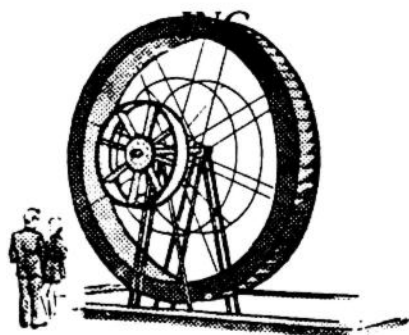


# ALBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## BULLETIN



Subscriptions: Individual Member \$20  
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Registered by Australia Post, PP.225170/00019

Patrons: Mr. Harold Mair, O.A.M.  
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Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of the month, February to December.

Albury Regional Museum: (02) 6051 3450  
Turks Head, Wodonga Place, Albury  
Open every day, 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.  
Website: [www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/museum](http://www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/museum)

ISSN 0813 6645

### NEXT MEETING

8pm **Wednesday September 8**

Commercial Club,  
Dean Street, Albury.

**GUEST SPEAKER - Dr Bruce Pennay**

on "*Framing Bonegilla for the Tourist Gaze*".

Please send in your  
**SUBSCRIPTIONS**  
by September 27 to  
receive the *Bulletin*!

**BULLETIN 439**  
**SEPTEMBER 2004**

### FUTURE EVENTS

① **Albury Regional Museum** Exhibition:

6 August - 31 October.

-Crime Scene, Scientific Investigation Archives, 1945 - 1960

② 19/3/05 @ 1.15pm (& 20/3/05)

**The Sutherland Reunion.** @ The Scots Church Hall, 99 Russell St, Melbourne. \$ for tea & expenses, +\$ for **Reunion Booklet**—order by 18/2/05. Send postal + email addresses to John Henwood, Sutherland Reunion Organizer, 25 Sunnyside Ave, Camberwell Vic. 3124 [john\\_henwood@bigpond.com](mailto:john_henwood@bigpond.com)

③ 10-23 September. **Phoenix Rising** St Matthew's reconstruction 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations. Exhibitions, books, writing workshops, art prize, fashion show, music, new leadlight windows, tree dressing, Aboriginal stories, multi-cultural O&M grand final day. Brochures available at Sept. meeting. Details, phone Albury Council 02 6023 8111

### QUESTION OF THE MONTH

What does "Bonegilla" mean?

### REPORT ON THE AUGUST MEETING

The Society was addressed by **Dr Donald Tynan**, about the *History of 'Radio Ettamogah 107.3FM'*.

**Don Tynan** graduated in Veterinary Science in 1956 & practised in Deniliquin, setting up the first private practice after 8 years. Domestic circumstances forced movement to meat inspection & small animal practice in Melbourne. Then in 1968/9 he replaced **Mr J.L. Berry** at the Albury Veterinary Hospital (Fallon Street). After rebuilding in Borella Road Albury, **Don** sponsored practices in Deniliquin, Finley & Holbrook. The credit squeeze took its toll & the practices disbanded. Following various locum positions, **Don** graduated in Theology at Melbourne College of divinity; since then he has practised at Mount Beauty before retiring to viticulture in 1997. Currently he tends 10 hectares of vineyards on the family property, "Bogong Estate". **Don** will talk about "Radio Ettamogah".

Cherry Scatchard & Don Tynan in the Radio Ettamogah Studio. The display board lists the names of donors & sponsors.

**RADIO ETTAMOGAH**

### DON TYNAN & "RADIO ETTAMOGAH"

All forms of broadcasting are holistic in a sense, they are aspects of total communication between one person & another, between one community & another. We are talking in the historical context of the accelerated development of Albury & Wodonga under the **Albury Wodonga Development Corporation**, & in 1975. Enthusiasm for this depends on your ideological slant, for all planning is socialist, & some suffer when you start promoting causes. Consequently to organise a broadcast medium is just like organising the entire project of accelerated development.

# ETTAMOGAH RADIO

## THE AWDC & RADIO ETTAMOGAH

The AWDC planners, (especially the Social Planners) saw the potential in having a local medium available which could cushion the effects of accelerated growth on people migrating into the area, & as a way to maintain some contact between the valuable existing residents who could be overrun.

In 1975 the annual population growth in Albury was about 800 persons, of Wodonga about 500, but it rapidly accelerated to 1400 & has been rising linearly since. Community radio was conceived of by the AWDC & its various consultant advisors as being a way of communicating news of the changes & of marshalling resources to the emerging needs. (The grave effects of rapid development on social cohesion had been observed in Britain's New Towns program after the war & ought to be avoided). Wodonga & Albury which were initially separate entities had not really progressed far beyond their 'village' or 'large country town' atmosphere.

The AWDC met opposition from residents who did not want their way of life disturbed by a "City in the Country", aiming at 180,000 or more. It is big thing to have rural land expropriated not by developers for their own profit but for some social purpose as planned communities.

The founders of public broadcasting or community, local radio were then, generally in favour of the Corporations objectives, & assured of moral & practical support. A Thompson report in 1975 clearly supported the place of such broadcasting involving many people & non-professional, voluntary administrators, builders & presenters in the Growth centre.

Anne Gorman was the AWDC's Social Planner, & co-opted me on brief acquaintance as Convenor after the earliest meeting held on these matters which drew on the Reports of Australian Frontier (Peter Mathews); the Steering Committee consisted of Roy Guthrie (Regional Council for Social development),

Harvey Mendham & Ian Mc Calman

(Riverina College Advanced Education) Laslo Kovacs (Union Organiser), Bill Wheatland (Corporation Architect & broadcaster).

There were numerous other avenues that the AWDC were fostering to develop in a balanced way. For instance health services, local government, transport, environment & conservation, churches & recreation. Consultative Councils were created to elicit the public interest & expertise in these components of growth. I was Secretary to one, Conservation & Environment at the time.

There was no aspect of life in our communities that did not come under some sort of study, so exactly those categories comprised the agenda of community radio giving voice (so it was hoped) to real people involved with & affected by growth.

The Steering Committee had to generate public support for broadcasting itself by ordinary people, & its novel aims for this, our area. The common round of public meetings & working parties assembled the administration basis for an ex-

but there were budgeting advantages. The music station 2MBS in Sydney enlisted 400 volunteers & became known as "The Fine Music Station" with its long hours of transmission & promotional magazine, even recordings under its own label.

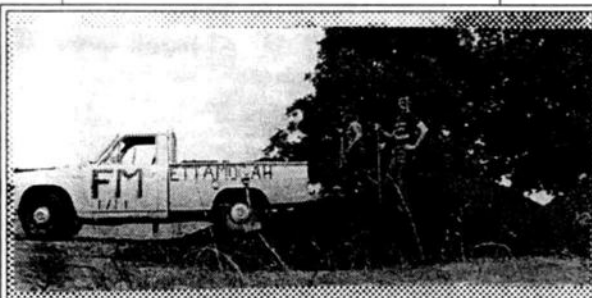
Public Broadcasting was meant to include the spoken word, other languages, radio journalism, comment, plays, book reading & poetry for each of which training was necessary. For me the possibility of stimulating self expression, & the world of exchanged ideas was a motivation towards getting a Licence here.

There was a huge resource in Albury-Wodonga of every type of recorded music, discs then, later cassettes & reel-to-reel & CD in private collections. It needed to be discovered whether people would avail themselves of a new opportunity but I need not have worried, broadcasters appeared from everywhere. This "pure public base" was also a first for Albury-Wodonga & the basis of funding problems.

The catalyst for public involvement was the ABC's offer of Access Radio through Chris Musters & Ralph Elphinstone. On Saturday afternoon some 14 topics were torn apart for two hours with 130 participants over many weeks. Voices in the studio could be of police & lawyers, councillors & students. I recall a councillor objecting to pressure put on him to reveal some details or names of persons distrib-

uting drugs in a school. This made me very aware of how sensitive interviews on air might be, & that the interviewee does not have time to think so basic attitudes are exposed. The coming prospect of Station Management seemed daunting, supposing hundreds of amateur broadcasters came to fruition with their diverse views.

Whilst meetings, talks to service clubs, press releases made enthusiasts aware of our negotiations for a Licence, & a holding body, Albury-Wodonga Community radio Co-operative Society applied for a licence; the ideas & equipment were assembled in the hope that eventually a test transmission & licence Hearing would eventually.



Don Tynan & his Mazda Truck, & a helper. Early Siteworks at Ettamogah. Photo: Don Tynan

pected application for a Public Broadcaster's Licence & the allocation of a frequency in the FM band, to be the first in this district, & about eighth in Australia.

### RADIO AT THE TIME (c1975)

By 1976 there were twenty applicants waiting throughout Australia for the Invitation to Apply as above, & only eight operating stations, all low-power, that is only heard over a radius of 10 or 30 km. All but one of these was associated with a College of Advanced Education tertiary institution such as Northern Rivers (Lismore & Ivan Hincks Chairman of the PBAA @ 2NR) & University of Duncan Graham at Western Australia 7UV callsign). The participation of students & staff meant dislocation when academic terms ended,

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This space  
is available  
for  
ADVERTISING

◀◀◀  
The AWDC officers *Kath Davey* & *Theo-Charles-Jones* co-ordinated liaison with the encouragement of the Chief Planner (whose interview I hold on tape) & the Chairman *Gordon Craig* promoted our cause through the intricacies of Broadcasting Act, Public Broadcasting Act, Tribunals, post-ponements & politicians (*Harold Mair* & *David Fairbairn* & the two Border Councils were most helpful).

Through *John Alker-Jones* & *David Winterbottom* with guidance from the City of Albury, a country cottage beyond Lavington, at Ettamogah was offered on nominal rent, for a studio for the new station with a catchy name "Radio Ettamogah" after its location & the *Ken Maynard* cartoons. This little house was at the foot of One Tree Hill from which communication networks on the NSW side of the Border transmitted. It lacked water & services so I used my old Mazda ute to collect building materials from district firms.

From the water main, someone donated pipe, someone else dug a trench, someone else the toilets & taps & finally there arrived a load of concrete for the toilet block with no doors.

*David Orames*, a wonderful man, volunteered his radio electronic expertise & the resources of Uncle Ben's regular sponsors of embryonic broadcasting. With his subcommittee of *Dick Jacobs*, & later *Hugh Paton* a sophisticated equipment rack & consoles were installed in the two (practice) studios. The linings were salvage of Oregon & insulated panels, air-conditioning was donated & carpet arrived, bricks were laid & soon enthusiastic rehearsals for the test transmission began. To connect a transmitter to a high point requires a coaxial cable; by chance talking to a bloke from P&T department he told me of an old cable somewhere in the back paddock of our station, en route to the pinnacle. This was a chewed up coaxial mess of coloured wires left by the cows. With another donation of fresh cable & a fantastic pre-cast concrete pillbox to house the works up the hill, we acquired capacity to broadcast supposing a Licence to do so.

2REM was to be the only Applicant in this area if no one else objected to its issue. It had been known that the Federation of Australian Commercial Broadcasters had so objected at Hear-

ings mostly insisting that advertising should not be allowed, nor the use of popular commercial music, their stock in trade. In other words, any new broadcaster should be alternative in its content, non-commercial (so how to be funded?), low powered so limited geographically to its community, & adhere to its "Promise of Performance".

Development to this stage was financed by Grants from various statutory bodies & local supporters. With no Licence yet, a Corporate registration was impossible, & vice versa. I personally leased Revox B77 reel to reel broadcast quality recorders, a high quality console & microphones, & persuaded clients of my practice to support me also with turntables & supplies. A 'turnkey' studio might cost \$27000; 2REM had two studios in air-conditioned rooms with sound insulation & carpets, a base station & transmitter for a few thousand.



School Volunteer, "dummy broadcaster" at the microphone & sound mixing console. Photo: Don Tynan

## THE THEORY OF PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Regulators demanded that applicants were aware of their coming obligations when going to air. With training from the established broadcasters who visited on funded tours, & interim membership in the PBAA, the ethos of broadcasting was acquired. The emerging status of our plan was recognised when in December 1976 we organised the annual conference of Public Broadcasters at Clyde Cameron College & were assured by the Minister, *Tony Staley* MHR that our chances were good. But it was unclear due to changes in legislation.

I had written a Feasibility Study to summarise the multifaceted planning & to assure future sources of finance. This formed the basis of an application to the Schools Commission for myself to coordinate the use of the coming medium by educators & pupils, including ethnic groups. A sum of \$10,000 ar-

rived to fund my activities which were encroaching dangerously on veterinary practice. *Harvey Mendham* supervised this aspect which a report was accepted on termination.

## TEST TRANSMISSIONS

As the chance of a successful application increased, the arrangements for a Test Transmission, generally on a weekend, aroused enthusiasm in the 140 volunteers. But it was blood-from-stone to get permission, control of the right to broadcast was tight. In the test period of two days the candidates had to set up to deliver broadcasts, the easy part, & to discover reception areas, problems of interaction with existing broadcasters, the commercials in the area, & in two States.

Not every householder had an FM receiver, & the test transmitter itself was to be picked up by courier from 2MBS, used & returned. We had a great aerial, & a large amount of publicity, letter drops arranged. (Later I counted that 2REM had engendered 20,000 sheets of paper).

The test was well & widely received, with minimal interference to TV. Unfortunately a further 18 months, into late 1977 elapsed before a Hearing was scheduled & in all that time practices & in-house broadcasting was all that was possible, accompanied by all the administrative load of the guiding Co-operative. *Noelle Oke* was the mainstay of this period & a greater contributor to the success of 2REM than I.

In February 1978, a Hearing was held in the Mayors' Room, Albury Civic Centre, before Mr *Keith Moreman* of the ABT & his entourage. It was a blue suit occasion, & after witness support especially from the AWDC & leading citizens, the "Promise of Performance" of the applicant was presented (Tabled). 2AY made a reference to their concerns about public broadcasting & a rebuttal delivered by *Michael Law* a broadcast advocate.

The proposed callsign was 2REM, & apart from connecting to Ettamogah, REM is an acronym for *rapid eye movement*, as in sleep, when fantastic dreams & visions arise - I thought very appropriate for this venture.

This "Promise..." confirmed the broadcasting philosophy of the PBAA, community & participant obligations to uphold ethical standards & the broadcast Law.

➤➤➤

On April 4<sup>th</sup> 1980 the Licence to broadcast was received. & radio broadcasting commenced almost immediately.

### SPONSORSHIP

To raise funds apart from Grants, sponsorship income was to be sought. This format allows the station to name the sponsor, their line of business, location & contact. Nothing suggesting their merits or special skills can be added. Names of such sponsors well-wishers can be repeated in printed media. This tenuous base made it very difficult to fund a Co-operative, with public shareholders so few. Without funding qualified management & administrative staff cannot be retained & in a situation of hundreds of volunteers, problems arise.

### THE PEOPLE OF 2REM

I will touch briefly on some of the characters of 2REM at its establishment.

**David Fraser** is an **Al Bowley** fan; his carefully rehearsed programs, "Music of the Thirties" became a paradigm. His records were played wet to suppress noise. His commentaries were evidence of deep knowledge of his subject matter. **Susie Wild** came from Canada with broadcast training, became both presenter & Station manager, & wrote Operations Manuals. She had natural aptitude for voice media.

Finally I recall a shambling bearded American teacher **Lief Ayen** who turned up one day with a huge collection of classical music in rare original editions. He had several **Wagners**, every Broadway Musical, every classic. He enjoyed his solitary night sessions, spent in the studio with the monitors blaring. One day he did not arrive; **Bob Van gelder** found his body at his flat. The then Chairman & I distributed his ashes in the station grounds. With a grant, we bought that collection for \$2000. Now the DVD has arrived & other formats are redundant, awaiting their archivist, a task either for the ABC or Public Broadcasting.

Unfortunately many younger broadcasters accustomed to disc jockeys aspired to the same, & not the alternatives. Of course it is difficult to expect standard ABC pronunciation in public radio but many managed it. It is the job of management to find natural talent amongst volunteers- management cannot refuse anyone their right to broadcast, but

must guide so as to maintain a standard.

**D**o we have a Right to Broadcast? In Albury-Wodonga one does, within the Promise of Performance. Your ADHS can offer Oral History, its news & views, upon application. Ethnic presenters have sustained fourteen language streams, originally using overseas transmissions & supplied tapes from Germany, Holland, Italy, & SBS & their own resources. Extensive funding, at times later the majority was distributed for these segments.

There is a lot of people in radio, & a lot of human tragedy. This is a history of the beginnings, not of the present operations. The community, this community, & each in their own way, contributed to its origins now others have to carry on, under that promise, & must face periodic calling to account before the Broadcasting Tribunal. Without the help of the AWDC, & many community leaders, the guiding Committee could not have achieved the goal; **Noelle Oke**, first Chairman, **Terry Hillman**, **Barry Morwood** (Lawyer), **Steve Kynoch**, **David Oram**, **Judy Veenhof**, myself.

The end result of these labours arrived on April 4, 1980 when licensed transmission began from the refurbished studios of 2REM. A party atmosphere prevailed at Ettamogah as a succession of presenters & supporting technicians & phone answerers & tea ladies filled the annex. What was being heard throughout Albury-Wodonga, what did listeners think? Little attention had been paid to just how feedback could be obtained & analysed, but then enthusiasts phoned in & everybody felt happy with the Comments register demanded under the Licence.

This aspect of the broadcast - response, was & still is difficult because public broadcasting is not about numbers & popularity, as commercial radio requires to sell its advertising product, but about the stimulation of diversity. The public ethos is not about the lowest common denominator. Each segment was meant to expose the presenter-person & their choice of broadcast material. Preparation was essential to good presentation. On the whole this challenge has been met.

Looked at another way, "the audience" is a niche concept, & the presenter may have only one listener & his session still be valid.

There is immense power in Albury-

Wodonga & the genesis of Radio.

Ettamogah expresses that; marshalling enthusiasm was all that was required. It could have been easier & efficient if I had been a trained media person as well as a country vet but a result eventuated for which the community ought to be glad.

-Dr Donald Tynan 11/8/04

■ See also; Border Mail, 1/4/2000 p39

### GENERAL NOTICES

- 1 Bulletin 438, Page2, Col 2. The "Englishman" (missing name - correction) was **Brian Harley**.
- 2 Bulletin 439 was transcribed by **June Shanahan**.
- 3 Thanks to all of you who are sending the A&DHS corrections to the Bulletin.
- 4 Current A&DHS research projects:
  - ✍ **Joe Wooding** - "History of Cricket in Albury"
  - ✍ **June Shanahan** - "History of Tennis in Albury"
  - ✍ **Peter Harper** - "History of Dentists in Albury"
  - ✍ **Jan Hunter** - "Social History of a Nth Albury Community".

### ANSWER TO THE QUESTION OF THE MONTH (AUGUST)

(Commercial radio started in Albury on 17 December 1930.

What was the station; where was its studio & where was its transmitter?)

2AY commenced in 1930 (studio in Temple Buildings, & then above Mid States Radio, in Dean St), with Charles Rice securing the licence in June. The transmitter was on Poole's Hill -the radiation nearby was enough to light up a light bulb! 3 months later 2CO started (with Clever Bunton as announcer).

-Gerry Curtis, Jill Wooding, Ron Braddy.

■ Bayley, W.A. "Border City", 1976 p165.

### NEXT COMMITTEE

MEETING: 5.15pm Tuesday  
Sept. 28, 2004, at Albury City Library.

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