Greg Ryan.

Joe was Society president in 2017-18. He had been a member for over 15 years, and about 11 years as vice-president. As vice-president since 2018 he continued to produce local history articles for the *Border Mail* but his great legacy is surely his 316-page cricket history, *150 Not Out, 1858-2007 – Cricket in Albury Wodonga*.

Thanks for the memories Joe.

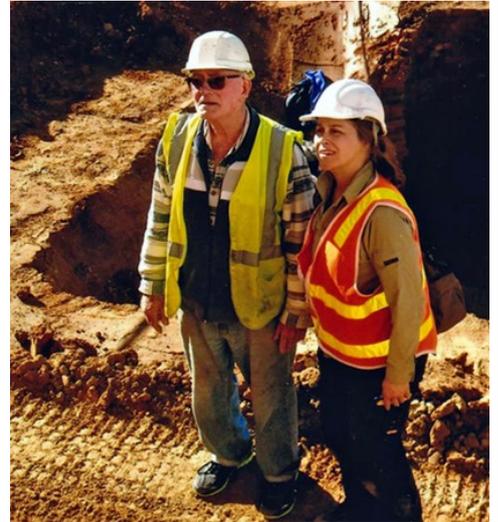


Photo: Joe at work for the Society in 2014 with archaeologist Sarah Miles during excavation prior to modifying and extending the former Albury Town Hall for Murray Art Museum Albury (MAMA).

Congratulations to Society member and Uiver historian Noel Jackling who received an Order of Australia Medal for service to community history in the recent Australia Day Honours List. Noel became the sixth member of our Society with an OAM, joining Joe Wooding (now deceased), Howard Jones, Bruce Pennay, Doug Hunter and Bill McDonald.



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Thanks to Commercial Club for many years of support.



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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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