

ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

President's Annual Report 2022/23

I agreed to take on the role of President with little understanding of the scope of the job. With the strong support of a very able, active and dedicated committee I have come to the end of the year with a better understanding of the pivotal role our Society plays in the life of the city.

Members who are able to attend our monthly meetings have been treated to a series of entertaining presentations by our members and by invited guests.

In July we heard Margie Wehner, President of the Jindera Pioneer Museum, tell us how the Jindera General Store became the Jindera Pioneer Museum in 1968. She also spoke of the journey of German migrants who came to the area in the 1860s to make Jindera and surrounds their home.

Our August speaker, Digby Jacobs of the Murray Darling Basin Authority, gave us a very topical and informative talk on water management along the Murray River. Flooding along the river and at Noreuil Park was inundating the area as Digby spoke to us.

Cesar Becerra enthralled us in September after being welcomed to Albury by the Mayor, Kylie King. Cesar convinced us that "Albury girl" Mary Brickell (née Bulmer) was indeed a co-mother of Miami. By chance, during a visit to the Uiver restoration hangar, Cesar learned that the plane being restored was a former Eastern Airlines DC-2 which was based in Miami. This created another connection between Albury and Miami. I have a feeling that Cesar Becerra will visit us again soon.

In October the Uiver Memorial Community Trust (UMCT) held an open day at the hangar to advertise their progress in restoring the Uiver replica. We attended with our publications and recently acquired EFTPOS machine. We sold a number of our publications and raised awareness of our group. It was a successful day.

Dr June Factor travelled from Melbourne to speak about her book, "Soldiers and Aliens." In the following Bulletin Bruce Pennay wrote of the origins of the 4th Employment Company (Aliens) in 1942 and their work at the Albury railway station and elsewhere. At the October meeting Connor Fedorowytch and Neil Coulston set up a display of the interesting objects they had found with their high-tech detecting equipment.

In November committee member Peter Harper addressed us on the subject of Hume and Hovell and his project to identify a cycle path linking the various monuments along their route.

On 7 November we were proud to be one of the first cities in NSW to unveil a Heritage NSW Blue Plaque. Betro Abicare was honoured. Also in November we were involved in the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre.

A Christmas theme at our December meeting saw a number of our members speak about Christmas in Albury in times past and others do our traditional "Show and Tell." David Christie, with support from Natalie Wells told us of the various considerations involved in dealing with heritage buildings from a town planning perspective.

In February, Robyn Hawking spoke about the fascinating research, including DNA testing,

which allowed her to track lost relatives and to find them as models in the Tom Roberts masterpiece "The Shearing of the Rams."

Also in February Victor Selway and myself conducted a Dean Street walk as part of the Albury Seniors Festival. Our meeting in March took a different format in the shape of a dinner as guests of the UMCT at their hangar. After dinner Russ Jacob and David Crotty explained the progress of the restoration of the aeroplane and the museum which is part of their ultimate plan.

In April Mitchell Judd, an engineer with Transport for NSW explained the work involved in the maintenance and restoration of the old bridges along the Murray River.

At short notice Victor Selway stood in the breach when we had a late cancellation in May. Victor took us again to 1938 and the films of Dr Sam Woods in another entertaining presentation. closed out the year with another interesting look at historical objects unearthed by Connor Fedorowytch and Neil Coulston.

All of these speakers were pleased to see such a large attendance by members.

I want to express my thanks to the committee for their hard work and conscientious attention to the tasks undertaken by them:

- Greg Ryan edits an excellent Bulletin full of interesting history and produces and maintains our digital footprint on our website and our YouTube channel. Greg leans in to other tasks he volunteers for and reaches out to the community in public speaking and giving interviews to radio, television and print media. He also writes our fortnightly column for the *Border Mail*.
- Only members of the committee see the vast amount of correspondence dealt with by our Secretary Helen Livsey. Helen is also our research officer and assists numerous members of the community with the multitude of questions directed to her.
- Simon Burgess keeps a close eye on our finances and has played an active role in seeking and applying funding towards our fantastic gains in digitising local papers on Trove.
- Colin McAulay has handled distribution of our publications and Society papers. Colin will be standing down at the AGM and I thank him sincerely for his contribution.
- Jenny Romero has been responsible for the speaking program and her efforts speak for themselves in the quality of the program and the very positive response from members.
- Peter Harper has actively contributed in many ways including in identifying a cycle route linking the monuments along the Hume and Hovell track.
- Steve Judd has made valuable contribution using his experience and knowledge of Albury properties. Steve will be our liaison with the Uiver Restoration group to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Uiver landing.
- Yelly Evenhuis has ably and accurately fulfilled the role of minute secretary and greeter at our monthly meetings after taking over as greeter from Cheryl Blomley who so helpfully and willingly performed that task before her.

Many of our members contribute to the smooth working of the Society. They include:

- Richard Lee as Bulletin distributor and volunteer at the ALM and the Thurgoona facility.
- Chris McQuellin and Helen Livsey help at the ALM with scanning and cataloguing objects, photographs and documents.
- Claire Doolan and Narda Reid represent us on the Archive acquisitions and De-accessions committee.

- Howard Jones and Jenny Romero represent us on the Heritage Community Working Group also with our member Paul Grover.

We continue to work very closely with the ALM and thank Carina Clement and Emma Williams for the welcoming way they interact with us.

The professional work performed by Bruce Pennay over many years will be acknowledged at our AGM and I thank Bruce for his tireless dedication to our cause.

Thank you again to our generous corporate sponsors: the Commercial Club (venue for our monthly meetings); Albury LibraryMuseum (venue for committee meetings); Coxtech (website maintenance); Kwik Kopy (supply of our printing needs); and financial support from sponsors Lester & Son Funeral Directors, Baker Motors, Hume Bank, ThinkPilates, Armstrongs Financial Advisers, Elders Real Estate (through Manny Gonzales) and Rotary Clubs of Albury, Albury North and Albury Hume.



Geoff Romero