

Louis Harrison, Architect

Greg Ryan

Many of Albury's finest old buildings were designed by architect Louis Harrison. He was born in 1866 at Wanganella, about 40 km north of Deniliquin. His father Frederick, whose father and grandfather were also architects, arrived in Australia in 1852 from Wiltshire, England. After some time on the gold fields, Frederick resumed his practice as an architect, moving the practice to Deniliquin in 1874.

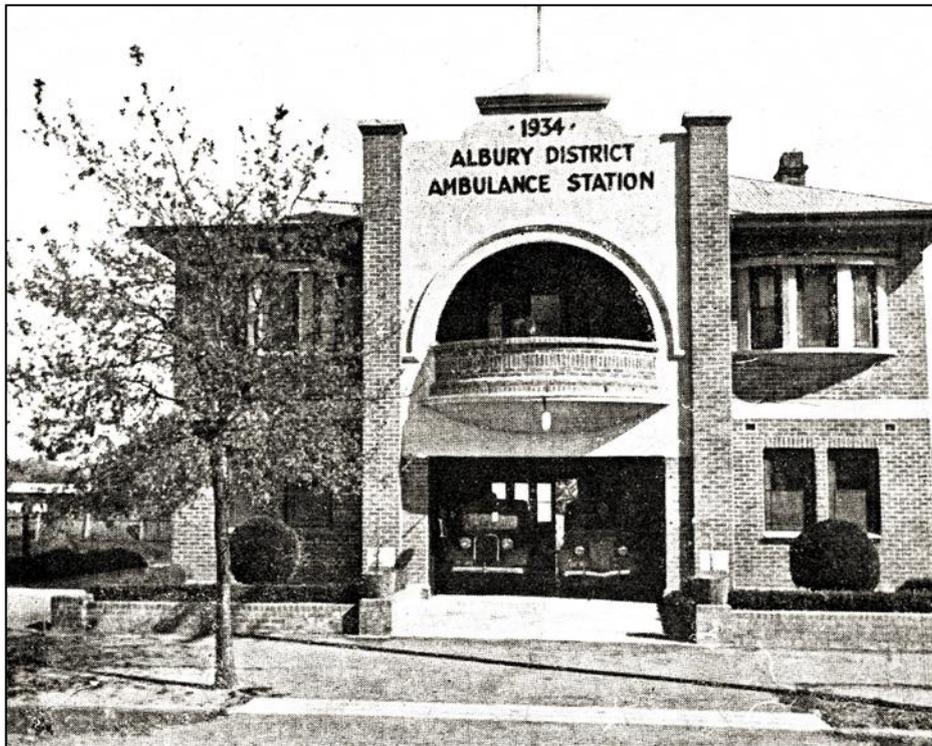
Louis started practising as an architect in Deniliquin, taking over his father's practice after Frederick died in 1903. Louis is said to have "designed many fine buildings" in Deniliquin including the courthouse and hospital. He was a local Alderman, president of the Deniliquin Hospital and Bowling Club and secretary of the Pastoral & Agricultural Society. For some time he was also the local Clerk of Petty Sessions.

In 1899 Louis was elected a Fellow of the Victorian Institute of Architects and in 1932 admitted to a Fellowship of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

Harrison was elected mayor of Deniliquin in 1913 before moving his practice to Albury in March 1915, establishing an office in the Temple Court Building, Dean Street.

Many Albury buildings designed by Louis are still standing today. He is best known as the architect of the Albury War Memorial (opened 1925). His original design was taller and more extravagant than what we see today, modified to minimise costs.

He also designed the Regent Cinema, for Betro Abikhair in 1926. When it opened in 1927, the *Albury Banner* described the theatre as "the pride of Albury." With seating for 1,374



An early photo of Albury Ambulance Station, the final building designed by Louis Harrison.

patrons, the theatre was equipped with a large stage and “appeals for its restful, beautiful and commodious qualities.” There were also eight retail shop units.

Other well-known buildings he designed include extensions to St Joseph’s Convent 1915, Christian Brothers’ monastery 1916, Farmers & Graziers wool stores 1923, rebuild of the Terminus Hotel 1925, the first Commercial Club building (later Anzac House) 1925, Holdenson & Neilson butter factory 1926, St Patrick’s Hall 1927 and Dalgety wool stores 1927.

In 1927 Louis was among the founders of the Albury Rotary Club and he was a member of St Patrick’s Church choir for over twenty years.

The last public building that Louis designed was the Albury ambulance station, Dean Street, in 1934. On October 31, 1934, Louis Harrison died at his home, *Ivensleigh*, 613 Olive Street (in 2021 the legal office of Dick & Williams, solicitors).