

Armidale and District Historical Society Inc.

‘Dumaresq Chambers’, Corner Faulkner St and Cinders Lane, Armidale
PO Box 692, Armidale, NSW, 2350

President.....Judy Grieve	6775 1205	Newsletter Editors *Judy Grieve	6775 1205
Secretary..... Robyn Curry	6772 4700	Mick Reed	6773 6555
Treasurer (Acting).....John Burrell.		.Ruth Thomas	6772 5001

Newsletter for April 2019

The next meeting of the Society will be held at 7.30pm in Dumaresq Chambers, 114 Faulkner Street on **Tuesday 16th April** when the speaker will be **Graham Wilson OAM**, whose recent research on **War Memorials** has revealed a wealth of information and interesting stories of designs, placement, form and decisions behind the many War Memorials in the district.

ADHS Website: Alan Hardaker and Bronwyn Clark have done a great job in setting up a new website for the Society which will be updated regularly and on which members can provide information, ask questions and have a more interactive approach to the Society. adhs.org.au is the new website.

e-mail address for the Society: contact@adhs.org.au

Society Treasurer: John Johnson has been Treasurer of the Society since first elected in 2009. The Society accepts John’s recent resignation with regret and extends thanks for the ten years of service he has given. However now, with frequent absences from Armidale it is too difficult for him to continue in this role. Thank you John and we wish you well.

At the March meeting members accepted the nomination of John Burrell as Acting Treasurer until the elections at the August AGM. Pat Curry, as Membership Secretary has been keeping the books in order and is happy to assist John Burrell with the new computerised system he has set up. Sincere thanks to Pat for ‘holding the fort’ and organising the financial system to smooth the path for John Burrell to take over. John is a new member of both Armidale and the Society and grateful thanks to him for offering his services.

A Trip Down Memory Lane: Topics at April meetings each decade.

1969: Mr W. Driscoll – The Twelve Days of Christmas – The Great Criminal libel Case of 1897.

1979: Janis Wilton – Hong Yuen’s and Inverell Store and the Chinese Hoy Family.

1989: Dr Kevin Smith – Prisoners of War from Northern Tablelands who were held in Borneo during the Second World War.

2009: John Farrell: History of the early Anzac Day celebrations in Armidale.

Snippets of History: Highlights of a report in the *Armidale Express* 9 January 1880 of a Public Meeting to consider the desirability of building a new Town Hall. (In 1880 the present Armidale Folk Museum, built 1863 served as Town Hall, Library and Billiard Room). The **Mayor, Mr W.C. Proctor** explained there were differences of opinion in Council with a majority in favour of building, but some against the manner of borrowing the money. **Alderman Scholes** moved ‘That it is desirable to build a new Town Hall.’ Seconded **Alderman Harper**. **Alderman Trim** (cheers) begged leave to move an amendment. He never shifted his colours, or turned his coat or wore two faces under his hat. He had been told that if he didn’t support the proposition of a new Town Hall he would not be returned again, but he was placed in the Council by the ratepayers to do what is right and just and lay out their money in the best advantage, and this should be on the public streets. So instead of building a new Town Hall for a lot of boys and girls to dance, who didn’t care what became of the streets, or if there were any at all. There were ten ratepayers to one who didn’t attend balls and parties and why should the majority suffer. This 2000 pounds was only a draw on, it would be another 1000 to rig it up with chairs etc....There were streets in town where there were large duck and fish ponds and even in Beardy Street there were trenches dug like a field of battle.... Whether returned or not he was determined to speak his mind and if the desire to build a Hall were expressed tonight, he would object to borrowing from the Building Society. As for the young men who wanted to build the new Hall, what did they care for the ratepayers, when their hats are on their head, their houses are thatched. If they want a place to dance they should do it on their own and not at the ratepayers expense (Loud applause).

Alderman Butler said it was immaterial to him whether the Hall was built or not but he wanted to undeceive the ratepayers as to what **Alderman Trim** had said. In the Council seven were in favour and two against a new Hall and five were agreed on borrowing the money. The Banks wanted personal security which none would give...and the only source left was the Building Society. The amendment was lost and three cheers were given for the new Hall and in the excitement of the moment rival storekeepers for once hurraed simultaneously and waved sticks and hats in cheering ‘The March of Progress’. The meeting was well attended and good humour prevailed throughout. The facetious individuals who cannot speak themselves and have the impudence to jeer at others were, as usual, present.’

(The first function at the New Town Hall was a banquet for 300 gentlemen to celebrate the opening of the railway on the first of February 1883. The building was unfinished and the diners were protected by a low temporary roof covered in tarpaulins, which were opened in places to allow ventilation while they enjoyed ‘an abundance of food and wine of the best description’ and plentiful toasts).