

Wiradjuri Country, PO Box 822 ALBURY 2640

<https://alburyhistory.org.au/>

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Next Meeting

Wednesday, July 09, 2025

7.30 pm, Commercial Club, Albury

Topic: Annual General Meeting
Noreuil Albury & France

Speaker: Nat Ward

ALBURY LIBRARYMUSEUM

New exciting exhibition

**"Bungambrawatha:
Stories of Albury"**

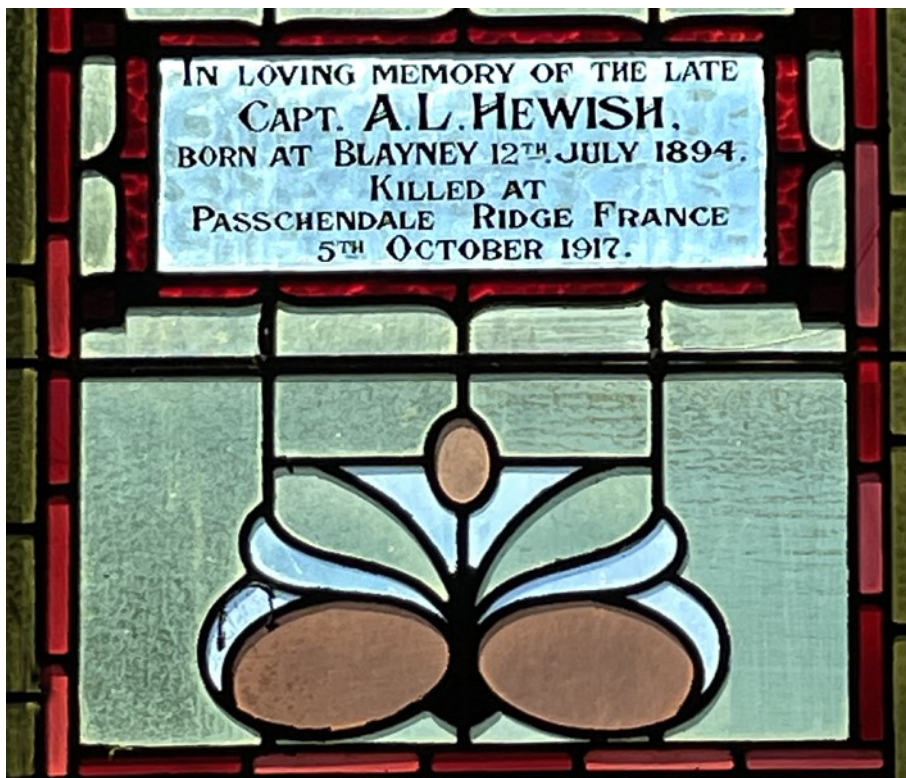
Opens July 26

Page 2 Annual Report

Page 3 AGM Agenda

Page 4 Uncovering WWI Story

Page 6 A&DHS on the Internet



Memorial window, former Wesleyan Church, Olive St [see page 5]

PRESIDENT'S NOTES FOR JULY

The theatre came to the Society at our meeting in June. We took a virtual bus tour of sites in Albury which were relevant to the happenings in the district in support of the war effort. Characters who were supporting our soldiers at the Front between 1914-1918 were brought to life by the clever, creative and informative writing of Doug Hunter. We visited the Town Hall, the Albury Railway Station, Noreuil Park, the Monument, St David's Church and the former Wesleyan Church, now part of the Albury police complex. The performance finished right on 9 o'clock when we appropriately had an 'after party.' Thank you Helen Livsey for arranging our party.

In July we have our Annual General Meeting followed by our monthly meeting. Nat Ward, our guest speaker, has recently returned from Noreuil in France where the connection between that town and Albury remains strong to this day. I recommend to members a viewing of the short video on the battle at Noreuil which our returned soldiers from World War I told Mayor Alf Waugh was the battle they wanted to be remembered for. The video can be viewed by going to our website and choosing the YouTube channel or by following this link: [YouTube](#)

Membership subscriptions are now due for 2025/26. The recommendation to the AGM is that subscription fees remain unchanged – single members \$30, family members \$35. Members who require a posted Bulletin please pay an extra \$12 towards postage.

2025/26 Subs Due

The past twelve months have been very busy for our Society as we witnessed three highly significant historical anniversaries.

The 90th Anniversary of the landing of the Uiver, the bicentenary of the arrival of Hume and Hovell and the centenary of the Albury War Memorial were all observed. In addition, we have been active in helping the memorial committee at the Albury Public School which celebrates its 175th anniversary next month.

Our speaker program, expertly co-ordinated by Jenny Romero, continued to make our monthly meetings interesting and well attended. This has led to quite a few new members joining our Society.

Let us reflect on our speaker program:

In July we heard from Dr Malcolm and Wendy Moore about their work in Nepal. Dr Moore worked at a 700 bed teaching hospital training young local doctors and Wendy Moore helped a humanitarian group helping women rebuild their lives after relationship breakdown. We also heard of their subsequent involvement with the Bhutanese refugees who settled in Albury after being displaced from their homelands.

In August Society member, Honor Auchinleck spoke about our lack of preparedness, as a nation, to deal with and support the immediate families of those who died in combat in the early stages of the war. We were told of the country's response to that need and the rise of humanitarianism following the war.

In September we heard from Yvette Nesire-McNeil who spoke of the Keamy sisters who left the mountains of Lebanon, as the Ottoman Empire was losing its power, and settled in Albury in about 1910. Yvette clearly demonstrated to us how valuable family history can be, especially to the descendants of those early pioneers.

In October Fr Peter MacLeod-Miller generously invited us to Adamshurst and gave an entertaining address about the history of the mansion which he now calls home. We were given a chance to inspect the eclectic collection on display including a section in the library set aside for objects related to Albury history.

Our November meeting focused on the Hume and Hovell bicentenary. Panel members Bruce Pennay, Peter Harper and Kat Kitsch gave brief presentations followed by questions from the audience.

In December our special guest was Captain Deborah Lawrie who spoke about her career which led to her becoming Australia's first female pilot at a major commercial airline, in her case Ansett Airlines.

Society member, Tom Doolan led us off in 2025 with a nostalgic and entertaining look at the development of Wirlinga. Tom recounted stories of local identities who have contributed to the development of Wirlinga to make it the attractive place it is today.

In March Jeff Brownrigg recited the poetry of John O'Brien and told tales of his life as Albury Catholic priest Fr Patrick Hartigan and he referred to other colourful Australian characters.

In April Captain Roger Turner RN took us underwater to find the wreck of the Montevideo Maru in an unforgettable presentation detailing the advances in technology which made the mission such a success.

In May we had two presentations. Superintendent Paul Smith described the tragic events in 1963 which cost a police Sergeant his life. We also heard from Andrew Johnston about an equally tragic loss of life in 1943 when a bus carrying soldiers to a dance in Albury collided with a locomotive on a level crossing in Wodonga.

June saw us enjoy the fruits of many hours of work by Doug Hunter. An evening at the theatre was enjoyed as some of our members did their best to re-enact the characters in Albury who helped support our soldiers on the frontline during World War I.

Apart from our monthly meetings we actively participate in community events to pursue our mission of keeping the history of our wonderful city alive.

Our secretary, Helen Livsey, answers numerous requests for information from the public on a myriad of topics. Greg Ryan curates a first class digital platform which attracts a large number of 'hits' from the public. Simon Burgess ensures that our financial affairs and compliance are professionally taken care of as well as being involved in all of our activities.

With the active participation of all committee members we also undertake numerous other projects, such as:

At the NAIDOC event in July we set up our stall alongside our friends from the Albury LibraryMuseum.

In September a Central Albury Heritage walk for participants in the Write Around the Murray writer's festival.

In October, a guided tour for vision impaired residents of the city to recognise International White Cane Day. Also in October we took our stall to the Uiver Open Day to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the landing and gave an interview to ABC Goulburn Murray live from the venue. Later in October we received the news that our nomination for a Heritage award for Sir Macpherson Robertson had been successful. This was the first such

award to an Australian. Sir Macpherson's grandson, Phil Robertson, lives in Albury and of course, Sir Macpherson sponsored the London to Melbourne Air Race which led to the emergency landing of the Uiver at the Albury Racecourse.

In November we had a stall at the Albury Show selling our publications and talking to local families about their connection with Albury. Also in November we attended the unveiling of the new landscaping works at the Hovell Tree. This improvement to the landscaping came about after consistent lobbying by the Society which was led by Greg Ryan.

During November we also gave radio and television interviews and spoke at various ceremonies to mark the Hume and Hovell bicentenary.

In January we led a guided bus tour of sites in Albury relevant to WWI and read the excellent scripts written by Doug Hunter. There were two further bus tours in the following months, all fully booked.

We nominated Peter Harper for the award of "Active Citizen of the Year" in the AlburyCity Honours List. In February we were proud and delighted to receive the news that Peter's work in creating the H&H Explorers' Bike Ride had been justly rewarded. Peter was crowned "Active Citizen of the Year" in a ceremony at the Albury Entertainment Centre followed by a cocktail party where the Society received praise from the Mayor and councillors for our constructive involvement in the affairs of the City and the recording of its history.

In March, during Heritage Month, we took another group on a Central Albury walk and delivered a Trove workshop at the ALM. Also in March we attended with our stall at the Wodonga Show.

In April we launched Howard Jones excellent publication, "Mud, Blood and Tears" at the ALM. Member for Albury, Justin Clancy officiated.

On ANZAC day we gave a brief address at a ceremony at the Albury war memorial which was held at 7.30pm, the exact time of the original dedication ceremony in 1925.

In May we conducted another guided tour of the City centre for the vision impaired, this time to celebrate International Guide Dogs Day. In June we attended as guest speaker at the Probus Club of Albury.

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); FoxDigital (for digital printing including Society banners) and financial support from sponsors Lester & Son Funeral Directors, Baker Motors, Hume Bank, Armstrongs Financial Advisers, Zauner Construction, Martin's Travel Group, Elders Real Estate (through Manny Gonzales) and Rotary Clubs of Albury, Albury North and Albury Hume.

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. Simon Barlow generously prints the paper copy of the Bulletin for those members who need one.

Finally I want to pay tribute to your hard working committee who work together to make our Society so successful at what it does. Also thanks to the large number of our members who attend our monthly meetings thereby making our gatherings so enjoyable for all of us.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AGENDA—JULY 09, 2025

Declaration of Annual General Meeting open.

Apologies:

Minutes of AGM July 10, 2024

President's Report

Treasurer's Report

Business:

Confirm membership subs: \$30 single, \$35 family (extra \$12 for posted Bulletin), corporate \$100

Election of Office Bearers & Committee – Nominations received:

President: Geoff Romero

Vice-President: Greg Ryan

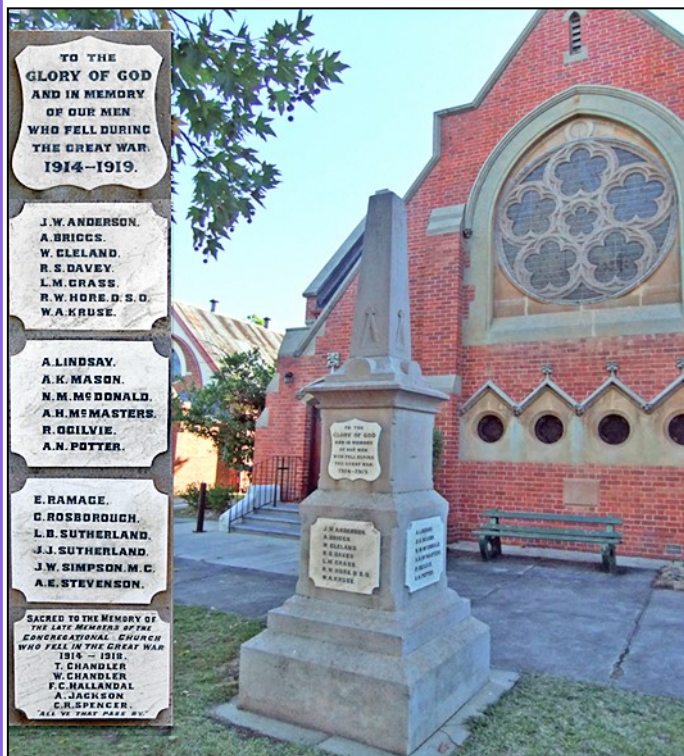
Treasurer: Simon Burgess

Secretary: Helen Livsey

Committee members: Jenny Romero, Yelly Evenhuis, Robyn Hawking, Howard Jones, Steve Judd, Peter Harper.

Closure of Annual General Meeting.





The Memorial in front of St David's Church

At the June meeting we were treated to a virtual bus tour of World War One sites in Albury. This virtual adaptation had its origin in a bus tour arranged by the Albury LibraryMuseum to complement an exhibition "Recovering the Past."

Six locations which had WWI significance for Albury were visited, the former Town Hall, now part of MAMA; Albury Railway Station, at the time the rail gauges differed, so everyone and everything had to cross the platform and board another train to continue the journey; Noreuil Park; the War Memorial; St David's Church; and finally the former Methodist Church, now part of the Police Complex.

In addition to recovering the sites and their stories, we 'recovered' Albury townsfolk of the era who told stories and of their part in them.

The townsfolk were Mayoress Ellen Waugh, young woman Francie Mudge, Clerk-of-Courts John Kingsmill, schoolboy Billie James, Red Cross President Flora Baker, Railway Refreshment Rooms Manager Hugh McCutcheon, Battery Sergeant Major Percy Pearsall, contractor Thomas Bartleson, church organist Horace Stelling, army cadet, Scoutmaster Frank Brown and Captain Leslie Hewish.

Our presenters were Albury LibraryMuseum staffer Elise Fletcher, A&DHS members Jenny and Geoff Romero, Greg Ryan, Doug Hunter and Paul Grover. Doug wrote the script and Jenny and Elise raided dress-up boxes, Op Shops and LibraryMuseum outreach boxes for costumes.

Three bus tours were conducted with twenty persons on each. Feedback was encouraging.

"The talk was beautifully researched, well put together and brilliantly presented. Well done all concerned."

"Excellent event, well-spoken and so informative. We learnt so much history about Albury we didn't know. We'll be telling others to attend future events of this."

"Really lovely session. Very encouraging and kind staff."

"It was an excellent tour. It took me quite a while to start enjoying the 'play reading' format, but by the time we got to Albury Railway Station I realised the powerfulness of it. Very knowledgeable presenters, and the program was very well put together."

The tour presented in the Wattle Room at the Commercial Club was a virtual tour with PowerPoint providing the sense of travel and the locations.

The stories were a balance of battlefield experience, Red Cross work, fund raising for Comforts, YMCA, letters home, deaths and remembrance.

Staff Nurse Alice Pritchard wrote to Albury Red Cross from a hospital on Lemnos Island where she was looking after men from Gallipoli.

"Several things that I have had to distribute to my patients have been marked Albury, and the supplies come regularly. Several thousands of our men are passing through our hospital where we take any number up to two thousand."

Lieutenant Colin Kingsmill wrote from France "You should hear the 10th and 13th Battery folk speak of the Billjim's Sisters. All the men in each of these Batteries got a pair of gumboots."

Flora Baker, president of the Albury Red Cross told of her ladies helping with the move of wounded soldiers



Red Cross nurses in front of Albury Town Hall

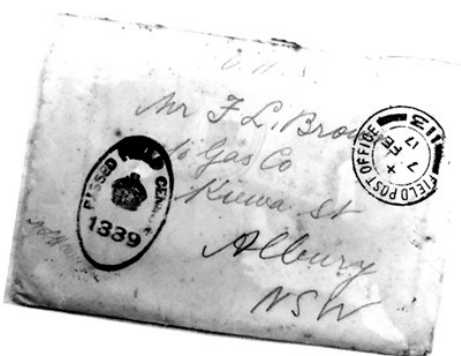
between trains at Albury Railway Station. Hugh McCutcheon told of a young porter at the Station, Joe Kennedy, wounded and paralysed in France and brought home to die.

Mayor Alfred Waugh related how his discussions with members of the Albury Artillery Battery convinced him of the need to name Noreuil Park as something forever distinctly Albury. Contractor Thomas Bartleson described the building of Albury's iconic War Memorial. Responding to a suggestion that in 100 years people might still look at it and remember all who served and especially those who didn't come back, said "You know I like that, my boy Harry didn't come back."

Horace Stelling, organist at a memorial service for three young men of St David's congregation killed at Amiens in 1918, touched on the role of ministers of religion who had the unenviable task of calling at homes in the town to deliver the news of a loved one killed. What words, he wondered, did Reverend Flemming have for Annie Cleland who had been married only one month before husband William had sailed and now was dead.



Returned soldiers at work landscaping Noreuil Park



The final presentation highlighted a unique collection of letters between Captain Leslie Hewish and Scoutmaster Frank Brown now held in the LibraryMuseum collection. Battlefield experiences feature in only a few letters. They are graphic when they do.

"Don't read any more of this unless you are prepared to tell it to no one, at any rate to no one by whom it could reach the ears of Father and Mother at home, for I've got nothing to write about if I don't write of some of these thing and there's no need for them to know them.

"Well we went up to relieve one of our officers and sections at dawn one morning, that is about 2.30 am. We had an open road which led up to Pozières village to walk on for a few minutes, and as soon as we got onto it saw the bodies of three poor beggars who'd just before been knocked out with a shell. Well we left the road and entered what was officially known as a communication trench but which really was a track through shell craters many of which were fifteen feet deep and some very much more.

"That does not sound bad writing or reading in cold blood but when it is pitch dark except for flares, rain is drizzling down just enough to keep the ground greasy, and telephone wires are run along and across the track all over the place, besides dead Huns and Australians right across the path and every few yards, the stink of which nearly suffocate you, shells are dropping all round you and the men are all loaded with guns, water and rations, well it isn't exactly pleasant.

"At last we got settled into the bottom of the trench where the guns were, but between the guns it was awful, no trenches whatsoever and in my rounds I was continually falling over dead men who had been there perhaps three weeks.

"Hang it I must knock off writing in this strain or I'll be as nervous and shaky as anything by thinking of these things."

Hewish is remembered by a window in the former Methodist Church, now part of the Police Complex [see page 1]. The colours of the scarf of 1st Albury Scout Troop, green and brown reflect the 3rd Battalion AIF colour patch, Hewish's battalion. Brown who had applied repeatedly to join the AIF was denied on medical grounds. Instead, he worked to establish the Scout Troop. His work is remembered in the Frank Brown Rover Scout Den in Mitchell Street Albury.



1st Albury Scout Troup scarf

A&DHS ON THE INTERNET

An important and effective way in which our Society raises awareness of our local history and heritage is through the internet. Clearly the internet is also a valuable tool for those researching aspects of local history. There are four major elements:

- ♦ **The Trove website.** Through a huge local effort and help from generous sponsors, we have almost completed the project to digitise Albury newspapers from the first local newspaper of 1856 through to the end of 1954. These newspapers are available on the Trove website of the National Library of Australia. [Search newspapers on Trove](#)
- ♦ **A&DHS website.** Our website has been evolving since it was first registered in early 2008 and now contains hundreds of articles and photographs. In early June this message was received from Colin, a 72 year old Sydney man "Congratulations on your Society's wonderful website. The 'Then and Now' images are a great resource." Over the past year we have averaged over 2,500 views per month. [Go to our website](#)
- ♦ **Our Facebook page.** Every Friday evening since 2014, a post with a photograph and brief info relating to the image has been added to this page – about 580 posts. Sean commented recently "Incredible, rich history. I'm constantly intrigued reading about our Albury. No better place to live." From Narelle "I love these history lessons on my childhood town." The page averages over 100,000 views per month. [Go to our Facebook page](#)
- ♦ **Our YouTube Channel.** Our channel currently contains 39 videos dealing with topics of local history. Recently we received this comment on a video on the channel from 17 year old Albury girl Emily "How marvellous! Thank you for your research and dedication to preserving our town's history." Over the past year videos received 15,500 views with a total 'watch time' of 1,500 hours (that's over 62 days). [Go to our YouTube Channel](#)

Newspapers
of Albury on
Trove
1856-1954



A&DHS
YouTube
CHANNEL

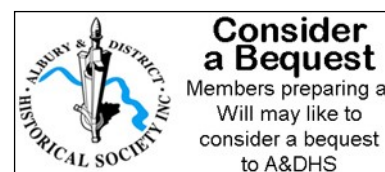
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Howard Jones, June Shanahan,
Helen Livsey, Bruce Pennay

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Vice-President: Greg Ryan

Secretary: Helen Livsey

alburyhistory@bigpond.com
02 6021 3671

Treasurer: Simon Burgess

Minute Secretary: Yelly Evenhuis

Publicity Officer: Helen Livsey

Public Officer: Helen Livsey

Committee: Jenny Romero, Robyn Hawking,
Peter Harper, Howard Jones.

Bulletin Editor: Greg Ryan

gregmjryan@gmail.com

Publications & Stock Officer: Volunteer needed

Bulletin dispatch (by post): Richard Lee

Meeting Greeter: Yelly Evenhuis

Web Editor: Greg Ryan

Meetings: Second Wednesday of the month
(except January) at 7.30 pm usually at the
Commercial Club Albury.

The Committee meets on the third
Wednesday of the month at 3 pm
at the Albury LibraryMuseum.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

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Corporate: \$100

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