

Albury Scout Hall

Jan Hunter

A donation of one guinea from the Scout Commissioner McAlister began fund raising for the building of the Albury Scout Hall in Mitchell Street. Parents and supporters of Albury Troops met in 1925 to push for obtaining land from the Police Paddocks which were to the west of the Albury Fire Station. With the support of the Albury Chamber of Commerce and local member Alex Mair, the committee obtained approval from the Chief Secretary's Department for negotiations to begin.



The 1st Albury Scout Hall in Mitchell Street Albury

Scouting in Albury had begun in 1909 and met variously at the halls of the Methodist and St Matthew's Churches and the Drill Hall in Victoria Street. In 1916 a newspaper letter from the Scoutmaster, Frank Brown, asking for more parental support, said, "We have a fine clubroom in Dean Street where the boys meet for games and study and the outdoor feature of our work is also emphasised." At that time Albury was the headquarters of the Southern Border District with troops at Albury, Corowa, Holbrook, Henty, The Rock, Gerogery and Brocklesby.

After obtaining the land, the tender for the erection of the hall went to Mr Griffen (sic) (thought to be Mr Ezra Griffin) with Mates Ltd providing the material on long term credit. The foundation stumps were supplied and placed by Mr Jack Saunders. Estimated to cost 300 pounds the final price was around 600 pounds and the hall was opened in August 1926 by the State Governor, Admiral Sir Dudley de Chair. The *Albury Banner and Wodonga Express* newspaper commented that "the Scout Hall is already being occupied although

painting of the external woodwork is in progress...the hall is not an ornate structure but is solidly and strongly built, the walls being of galvanised iron..."

While Scouts enjoyed the new facility, all was not smooth sailing. A 1930 item from the *Banner* reported that "Neighbourhood boys have become a nuisance at the Albury Scout Hall by throwing stones on the roof. Commissioner F Brown was determined to put a stop to the pranks and stationed Scouts at Kiewa and Bonegilla Streets. However, he was struck on the head with a piece of wood and rendered unconscious. He was taken to Albury Hospital where he subsequently recovered consciousness. The names of the offending boys have been secured and police action will be taken."

In 2021 the still sturdy hall is used at least six times a week.