

# A close call for Uiver passenger

by Noel Jackling

Roelof Domenie, one of the three passengers on the KLM Douglas DC-2 'Uiver' that made an emergency landing on the Albury Racecourse at 1:17am on the morning of 24 October 1934, escaped possible death by just six months when he flew on the 'Hindenburg' zeppelin, from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to Frankfurt, Germany, from 29 October to 2 November 1936.

Domenie moved to Rio de Janeiro in 1924 for his employer, the Hollandsche Bank voor Zuid Amerika, and soon became one of its senior officers.

Every two years or so he returned to the Netherlands on extended home leave, generally travelling by ship from Rio de Janeiro to Hamburg, but on just the one occasion, he travelled to Germany on the 'Hindenburg'.

After arrival in Frankfurt on

holiday. Roelof's wife Jakomina and their children Rudy and Johan, sailed on S.S. Cap Arcona from Rio, arriving at Hamburg, Germany, around 20 November 1936.

They then went by train to Den Haag, the Netherlands, where they stayed with Jakomina's father and mother, Jacob and Stoffelina Van Hoefflaken, for a short time before again travelling by train, this time to Arosa, where they met up with Roelof for the skiing holiday.

Roelof Domenie needed to let his parents-in-law know when to expect him, his wife and children to arrive in Den Haag. On 31 October, while on board the 'Hindenburg', high over the mid-Atlantic Ocean, he bought a postcard on the front of which was a picture of the Hindenburg's diningroom. He wrote an explanatory note on the back, bought

visited Albury, and on behalf of the Domenie family, presented Albury mayor, Cr Alice Glachan, with all his father's 'Uiver' ephemera. That included the postcard written by his father to his grandmother on the 16th Germany-South America-Germany zeppelin flight (see image). That remarkable object is safely held on behalf of the Albury and district community by the Albury Library Museum. After the skiing holiday, the Domenie family stayed for a time with their relatives in the Netherlands before embarking by ferry for England and returning to their Rio home aboard S.S. Andora Star. The family finally reached home about the middle of March 1937, less than two months before the terminal flight of the 'Hindenburg'.

It was on 6 May 1937 that the 'Hindenburg' came to a disas-

# Dutch bulbs and an emergency landing

by Noel Jackling

On 12 January 1937, KNILM's Douglas DC-2 PK-AFL, a sister plane to the 'Uiver', arrived from Batavia at Sydney Airport carrying some very important cargo—two tea chests of Dutch flower bulbs, including tulips.

Anton Bakker, the Sydney representative for the Netherlands East Indies shipping company KPM and the airline corporations KLM and KNILM, sent one of these chests to Parliament House, Canberra, the other to the Secretary of the Albury Racing Club, Mr Tom Barnett.

Anton Bakker had been closely associated with the flight of the 'Uiver', and on 13 December 1934, visited Albury as part of a NEI delegation that lavished gifts on those who helped the 'Uiver' to land on the Albury Racecourse on the night of 23/24 October 1934. Bakker returned to Albury on 22 April 1936 where, at the Albury Racecourse, he presented the KLM Netherlands Gold Cup to the owner of the win-

er. In November 1939 they were reported to have increased ten-fold. In 1940, notable photographer, Max Dupain, is said to have photographed the flowers and explanatory board, for a booklet promoting the Globe Hotel (see photograph). The board may read as follows:

## BULBS

**Tulips, daffodils, narcissus presented by THE PEOPLE OF HOLLAND to commemorate the LANDING of the UIVER at Albury RACECOURSE 24-10-1934**

In November 1942, the flowers were cut so as to leave a cross, said to be red, and sold for the war effort. But then the flowers simply disappeared, possibly because of a lack of 'manpower' to care for them during the war years.

The Dutch bulbs continued to thrive for many years at the Reis household, which in the course



LZ-129 'Hindenburg' dining room—postcard

2 November 1936, and doing banking business in Germany, Czechoslovakia and England, Roelof proceeded to Arosa in Switzerland for a family skiing

and affixed some German postage stamps, and posted the postcard in the Post Office on board the 'Hindenburg'.

In June 2011, Johan Domenie

trous end, when it caught fire and was destroyed during its attempt to dock with its mooring mast at Lakehurst, New Jersey, USA. Forthwith, zeppelins ceased to be used as a means of passenger and freight transport. It was all-metal land aircraft, like the one that in 1934 made an emergency landing on the Albury Racecourse, that took over as the major means of air transport.

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**COLOURFUL GIFT:** Pictured are the flowers and board explaining the gift of bulbs. Photograph from 'Eckers Globe Hotel Albury', 1940. Attributed to Max Dupain.

ning horse of the gold cup race, Kenneth Richards.

Anton Bakker's tea chest of bulbs reached Albury in mid-January 1937, and was delivered to the home of the President of the Albury Racing Club, George Reis, whose wife 'Queenie' (Annie Regina) was told to select some for herself, and for many years these flowers added colour and distinction to the garden of the Reis home on the south-east corner of Guinea and Macauley Streets. The remainder were soon planted at the Albury Racecourse and by October 1937 were in flow-

of time became the Thompson household, following Jean Reis's marriage. Eventually, they too disappeared.

In 2012, Doug Royal saw Jean Thompson, who allowed him to dig up her side garden, where he found no tulips, but some nascent hyacinth bulbs. These were propagated by the staff of the Albury Botanical Gardens and given to the Albury & District Historical Society and the Uiver Memorial Community Trust, and are botanical reminders of the Uiver's emergency landing.



The back of the postcard showing Roelof Domenie's message to his parents-in-law.

Images courtesy AlburyCity Collection (ARM 11.167).