

Albury & District Historical Society Inc

September 2025

No 670

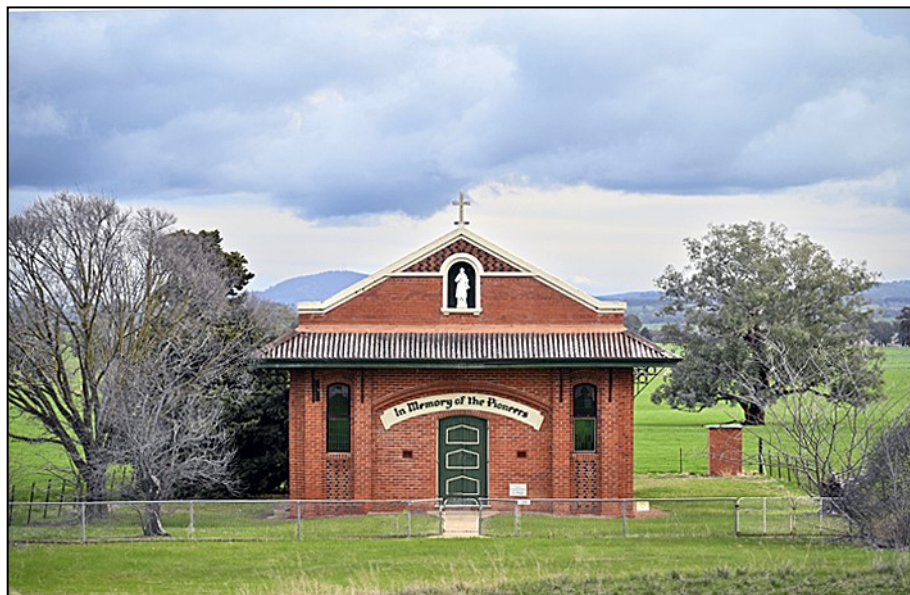
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St Francis de Sales Church at Bowna – see page 5

Next Meeting

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

7.30 pm, Commercial Club, Albury

Topic: Using the Trove Website

Speaker: Greg Ryan

ALBURY LIBRARYMUSEUM
“Bungambrawatha:
Stories of Albury”
Now Open

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PRESIDENT'S NOTES FOR SEPTEMBER

Our August meeting was very well received and I thank the members who came forward to share short stories of our local history. Allan Wilson read a very interesting and nostalgic history of “The People Who Lived On The Hill” (West Albury).

Chris McQuellin followed with an old photo of the Hovell Tree and zoomed in to reproduce images of a very interesting background. Our researchers have already started delving into what those background images represent.

Ron Haberfield detailed the five generations of the Gray/Haberfield families who attended Albury Public School. He also spoke of his fellow classmates Lou Lieberman and Senator Don Grimes who went on to successful parliamentary careers.

Narda Reid was responsible for bringing us a talk presented by her sister, Marion, celebrating 100 years of the Girl Guides in Albury.

Greg Ryan shared photographs of the Pioneers Church at Bowna which has recently been deconsecrated.

The evening was rounded out by Fr Peter MacLeod-Miller who brought along a new book by Professor Geoffrey Blainey, aged 95, titled “The Causes of War.”

It was wonderful to hear so many stories from our members and we would like to do a similar format again. This depends on our members getting behind the idea and coming forward with stories.

It is not necessary that you have a PowerPoint, or photographs. You can deliver your story from notes as was demonstrated by Allan Wilson.

This month we welcome new members Patricia Renfree and Carol Barr.

A further reminder, membership subscriptions for 2025/26 were due in July, single members \$30, family members \$35. Members who require a posted Bulletin please pay an extra \$12 towards postage.

2025/26 Subs Due

Around the early 1930s, West Albury had become known as a settlement, a vast majority of land in the area came under a mining title. Late in 1930, a deputation was presented on behalf of the West Albury residents to allow purchase of blocks. Eventually, land was offered for sale by the government.

Recreation Reserve

In July 1935 plans were afoot to create a public recreational reserve of over three acres. A survey of the area was conducted by the Crown Lands Department of Wagga. After deliberation between Albury Municipal Council and the West Albury Progress Association, tennis courts were permitted on a section of the reserve.

Albury West Progress Association

West Albury had a hard-working Progress Association. They fought tirelessly against all odds with Albury Municipal Council for improvements in West Albury. The action resulted in reaction – council commenced work replacing gravel roads with asphalt, adding kerb and guttering along streets and connecting overhead street lighting. Sewerage connections were introduced in 1963.



West Albury Community Hall
before a recent restoration *

Proposal for a Community Hall

A largely attended meeting was called by the West Albury Progress Association in February 1938. Held at the home of Mr Les Simmonds, the meeting discussed a proposal for a community hall, possibly in Mott Street. The proposal was endorsed but it took a further eight years before a hall was fully established on the site.

Post Office for West Albury

In June 1936 the Acting-Deputy Director of Post and Telegraphs advised Albury Municipal Council that a post office would be established at West Albury. Local community member Mr Bill Minchin became the first postmaster. Bill also operated a grocery store within the building. After the post office closed, the building became known as the West Albury

store. Today this old store has seen many changes over the years as numerous proprietors would come and go. The store still operates in 2025 trading under the name of Frankies, mainly specializing in take-away food.

Golf Links for West Albury

In 1961 Laurie Taggart approached a member of the Spurr family, who resided on a large property located on the Old Howlong Rd (this road name no longer exists). Laurie was interested in leasing thirty-two acres on Spurr land to establish an eighteen-hole golf course. Both parties were happy with a lease agreement, valid over a ten-year period.

Heavy machinery worked continuously preparing the course for an official opening late in 1961. Many people are not aware that a golf course existed in West Albury. In 2025 Albury West Public School is located at the original entrance of the golf links. Urban sprawl now covers the thirty-two acres of the golf course. When the golf links opened in 1961, it became the third golf club to be recognized in Albury.

Sport in the West

In the past West Albury men and women were involved in a variety of sports. During the late 1950s and early 1960s Albury Blues Football Club had eight men from the west play in their senior team of Group 13 Rugby League. Names that come to mind are Bob and Kevin Livingstone, Barry and Howard Halpin, Ernie and Les Kilpatrick, Alan Murray and my eldest brother Clarrie Wilson. It was uncommon that two brothers from three individual families all played football at the same club.

In Ovens & Murray Football, West Albury Football Club won their first premiership in 1929 defeating East Albury, West Albury 17.16 (118) East Albury 15.14 (104). West Albury were runners up to Weir United in 1930 and to Corowa in 1932. Refer also to page 7 of [Bulletin 644](#)



* Praise for West Albury Residents. The Mayor (Alderman Bunton) referred to the good progress and co-operation of the citizens of West Albury when he officially opened the West Albury Youth Hall. He congratulated the committee on its achievement. The opening was celebrated by a ball, and the women's auxiliary served supper. *Border Morning Mail*, May 13, 1947.

The club had at the time a talented footballer by the name of Haydn Bunton. Although Haydn did not reside in West Albury he became a member of the team. Hadyn was not only a talented Australian rules footballer as he excelled in local cricket. Unfortunately, he gave away the bat and concentrated mostly on his football career. Hadyn finally decided that he would like to have a crack at playing VFL football with Fitzroy, winning three Brownlow Medals in 1931, 1932 and 1935. Bunton became one of Australia's football legends. Refer also to page 5 of [Bulletin 619](#)

Recent Members of Albury City Band

Several West Albury men were members of the Albury City Band in the 1950s and 60s including Frank McMillan, Bert Keillor and Max Mildren. Perhaps the most popular character who participated with the band was Walter (Paddy) McCausland. In 1946 he was asked to take over as drum major and in 1968 he was made a life member for his excellent contribution as drum major with the Albury City Band.

Albury Public School – the First Years

Jenny Romero

Continuing our articles commemorating 175 years of Albury Public School.

In his speech at the opening of the Albury Infants' School on the July 17, 1942, Mr Clive Evatt, Minister for Education told his audience "In June 1849 a formal application was made for a school to be established at Albury. The application was signed by Dr Keatinge, Charles Crisp, Edward Crisp, William Conley and John Alston" and he went on to say, "men whose names should be written large in the history of the town." (*Border Morning Mail*, Saturday July 19, 1942, page 3). During a public meeting held in August 1849 Dr Keatinge, Messrs Crisp and Mr Alston were appointed local patrons of the school with Mr John Alston, the secretary, according to Mr Evatt.

It all started well but problems with dropping enrolments and the turnover of teachers in the first five years might have forced the closure of the school if not for the efforts of the community. The first teacher, Mr Rich was a single man and the patrons of the school wanted to replace him with a married man. In early 1852 Mr James Hanrahan was appointed. He unfortunately failed to live up to his reputation as a "most deserving teacher." By March 1852 he was accused by Mr Charles Lockhart, the Police Magistrate "to be a turbulent brawler" and "the cause of much disturbance in the town." Mr Loveday (and his wife) was the third teacher appointed followed by Mr Thomas Keenan. Enrolments fell to 50 with an average attendance of 28 students in 1856. The average attendance had fallen below the required 30 children, but the fortunes of the school were about to change.

Hanrahan's behaviour did cause some lingering distrust of the school in the community. The discovery of gold in Victoria, the movement of people to the goldfields and the general slowing of the growth in the public school system also contributed to a decline in enrolments but more significantly, a decline in the average attendance at the Albury National School.

In 1854 Mr James T Fallon arrived and from the beginning he was active in the development of the town. Mr Fallon's contribution to the town and to the wine industry is well documented.

Mr Fallon was from Ireland where he had received a liberal education at his local Grammar school. He took a keen interest in the Albury National School for many years, becoming a patron and then secretary of the patron's committee. AlburyCity's website credits Mr James Fallon with being instrumental in the opening of the Albury Model School in 1862. Whilst Mr Fallon was a significant contributor to the school's success, he did not and could not have done it without Mr and Mrs Dwyer who arrived to take up the teaching post in August 1856. The combination of Mr Dwyer and the Patron's committee of which Mr Fallon was an active member led to the Albury National School not only surviving but reaching the exalted standard of a Model School within six years of almost closing due to lack of student attendance.

Mr William Dwyer was appointed to the school in July 1856. His journey to Albury was fraught and he was caught up in floods in Gundagai. He did not arrive to take up his post until mid-August. He stayed until his appointment as one of the first school inspectors in the colony in mid 1862. He gave the school the stability it needed to rebuild its reputation. He established the teaching practice standards implemented by William Wilkins at the Fort Street Model School. He introduced the full curriculum required to meet the criteria of a Model School. He organised the school to function efficiently. By the time Mr Dwyer left to take up his appointment as a school inspector in mid 1862, the Albury National School was ready to be reclassified a Model School.



William Dwyer

Mr Dwyer trained as a teacher in Dublin, Ireland. Among his teachers were the celebrated educationist, Professor Robert Sullivan, Professors McGauley and Rintoul and eminent Professor Glover. In 1855 the Board of National Education in NSW requested the Imperial Government to send to the colony sixteen trained teachers, eight from England and eight from Ireland.

Mr and Mrs Dwyer arrived in the colony in March 1856, and he was posted for a short time to Fort Street Model School. Enrolments at the Albury National School and more importantly, the average student attendance increased steadily during Mr Dwyer's tenure. He restored trust in the school with his "modest, kind and courteous" approach to all people.

Mr McCann, a Government Inspector reported:

"After the examination he expressed himself as being perfectly satisfied with the mode of tuition pursued by Mr and Mrs Dwyer at the general proficiency of the scholars. He said he should be able to make a most favourable report to the Government of the Albury National School" (*Albury Banner*, August 28, 1861, page 3).

Following Mr Dwyer for a short time was Mr Griffith. Mr McCredie was the next teacher appointed, and the school enjoyed another period of stability. Mr McCredie was well regarded in the community and the reports following school inspections indicated the Mr McCredie was maintaining its Model School classification and was continuing to offer a very high standard of education to enable students to progress further with their education should they wish to do so. Teachers were being trained at the school.

Reports during the 1870s lamented the lack of progress in improving the standard of education in the colony. One reported that: "Schools which can be considered as models are still few in number" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, June 13, 1870, page 4) and later the report decries the lack of progress in the training of teachers. A report tabled in 1872 (*SMH*, July 5, 1872, page 6) explaining the lack of progress in the colony, starts with "Except in the Albury district it does not appear that the character of supervision by the local boards has materially improved." The standards laid down by Mr Dwyer during his period of tenure gave the Albury Model School the foundations upon which attracting suitably qualified and committed teaching staff meant the school provided local children the best possible education on offer for the times.

When Mr Dwyer's retirement was announced in July 1900 it was written of him:

"Mr William Dwyer, District Inspector of Schools, is about to retire from public service after 44 years of successful and meritorious work in the Education Department ... Mr Dwyer has been an important factor in our great success in the education of the people, and that fact must be very gratifying to him." (*Sydney Mail and NSW Advertiser*, Saturday July 28, 1900, page 206). As a mark of respect for his achievements, The Minister for Education and the Director of Public Instruction attended a huge farewell to Mr Dwyer on his retirement.

The Albury National School in the late 1850s had the "dream team" to use a modern analogy. Mr Fallon's commitment to public education, his enthusiasm and his energy combined with Mr Dwyer's qualifications and training and his systematic implementation of the standards commensurate of a Model School, took Albury's school from almost suffering the fate of so many of the early National Schools, to a school that stood out as exceptional in a system that was struggling to educate the children of the colony.

Mr & Mrs Dwyer were the parents of two Australian Catholic Bishops, Joseph William Dwyer, the first Bishop of the Diocese of Wagga Wagga (referred to in the article on the next page of this Bulletin, "Church of the Pioneers Bowna") and Patrick Vincent Dwyer, born in Albury, Bishop of Maitland.



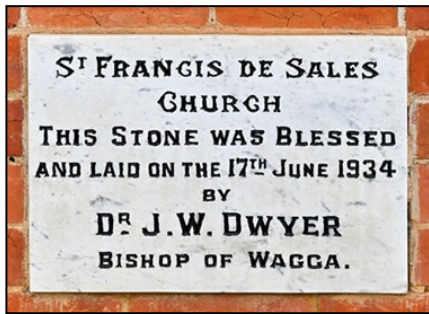
NEW YOUTUBE VIDEO

Greg Ryan has provided a new video for the collection on our YouTube Channel.

The video covers the development of the eastern end of Dean street. After a slow start, in the early 20th century development accelerated at that end of the main street. There is a focus on the contribution of the Syrian/Lebanese community and other families who contributed to development from Young street to Olive street.

Go to [A&DHS YouTube Channel](#)

St Francis de Sales Catholic Church at Bowna (see photo on page 1) was deconsecrated on Sunday August 3, 2025 by Bishop Mark Edwards of the Wagga Wagga Diocese. A large crowd attended the ceremony, most with a close family connection with the district. The foundation stone of the church had been blessed by Bishop Dwyer on June 17, 1934 after the original Bowna church had been deconsecrated due to the rising waters of Lake Hume in the early 1930s.



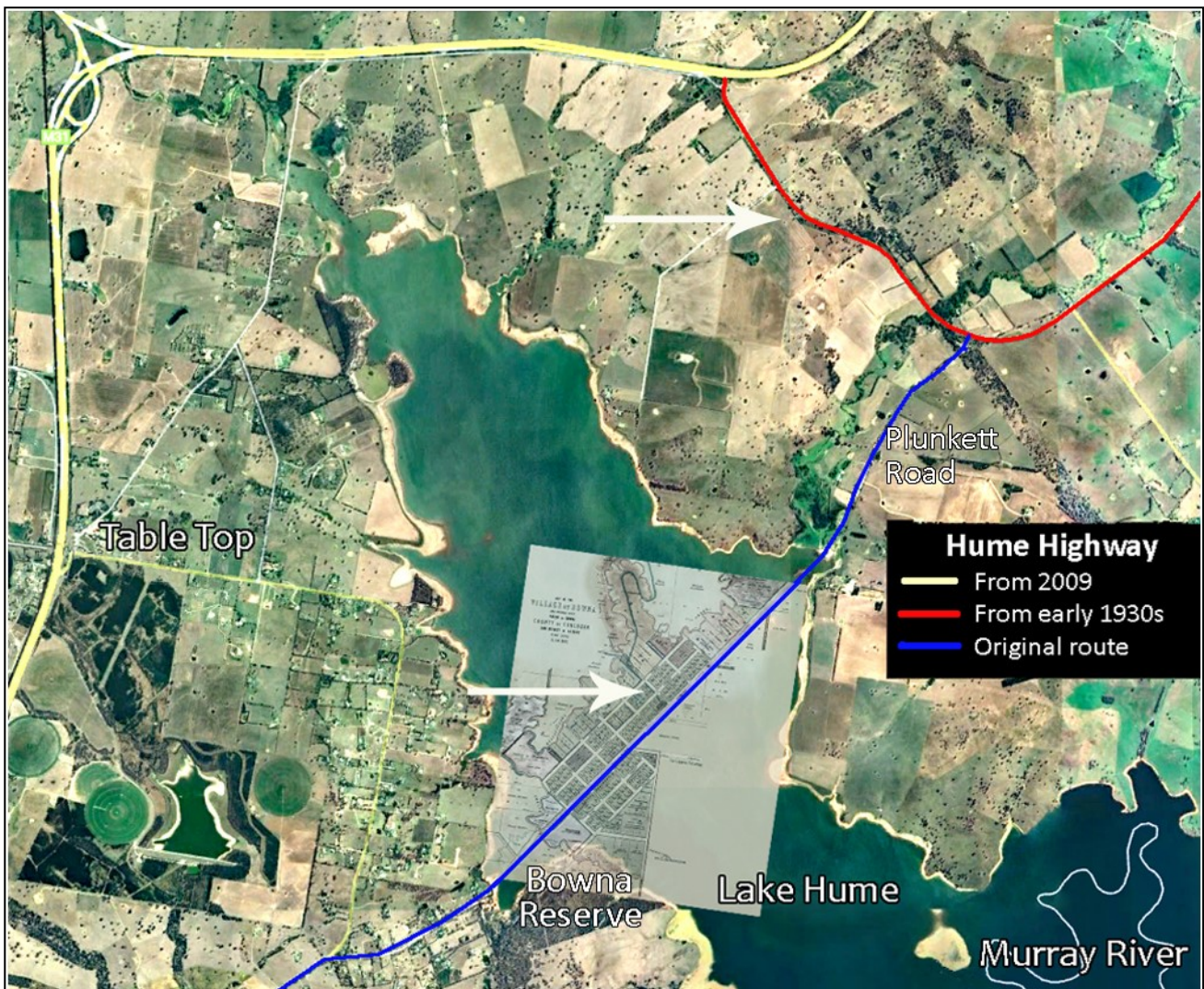
The NSW Government Gazette, August 29, 1865, notified an allocation of one acre for a Roman Catholic Church on Section 6, Allotment 9 in the village of Bowna, and two roods (half acre) each for a Catholic presbytery and a school on adjoining lots. The church was dedicated on August 25, 1868.

Until the Hume Highway was diverted around Bowna and Mullengandra, the Church of the Pioneers was on the highway. It was a regular stopping place for travellers and often photographed.

After isolation from the highway in 2009, the church had been a target for vandals. Thieves broke open the tabernacle and stole a precious engraved chalice from the original church. The church was becoming structurally unsound and had neither electricity nor water connected. So the decision was made to deconsecrate and sell the property.



Part of the congregation after Sunday Mass at the original Bowna Roman Catholic Church.



A Google Earth photo overlaid with a map of the Village of Bowna, now submerged under Lake Hume. The Sydney Road (Hume Highway from 1928) went through Telegraph Street, the main street of Bowna. The position of both churches is indicated by the arrows on the map.

Chris McQuellin works as a volunteer at the Albury LibraryMuseum. He scans photographs in high resolution for the ALM collection before they are catalogued and able to be searched for online. Chris often comes across a photograph that is quite old and needs to be enhanced to properly appreciate the detail in the photo.

Such a photo was recently purchased from the State Library of Victoria. It was a hazy photograph taken in the 1880s with the Hovell Tree and beyond the tree, the wharf and crane of the Port of Albury. Not much else could be distinguished. After enhancement by Chris using software designed for the task, he found a few details that had been lost in the haze.



Above, the original photograph after a little enhancement and cropped top and bottom. The tree and some detail of the crane can be seen. In the background not much is distinguishable.



Detail of wharf and crane emerges and the hut on the hill is sharper with a track in front.

[The river trade had peaked in the early 1870s, but rail links from Melbourne to Echuca in 1864, to Wodonga in 1873 and Albury from Sydney in 1881, saw a rapid decline in river trade. The 'Albury Banner' of November 21, 1874 reported that "The railway has driven steamers from the Murray." By the 1890s, river trade as far as Albury had all but ceased.

The wharf at Albury was completed in May 1871. However, in May 1878, the Sydney Mail

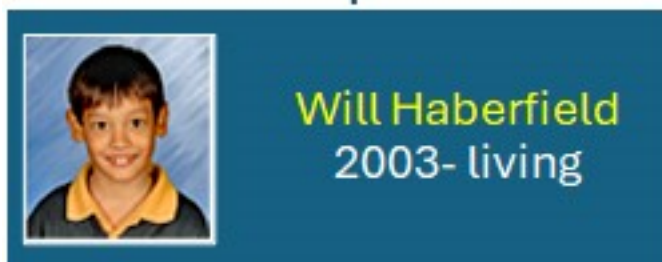
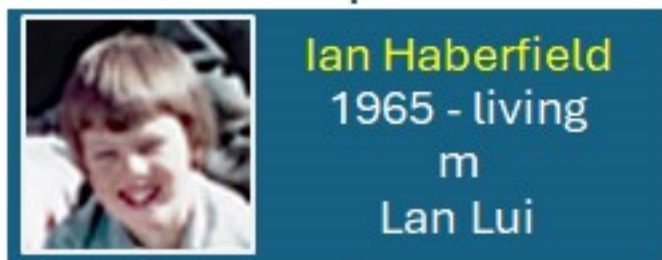
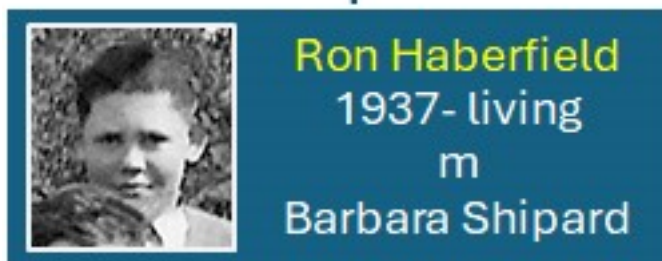
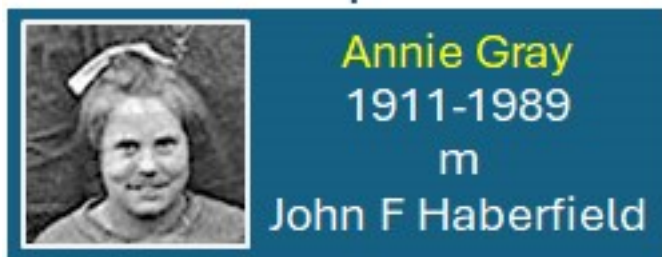
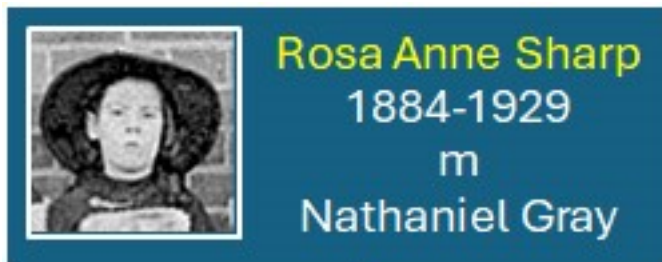
reported that "Since the opening of the railway few steamers come above Howlong and the Albury wharf, useless and deserted, is quietly rotting away. The wharf remained a sad relic of the Port of Albury until it was finally demolished in 1896. Editor]



This section of the original shows a navigation aid (arrow lower left), presumably there to guide river boats preparing to berth at the wharf.

We see two post and rail fences, the white one leading out of Albury to the west. Ridges or mounds and a fence come down the hill to a gate, right to lower centre.

On the hill in the background are buildings, probably a house with outbuildings. These buildings are also visible in a separate image from the top of Western Hill. There is the burnt trunk of a tree near the lower fence.



FIVE HABERFIELD GENERATIONS

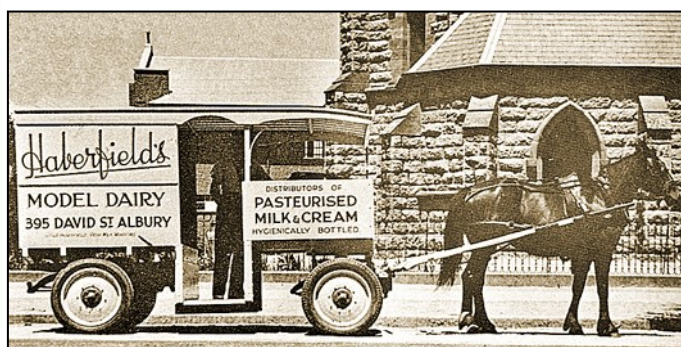
The chart highlights five successive generations of Ron Haberfield's family to attend Albury Public School (APS), starting with Ron's grandmother, Rosa Anne Gray through Ron himself to his grandchild, Will Haberfield.

However, it represents just a fraction of the family's contribution to APS. Rosa had twelve siblings and they probably all attended the school. So too did many of their children.

All five of Ron's siblings, John, Laurie, Gwen, Judy and Bruce, attended APS as did his five children, Brian, David, Sue, Ian and Kim. Five grandchildren also attended the school, Angus, Samantha and Alesha Mackinnon and William and Ethan Haberfield.

Ron had some notable classmates at APS. They included Don Grimes AO who completed medicine at the University of Sydney and later became a Senator for Tasmania and was Minister for Social Security and for Community Services in the Hawke Government; Lou Lieberman AM who was a member of the Victorian Legislative Assembly and later the Federal House of Representatives.

In 1952, Haberfield's Albury dairy won the tender to supply milk to the Albury and regional schools under the Commonwealth Free Milk Scheme. In March 1953 the *Border Morning Mail* reported that at APS "Most of the children are enjoying the milk provided by the Education Department and supplied by Haberfields. The small children are handling the bottles expertly." Some of the children enjoying their daily milk would have been Haberfield children!



Click on the link or use the QR code:

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Eighty years ago, on August 16, 1945, the BMM brought news of the surrender of Japanese forces on the previous day:

“Big Throngs Join In Round of Merry-Making. Albury's first official indication that the Japanese had surrendered was at 9am, when church bells began to peal. The deep drone from St Matthew's heralded the news.

Then came the peal of bells from other church steeples, intermingled with the screeching from air-raid sirens and the honking of motor horns ... the whistles from every available engine at Albury railway station ... ”

The following day the BMM described the mood in the streets:

“Five thousand people – the largest crowd to ever assemble in Albury – took part in Victory celebrations yesterday. Standing shoulder to shoulder they crammed the roads and footways near the CML corner and offered thanks to God and the Allied leaders for the return of peace after almost six years of war.

After the first day of joyous celebration the crowd yesterday was subdued. People had been given time to reflect on the world-wide holocaust and its dreadful repercussions on the lives of almost every living being and from every heart sprung a simple, sincere prayer: ‘Please God that throughout this world men shall link hands in a spirit of brotherhood and pledge themselves to work for the common good of all.’ On this simple thought the combined celebration broke up. With a thought such as this in their minds, the people again began a tour of jollification – to parties, dances, picnics and picture shows ...”

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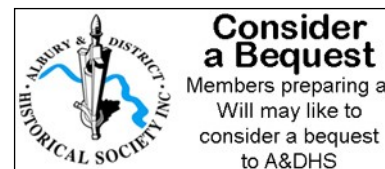
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Meetings: Second Wednesday of the month (except January) at 7.30 pm usually at the Commercial Club Albury.

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

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