

North Albury Red Cross

Jan Hunter

In 1940 the North Albury sub-branch of the Red Cross was appealing for felt hats. These were to make slippers for hospitalised World War II veterans. The ladies were obviously successful as minutes record regular donations of over five hundred pairs along with multiple knitted goods, handkerchiefs, dressing gowns and pyjamas.

In conjunction with Albury, the members regularly visited the wounded in the local hospital taking chocolates, clothing, cigarettes and matches and at Christmas time, a bag containing an egg, tomato and fruit would be added.

The North Albury sub-branch was formed in October 1939 at the instigation of the All Saints Women's Guild. The 30 odd members met monthly at the church as well as in homes for sewing afternoons.

In around 1944, Lady Gladys Owen, a Red Cross official was to visit Albury. The minutes record that Lady Owen preferred a night meeting with all members, but this was opposed as so many rode bicycles to meetings so "a night meeting is out of the question."



North Albury Red Cross Ladies.

Back: Mrs Linda Wright, Mrs Ivy Odewahn,
Miss Jean McIntyre;

Front: Mrs Jess Phillips, Mrs Ella Chick;
Mrs Vera English, Mrs Pauline Greschke.

Photo Judith Maynard, (née Wright)

The North Albury ladies raised significant amounts of money by catering at the Albury Show, and other local events. They also ran card parties (euchre was very popular), had regular stalls selling flowers and homemade goods, and organised flower shows and dances.

When the Albury Blood Bank opened in the mid-1950s the sub-branch volunteered on the evening roster, sitting by the bedside of the donor, shaking the bottle while it filled with blood as well as serving refreshments.

When the Albury Red Cross Hall opened at 446 Dean Street in 1953, the North Albury ladies expanded their catering prowess to weddings. The wedding breakfast menu consisted of cold meats and salad, followed by fruit salad or apple pie with cream. The preparation of the meats, apple pies and salads was done in the members' homes with the final touches taking place in the

hall kitchen. A 1959 instruction sheet lists the recipe for the Mince Roll (sausage and hamburger mince, bread and seasoning) and instructions – "put in cloth and boil steadily for about 3 hours, roll in breadcrumbs and leave till cold."

In July 1971 the first Annual Meeting of the North Albury Red Cross with the status of a branch was held. That group met in St Mark's North Albury until it closed in 1988. The lapsed Albury branch re-formed in about 2012 and in 2021 meets monthly at Anzac House Albury.