

Albury & District Historical Society Inc

February 2026

No 674

Wiradjuri Country, PO Box 822 ALBURY 2640

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

For Your Reference A&DHS account details are:

BSB 640 000 Acc No 111097776

Registered by Australia Post PP 225170/0019 ISSN 2207-1237



A photo of the Mullengandra Hall from Bowna Road,
the old Hume Highway – see page 3

Next Meeting

Wednesday, February 11, 2026

7.30 pm, Commercial Club, Albury

Topic: Indigenous Dispossession

Speaker: Bruce Pennay

ALBURY LIBRARYMUSEUM
Australia in Space
Until March 15

Page 2 Show & Tell

Page 4 St Matthew's Church

Page 6 Lavington Timeline

Page 8 Investigating
Dispossession

PRESIDENT'S NOTES FOR FEBRUARY

Our December meeting was a truly fitting way to finish off our year. The Show & Tell segment drew universal praise. I thank those who came forward to make a presentation. The interest from members was evident from the amount of discussion generated during the meeting and afterwards at supper. The energy in the room was reflected in the noise level as we continued until close at 10pm.

A number of people had prepared items but we did not have time to hear them all. We will include those items in our program over the next few months and look forward to hearing them.

I was also approached by a few members who wanted to say how much they enjoyed the format of our dinner meeting in November.

I do hope that members enjoyed their time with us in 2025. I hope that you all had a restful Christmas and holiday season and I wish all members a happy and healthy New Year. I am mindful that some members did not have a happy time during our break and I assure those members that they have our love and support.

We have an interesting guest arriving from Miami, Florida (no, not Donald). She is Miss Beatrice Brickell, a direct descendant of William Brickell and Mary Bulmer. If you don't recall their significance to Albury, click on this link to our Bulletin of [October 2022](#). There will be an opportunity for locals to meet Miss Brickell at the Albury LibraryMuseum on Thursday, February 5, 4.30pm to 5.30pm, no charge. Click on the link [From Albury to Florida](#) to book a seat.

For 2026 we already have an interesting list of guest speakers. I look forward to seeing you all back at our first meeting at the Commercial Club on Wednesday 11 February at 7.30 pm.

Welcome to Michelle Gleeson from Osborne, NSW as a new member of our Society. Michelle is researching the Plummer/McInerney and Simmonds/Foster families of Albury and surrounds.

Our December 2025 meeting focused on 'Show & Tell' items from members. It was a very full meeting, so much so that some items were not presented – we will catch up with the missed items in 2026. Feedback from those present at the meeting was very positive, a fitting conclusion to a very full year for our Society. Below are brief outlines of presentations.

Albury Proclaimed a City



Emma Williams, our museum curator, showed us the 'Movietone News' short newsreel "Albury Declared a City Amid Gay Pageantry." The April 1947 declaration of Albury as a city is highlighted in the film together with the speeches, street parades and celebrations.

Emma also described how articles become part of the 'Albury Collection.' She used the example of a very recent acquisition – one of our Facebook page followers spotted a framed 1891 calendar at Vinnies in Wodonga, took a photo and posted it on FB. On the calendar is the image of a lovely lady and the text "Geo F Bray, Baker and Confectioner, Townsend St Albury" with a month by month calendar for 1891. Emma sent members of her team to have a closer look and decided that the calendar was worth purchasing for the collection. It is still awaiting cataloguing.

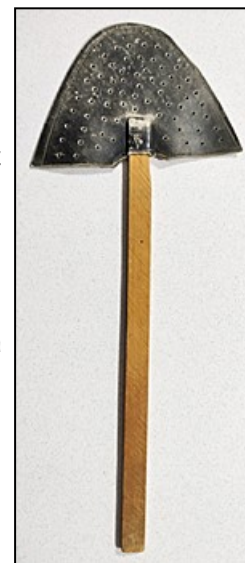
We will return to this item with a short history of the bakery at a 2026 meeting.

Plummers of South Albury

John Plummer provided a hand drawn sketch map of their 'Ivy Tree Farm' in South Albury. The map was completed by John's father in about 1950. It indicated the various vegetable plots in the families market gardens in the area north and south of Abercorn street South Albury. It also showed the location of a rubbish tip on Panmure street that was used to fill the hole from which the Plummer family had extracted clay for their brick making business in the latter decades of the 19th century.

Discussion at the meeting moved to a paper mill on Plummer land. The *Border Morning Mail* reported in June 1949: "a proposal to develop on a relatively large scale, a fine paper mill on land owned by Mr A J Plummer, in Abercorn st, South Albury." Four months later the *BMM* told readers that: "building work on a large scale will be carried out on the river bank at the southern end of Olive st, and employment provided for over 300 workers. A small factory, with plant valued at £25,000, has been operating on this site during the past year, and sample papers produced." After trialling the project, the plan was "discarded" in March 1953 due to concern about "effluent disposal" into the Murray River.

Illustrating the ingenuity of a previous generation John's wife, June Plummer, provided a home-made fly swatter. June described the lethal swatter: "My grandmother, mother and now myself have owned this device. Many flies have met their fate as you can see by the worn leather. My mother and her sister both were employed by Julius Marlow, shoe makers of Melbourne. After their mother became sick and house bound, to care for her the company allowed the daughters to work from home sewing shoes. So the swatter was invented (pictured). Two brogue toe pieces were stitched together and a piece of wood fitted as a handle. It's a deadly machine still used today."



Returned from Active Service Medal

Connie Fedorowytsch showed us a World War I medal found while metal detecting at Cobram. Connie then went on to describe the process used in trying to trace the identity of the soldier who was issued with the medal.

Each badge has a unique number on the back. This number is recorded in a register available online at the National Archives of Australia. The medal Connie found was numbered 253103.

Searching through the records, Connie was able to find that the soldier that this medal was awarded to was "Alexander Joseph Smith, 110 Flinders Lane, City." His war record could then be researched at the Australian War Memorial's website.



Front and back of medal

Mullengandra Hall

Cheryl Ryan chose to display two items related to the Mullengandra Hall, a topic that is dear to her as she grew up on Green Bank, a property directly across from the Hall so she has many fond memories.

The first Mullengandra Hall was built in 1923 on the south-east corner of the Hume Highway and Sweetwater Road. It was officially opened with a 'Grand Ball' by Albury Mayor Clive Burt in March 1924. The Hall then became the venue for all sorts of local community and family events.

The Hall was in use up until 1950 but by then it was falling in to disrepair and was said to be "ridden with white ants." A meeting of Mullengandra and Bowna residents was convened in July 1951 to consider the future of the old Hall and decide a site for a new Hall. The site chosen was the Mullengandra Recreation Reserve, further south along the Hume Highway.

In early 1953 tenders were called for purchase of the old Hall before it was eventually demolished. Bowna Hall Trust had been granted funds when the water of the Hume Dam inundated the Bowna township and that money was put towards the construction of the new Hall.



Copy of a 1924 Ball ticket



The Bowna-Mullengandra Hall was officially opened with a 'Gala Ball' in 1957 by David Fairbairn MHR. Belle of the Ball was Cheryl's 17 year old sister, Dawn Mullavey, the sash awarded while the 7 year old Cheryl slept in the back seat of her parents' car outside the Hall.

Cheryl displayed her sister's Belle of the Ball sash and a poster hand painted by her father, Frank Mullavey, advertising a Catholic Ball held in August 1957 to raise money for the new Mercy Hospital in Albury.

The Hall is still in good repair and held a 'Royal Retro Ball' in October 2025. Another recent function that the Hall hosted in September 2025 was the funeral service of prominent Mullengandra citizen and Historical Society member Bill McDonald.

Albury Brewing & Aerated Waters Co

John Hawking purchased this pottery ginger beer bottle from Ned Day, when Ned was in Wagga Road in the 1980s. It is a standard ginger beer bottle belonging to the Albury Brewing and Aerated Water Company. However, the search for any online reference to the company returned no results.

John asked AI and got the following: "The Albury Brewing & Aerated Water Company was a significant early business in Albury, NSW, formed from the Hume Brewery and later associated with the prominent Billson family, known for producing beer, cordials, and aerated waters like soda and tonic, operating from the late 1800s until it eventually merged or ceased operations in favour of the larger Billson's brand, with remnants of its history visible in vintage bottles."

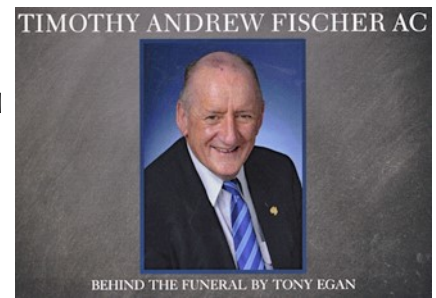
Billson's Brewery and Hume Brewery merged in 1888 to form the Albury Brewing & Malting Co, a company which lasted until 1911. John believes that Albury Brewing & Aerated Water Co may be the 'soft drink' side of their business.

The Albury Banner reported in February 1906 a meeting of the Albury Brewery: "The cordial and aerated water factory, which has been associated with the A.B. and M. Co., since September 1905, has proved a decided success and is rapidly growing."



Tim Fischer/Lucy Staton

Howard Jones had two items to display. The first was a photo book featuring the huge funeral of Tim Fischer at the Albury Entertainment Centre in August 2019. Albury funeral director Tony Egan of Lester and Son organised the funeral and it was he who compiled the book of the funeral. Howard pointed out that in attendance at the funeral were the Governor-General David Hurley, Prime Minister Scott Morrison as well as prominent politicians from all sides of politics including future and past PMs Anthony Albanese, John Howard and Kevin Rudd.



Tim's coffin had been placed on a small heritage train to be brought to Albury from The Rock with crowds of people lining stations along the way to pay homage to Tim. Then after a solemn greeting at Albury Railway Station, all traffic lights from the station to the Entertainment Centre turned green so that the cortege with its police escort was able to proceed unhindered. After the service, Tim's coffin was taken to the Yackandandah cemetery for burial.



Howard's second item was an unusual looking ink well (left). On the side was a badge with a flag and beneath the label *MS Manunda*. Howard recognised this as the name of a ship that was originally a passenger vessel for the Adelaide Steamship Company. It was converted to an Australian hospital ship during World War II and serving on board was nurse Lucy Staton. Lucy was later well known in Albury as a CWA Baby Health Centre nurse and she was a member of our Society.

The *Manunda* was hit during the Japanese bombing of Darwin in February 1942. Twelve were killed and many more injured. Lucy Staton was on board. The ship's hospital cared for their own injured and acted as a casualty clearing station for injured personnel from other ships involved in the attack. Lucy later became ship's matron on the *Manunda*.

After the Japanese surrender, *Manunda* was despatched to Singapore to repatriate ex-POWs and civilian internees who had been imprisoned in Changi Prison.



Lucy Staton

ST MATTHEW'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND – 150 YEARS

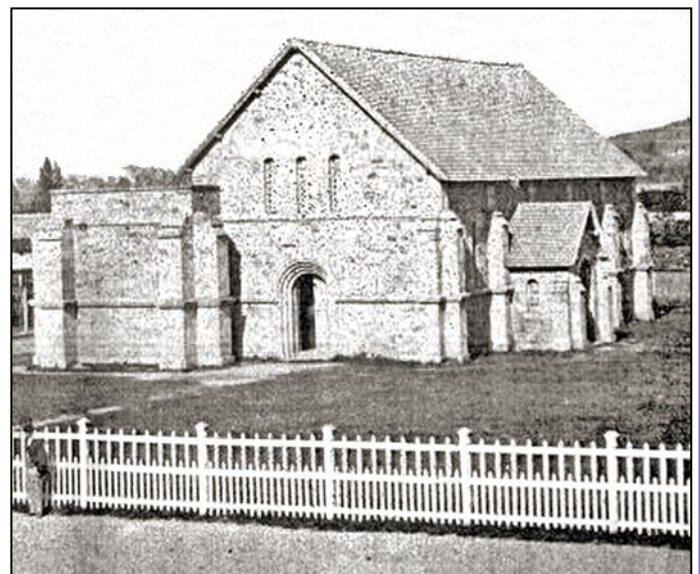
Greg Ryan

On January 13, 2026 it was 150 years since the official opening of St Matthew's Church in Albury. However, the church goes further back almost 30 years.

In May 1856 "a meeting was called to select a suitable site for a Church [of England], and to raise the necessary funds. A committee was then appointed, and subscription lists opened."

In November 1856 the *Border Post* reported that they had inspected the plans for a Church of England to be "in the Norman style of architecture ... the building is to be 92 feet [28 metres] in length by a width of 23 feet [7 metres]." The design was by prominent colonial architect Edmund Blacket of Sydney. Tenders were called for construction and on May 9, 1857 the church building committee considered five tenders before the tender of Messrs Kirkpatrick, Levie and Robertson of Albury for £2,317 was accepted.

The foundation stone "of this the parish church of Albury, to be called the Church of St Matthew the Apostle and Evangelist" was laid on Friday July 24, 1857 by Mr George Macleay, Member of the Legislative Assembly, in the presence of the Reverend Henry Elliott, the first resident clergyman – he died in April of the following year while construction of his church was far from complete and he was succeeded by Reverend Robert Potter.



The Blacket designed St Matthew's

Possibly because the building was not finished there appears to have been little formality when the church

opened. A small advertisement in the *Border Post* on March 9, 1859 alerted locals to the first service in the partly completed church: "The New Church will be opened for Divine Service on Sunday, 13th March, being the first Sunday in Lent. On the day of opening all the Sittings will be free."

Albury grew quickly and with the original church still incomplete, in January 1873, at a meeting of members of his congregation, new vicar, Rev Alfred Davidson Acocks, noted that the purpose of the meeting was "principally to concert measures for providing increased accommodation in St Matthew's Church, Albury ... The present wants of the town demanded more sitting room. By the last census, out of a population of 1906 within the bounds of the municipality, no less than 669 were members of the Church of England. Where were those people to be seated if they ever came to church, there being only sitting accommodation for 250 in the present building." A motion was passed unanimously "That in the opinion of this meeting, it is necessary to take steps for providing increased accommodation for the congregation of St Matthew's Church."

Building plans were considered, a building fund established and in October 1873 the *Albury Banner* advised that "a premium of £25 for a most suitable plan" had been offered and a plan submitted by Mr William Boles of Sydney had been selected. Tenders were called and in November the *Banner* reported that the building committee had "decided to accept the tender of Messrs Frew and Hill, for the masonry &c, of transept, chancel, portion of nave, vestry, and organ chamber, for the sum of £2569. The finishing trades were left for future consideration."

When Thomas Mate laid the corner stone on March 20, 1874 the *Banner* noted that "it has been considered wiser to build, in the first instance, only about two thirds of the entire church; and utilise the nave of the old building until, in the course of time, funds are available to complete the new one. The church, when finished in accordance with the design, will consist of chancel, vestry, organ loft, transept and nave, with a handsome spire 120 feet high."

Construction progressed well and, while the church was still incomplete, it was time for a formal opening. On January 8, 1876 the *Albury Banner* announced "A Special Service will be held in the new Church on Thursday, 13th January, 1876 at four pm. Preacher: The Very Rev the Dean of Melbourne, Archdeacon Tucker, and the Revs J M Ware, J C Sabine, F J Armstrong, J F Caton, J Hollis, D E Jones (senior), D E Jones (junior), J Wilkinson, J Evans and the Vicar will assist in the service. A Soiree to celebrate the completion of the church and the opening of the grand organ will be held on the Church grounds on Friday, January 14, at six pm. Selections of sacred music, accompanied on the organ, and addresses from the various clergymen will be given during the evening. The Vicar-General of Melbourne will preside on Sunday January 16. Special sermons will be preached by the Ven Archdeacon Tucker and the Rev J M Ware (of Deniliquin). Collections in aid of the Building Fund will be made on each occasion."

The church then stood in its incomplete state until the late 20th Century; the only major change was the addition of a large timber belfry rising from the stone tower-base and a set of bells.

Then in 1991 fire ravaged the building and totally destroyed all but the stone walls. Under guidance of the rector Archdeacon John Davis and architect Ian O'Connor, the decision was made to rebuild the church entirely in the old style and recover as far as possible its remembered beauty; the one major change was that the nave would be completed to the dimensions of the 1870s design by Boles, leaving only the Blacket facade and the first bay of the original nave with its tower base. Then fortuitously, a local benefactor was found who was willing to stand the cost of raising the unbuilt tower and spire – this would bring the church to completion and contribute a significant landmark to the Albury townscape.



Blacket's façade with Boles' additions. The occasion is the unveiling of the World War I Memorial on Wednesday April 19, 1922. The memorial is now in QEII Square.

In mid-December 2025 re-modelling of Lavington Square was taking place. Several blank walls were installed to limit access to the construction sites. Along one of these walls the centre management have installed the timeline extending about 30 metres –it is illustrated below. Much of the text and photographs used were supplied by Albury & District Historical Society in collaboration with Albury LibraryMuseum. We commend the centre management team for their initiative in highlighting local history. As most is unreadable below, the following is a copy of the text (continued on page 7).

Indigenous Australians occupied the Albury district for thousands of years before the arrival of the first European settlers. The first white men passed through in 1824 in the expedition led by Hamilton Hume and William Hovell. The native name for the river was Milewa Bila but the explorers named it Hume River to honour Hume – it became the Murray in the 1830s. White settlement began in 1835 when the Mungabareena and Wodonga stations were formed and Robert Brown opened a store at the river crossing place near the Hovell Tree.

The Discovery of Gold

In November 1851, gold was uncovered in Black Range, now known as Lavington, but it didn't immediately lure a rush of diggers. Over the next decade, the area's population grew to around 300, with a third of them being Chinese. While Black Range didn't have a formal village, it was bustling with activity, featuring huts and tents where diggers lived alongside essential businesses like blacksmiths, butchers, hotels, shoemakers and even gambling houses.



Meanwhile, in Albury, German migrants Sebastian Schubach, John Frauenfelder and Heinrich Rau planted the first vineyards, marking the beginning of a new chapter for the region.

Industry and Infrastructure

Although mining continued on the Black Range for 40 or 50 years, it was a minor activity compared with what happened in Albury. Albury became a paddlesteamer port from 1855 and had its first newspaper in 1856. A town council was elected in 1859. In the next two or three years, a hospital, a jail, a large courthouse and the first Union Bridge were opened. The 1600 population by then had several hotels and churches. Later arrival of railway led to growth in population to about 6,000 by Federation.

Black Range village was included in the new Hume Shire in 1906. It was renamed Lavington in 1909 and built its own village hall (as a Literary Institute) in 1910. Fruit growing became a major activity. Electricity was supplied to Lavington from 1927 but it remained essentially a rural village with mainly unsealed roads and no sewerage until absorbed by Albury City in 1962. A reticulated water supply was provided in 1952.

World Wars

Lavington, being a village rather than a suburb at the time of the two world wars, built its own war memorial in Urana Road in 1957. Four Lavington men were killed in action in World War I and five in World War II and many more were wounded or taken prisoner. The memorial lists more than 200 locals who served in the armed forces in wartime, including the Korean War. Lest We Forget.

A Growing Population

After World War I, the population of Albury continued to grow. A textile mill employing several hundred people opened in 1925 and helped cushion the effects of the Great Depression. City status was gained in 1947 and the 1950s saw many streets of houses built in North Albury as far as Union Road, the northern boundary until 1962. Albury Council began to consider how it could extend into Lavington.

In the 1960s, Albury pushed for new industries and by 1971 Lavington had gained its biggest employer by far, the Borg Warner Gearbox factory on Kaitlers Road. Thousands of men and women were to work there over the next half-century.

On January 25, 1973, the Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, the Premier of NSW, Sir Robert Askin, and the Premier of Victoria, Dick Hamer, launched the Albury-Wodonga National Growth project. After the launch, many other industries and businesses located to the Twin Cities. Among the new suburbs created by the Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation was Springdale Heights, construction beginning in 1977.

A shopping centre called Border Shoppingtown was built in 1979 on land formerly used by the Griffith family for grazing and milking cows. It has been extended and enhanced several times and was renamed Lavington Square in 1988. A \$33 million upgrade built by Zauner Construction opened in 2006.

Major institutions opened including Myer Shopping Centre 1981, Westend Plaza 1989, Charles Sturt University 1989, Wodonga TAFE 1987, and Albury-Wodonga Campus of Latrobe University in 1991.

A joint venture with Stoddarts Holdings Ltd (a subsidiary of Argo Investments Ltd) was formed to acquire Lavington Shopping Centre for \$9,250,000.

Local girl Jacinta Van Lint wins a Silver Medal in 200m relay swimming at the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

There have been several ownership changes, for example in 1994 Lavington Square P/L (60% Argo Investments, 40% Gowing Bros) sold to Centro Properties Ltd for \$17 million (it was then known as Centro Lavington until 2013). Subsequently Lavington Square and Albury's Westend Plaza sold for \$120 million to SCA Property Group, renamed Region Group in 2022. In 2024, Region Group began transforming Lavington Square to better support the daily needs of more than 97,000 locals.



Click on the link or use the QR code:

Visit [A&DHS website](#)



Visit our [YouTube Channel](#)



Click on the link below to visit our [Facebook page](#)



LAUNCH OF 'INVESTIGATING DISPOSSESSION – CONFLICT & COEXISTENCE'

Geoff Romero

In December I was pleased to launch our Society's latest publication "Investigating Dispossession: Conflict and Coexistence 1838-1844."

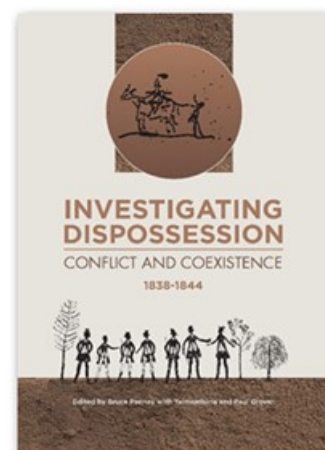
The book is timed to satisfy a soon to be created need. In 2027 the National Secondary School curriculum will contain a compulsory unit of study styled "Aboriginal Peoples Experience of Colonisation." The book is the creation of Adjunct Professor Bruce Pennay who edited it with assistance from Yalmambirra and Paul Grover. In the production phase Greg Ryan spent many hours in sub-editing, layout and formatting.

We are fortunate to have such experienced and respected teachers willing to devote their expertise to this important educational tool.

The indigenous experience of colonisation is a matter of national significance, however this book deals with the subject through a local lens. It describes the interactions between colonists and the aboriginal inhabitants of this area between the Murray and Goulburn rivers. It is available online at [Investigating Dispossession](#) (click the link or use the QR code below). We have supplied a print copy to public libraries and secondary school libraries in the area covered by the book.

The book is a teaching resource which contains evidence based accounts of significant events between 1838 and 1844. It also contains questions for students to investigate and provides reference links to assist them in their research. Thanks to AlburyCity for providing finance from the Community Development fund.

Bruce Pennay will explain his project at our February meeting.



A&DHS Corporate Sponsors

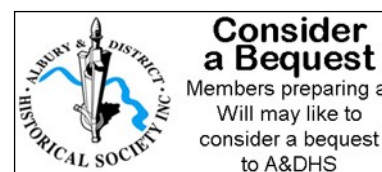
Albury & District Historical Society receives generous support from the following sponsors.

Please click on the logo to visit their respective websites.



Disclaimer: The Albury & District Historical Society Inc, and/or its members, through this newsletter, endeavours to provide accurate and reliable information, but does not warrant or make any representation regarding the accuracy or reliability of information contained within this newsletter.

To the maximum extent permitted by applicable law, the Society and/or its members shall not be liable for any damages of any kind relating to the use of this information, including without limitation, direct, indirect, special, compensatory or consequential damages, loss of profits or damage to property, even if the Society and/or its members have been advised of the possibility of such damages.



Patron: Greg Aplin

Honorary Life Members:

Howard Jones, June Shanahan,

Helen Livsey, Bruce Pennay

President: Geoff Romero

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, Steve Judd

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

Single: \$30 Family: \$35

Corporate: \$200

Note: There is a \$12 surcharge for mailed Bulletins.

Research undertaken, \$25 first hour. Enquiries in writing with \$25.