

# WWDHS NEWSLETTER No. 423 Feb. 2017 – Mar. 2017 ISSN 2207-1016

**Next Meeting Date:**

Monday 20th February 2017,  
at Museum of the Riverina,  
Willans Hill site.  
Committee Meeting @ 6:15pm  
General Meeting @ 7:30pm

**Following Meetings Date:**

Monday 20th March 2017,  
at Museum of the Riverina,  
Willans Hill site.  
Committee Meeting @ 6:15pm  
General Meeting @ 7:30pm

**INSIDE:****Feature article:**

**Miss Wagga Wagga : 1949-1954. Part 1.**

**New Book:**

**Gentlemen Only. A History of The Riverine Club, 1881-2016.**

**New Link:**

**Street Names of Wagga Wagga.**

**Guest Speakers.**

**February:** Robyn McPherson - her family and their connections with Wagga Wagga.

**March:** Wayne Doubleday - Digitisation of RW5 and RVN news film.

**April:** Margaret Nowland-Jones –talking on Bimbi Anzacs

**May:** Bill Tearle - re his mother, Mrs Sheila Tearle, and Dame Mary Gilmore.

**WWDHS Patrons:** Michael McCormack, Federal Member for Riverina,  
& the Honourable Wal Fife.

## WAGGA WAGGA & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. PO BOX 90, WAGGA WAGGA. 2650.

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**Committee meetings:** 3rd Monday of the month  
6:15pm at MOR, Willans Hill site.

**General meetings:** 3rd Monday of the month  
7:30pm at MOR, Willans Hill site.

**Annual Subscriptions:** Single: \$20, Couple:  
\$30. Corporate: \$50. Due 1st July each year.

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**New members** - Welcome to our newest members — Leigh Ryan, Dianne Harris, and Dawn Smith. Great to have you with us.

**Street Names of Wagga Wagga** - Can now be downloaded from MOR site.

The above is a book compiled by William R Ellis (aka Bill) who was the Town Clerk of Wagga Wagga from 1960 till 1984. It provides details of *“the derivation, meaning and/or significance of the names applied thereto. Compiled from records kept by The Council of the City of Wagga Wagga.”*

Now available at the following link, [“http://www.museumriverina.com.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/56560/THE-STREET-NAMES-OF-WAGGA-WAGGA.pdf”](http://www.museumriverina.com.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/56560/THE-STREET-NAMES-OF-WAGGA-WAGGA.pdf)

We extend our best wishes for a speedy recovery to former president, and dedicated member, **Phyllis de Jersey**, whose recent health necessitated a stay in hospital. We expect to be able to provide further information in our next newsletter, knowing that many of our members will wish to hear how she is progressing.

**Best Family Cemetery:** As members will be aware, our society, in co-operation with the Wagga Wagga City Council, was instrumental in restoring the Best Family cemetery. The photo below shows that it is currently in need of some love and attention. It is overgrown with weeds, some of the headstones are damaged, the inscriptions are being obliterated and the brick wall surrounding the graves is subject to major structural damage in places. Your committee will pursue this matter with council.



**Above:** The Best Family Cemetery in February 2017.

## New Book - "The Riverine Club" by Norman Houghton.

Norman Houghton is a qualified historian who has worked in museums, archives et al since the 1970's. He lives in Geelong and has published some thirty book related to Geelong and the western district of Victoria. He is a member of the Geelong Club and when in Wagga Wagga has stayed at the Riverine Club, which has reciprocal rights. From that connection has come Norman's latest book, "*Gentlemen Only. A History of The Riverine Club, 1881-2016.*"

There is a considerable quantity off historical information available, held mainly by CSU Regional Archives and by the club itself. Norman has meticulously examined this material and produced a very well constructed book covering a range of topics. His style is professional and interesting, resulting in a valuable addition to our local history.

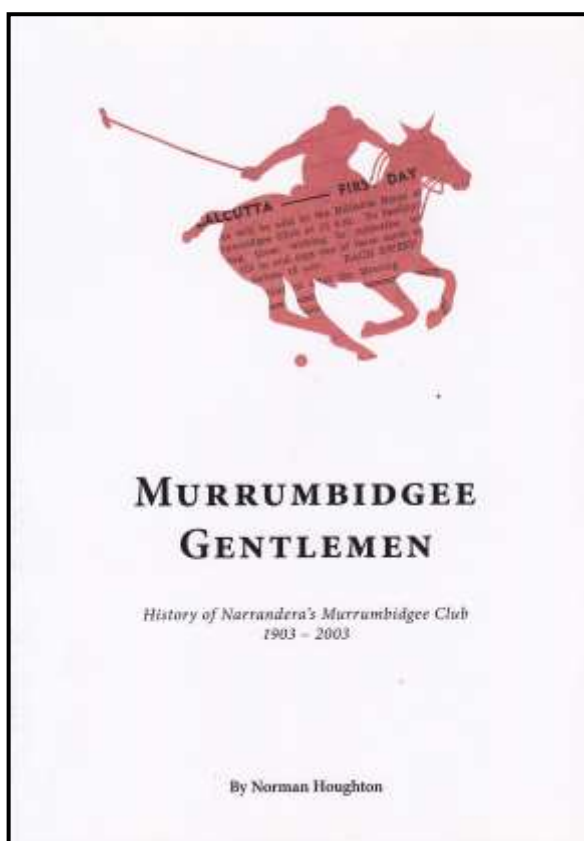
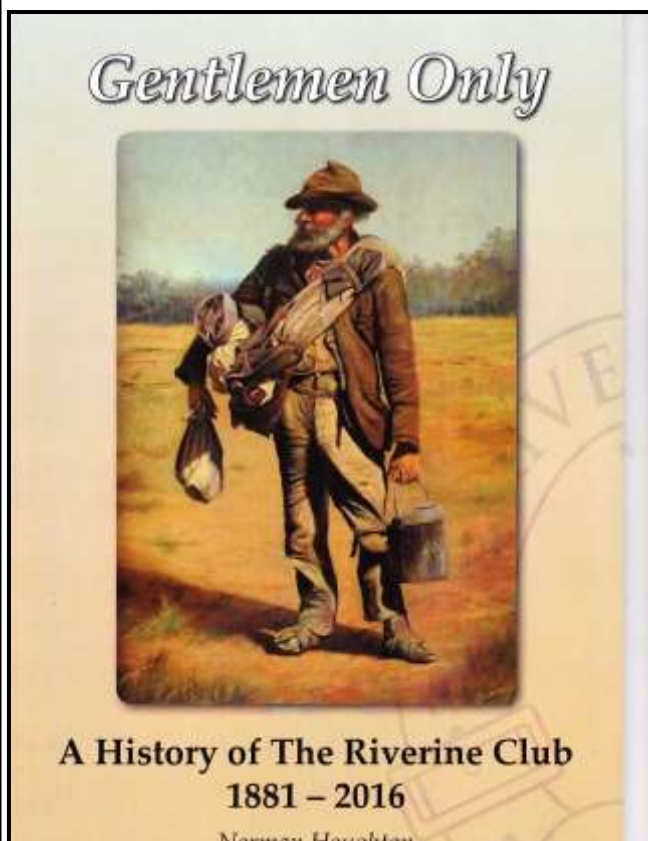
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The society has purchased a copy and those wishing to purchase a copy for themselves can do so at either of the two Museum of the Riverina outlets—the Historic Council Chambers or the Willans Hill site.

Norman has also written a book on the Murrumbidgee Club at Narandera and this can be purchased direct from Norman at a cost of \$20 (includes postage and GST). Norman can be contacted at, "[norrmhough@gmail.com](mailto:norrmhough@gmail.com)".

**Above:** An index showing the contents of Norman's book on the Riverine Club.



**Above:** Front covers of the two publications.



# The Week in Wagga

As seen by "BRUTUS"

● "Brutus" rarely mentions personal names in this column, but one citizen at yesterday's bushfire near Wagga was "an angel in disguise" to many of the hot, weary firefighters.

Without thought for himself, well known hot dog vendor, Stan Keep, packed his truck with cases of cordials and raced to the devastated scene.

Although the fire was burning not yards from his stand, Stan dispensed free of charge bottles of cordial to the men as they returned from the "front line."

He did a wonderful job and was praised by the boys with the beaters for his unselfish act.

★ ★ ★

● Royal visit organisers in Wagga are grappling with their most unusual problem to date.

The itinerary which has been mapped out for the Queen when she visits Wagga on February 13 will take two hours and three minutes. It should take only two hours and one minute.

The organisers are faced with the problem of how to lop two minutes off a programme which is already crammed to bursting point.

As it is, the Queen will travel through Wagga at eight m.p.h. Instead of the traditional four m.p.h. Organisers reckon this will save a lot of time, but they still have that extra two minutes.

★ ★ ★

● Talking about the Royal visit, did you hear about the commercially minded bloke who narrowly missed out on making a packet on the visit by selling awning vantage points.

Some sharp characters who

own awninged properties on the route of the Royal procession licked their chops with anticipation of making a few quick quids.

They found buyers of vantage points on the awnings at something like £2 each. Then the authorities got wind of the deal.

Last week police and civic authorities announced that they would take action against any persons viewing the procession from awnings.

"Brutus" didn't hear

"Brutus" didn't hear whether or not the people who had bought positions had their money refunded.

★ ★ ★

● One day many years ago a man was driving his wife along a rough bush track in one of the first Fords ever to come to Australia.

Eventually the car (gearless) bogged in some sand and about an hour's strenuous effort failed to get it out. Hubby had a brainwave, and taught the wife the rudiments of driving so that he could get out and push.

They got the car out but it careered for about half a mile before the wife could stop it.

On New Year's Eve the same woman was awarded the Wagga Road Safety Council's annual prize for the most courteous woman driver during the Christmas period.

★ ★ ★

● The fair sex has enlisted the aid of a prominent Baylis Street publican in the battle to strip man of his pants.

This publican has changed the hotel tradition so that it has become a women's domain. He has reversed the usual position where a female is not admitted unescorted to places where the proprietor strives to maintain "tone" or something.

The other day "Brutus" was seeking a quiet place to have a pot or two and forgot the cares of life. He mooched into the lounge and was politely, but firmly, informed that he would not be admitted unless accompanied by a female companion.

And to think "Brutus" used to admire the suffragettes.

★ ★ ★

● A shire councillor at a meeting in Wagga on Tuesday waxed enthusiastic about a proposal to install depth markers in a creek in his shire area.

In his enthusiasm he became excited.

"We could have these sticks with the feet and inches donated on them," he enthused.

Later his confreres realised that he meant "denoted" and not that someone should give the markings to the shire.

★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★

● Attention P.M.G.'s Department.

A few of the public telephone boxes in the town could use a little belated spring cleaning.

One box in particular, at the corner of Crampton and Broad Streets, is in a shocking condition.

Spider webs are hanging so thickly from the roof and walls of the box that a man of even average height has to crouch his neck to keep away from them.

And women feel rather nervous about it all, to say the least.

Printed and Published by A and F. Sullivan, 48 Trail Street, Wagga.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(We do not necessarily endorse the views of our correspondents)

### Sunburn

MR.—I read in your paper an appeal by "Dianthus" to her column concerning children's swimming classes for the children's shoulders to be covered as a protection against sunburn.

I would like to offer to those children sufferers my very simple, but effective remedy.

Immediately after leaving the water, cover the exposed portions of the body with a thick layer of soap, and leave to dry, until the next wash, and then again cover with soap.

Do this day and night for two days—it will give immediate relief, and leave an even tan.

Use our ordinary bar soap. Do not use a carbon, or heavily medicated soap—our own until the skin blisters.

My husband used this remedy against sunburn all through the Middle East, and I've used it for many years with great success.

Hoping this can be of some help to sufferers.

Yours, etc,  
ERRELLA BEARD,  
Wagga.

### Wagga's trees

MR.—It was with great pleasure that I read "Dianthus"

Advertiser 26/12/53 in "Dianthus" some bar tribute to the late George Sheppard and his work in planting and nurturing the trees that still, some 16 years after his death, make Wagga's streets beautiful and green.

Truly no man can build himself a finer monument than by planting trees that will be a pleasure to the holder and a solace to the weary for long years after he has gone. His pioneer work in this way has not only served many generations and will continue to serve more, but it has already inspired others to follow in his steps and to develop Wagga's streets and park trees until they provide a veritable oasis among Australia's inland towns and cities.

Although many of us today personally remember George Sheppard and his work, and through his daughter, Laurence (Mrs. A. R. Raleigh) still live in Wagga as new generations grow up and grow old, and as generations evolve Wagga's expanding population, it would be sad to let the original inspiration of our beautiful shady streets be lost to memory. The suggestion recorded by "Dianthus" that we should perpetuate the memory of Mr. Sheppard's noble and far-sighted work by naming after him some further tree plantation

and creating some simple and simply wooded tablet, is a very happy one.

Wagga is no stranger to the form of commemorative tribute. The main avenue of young planes along Tarraville Road and the stone inscribed in Dorothy Hammond are the Country Women's Association's beautiful and imaginative commemoration of a most loyal woman's devoted work, a tribute that is both as timely in the present commemorative and that serves as the ideal of service to the community.

It is often said that Australia's towns and cities, though they may be prosperous and progressive, are often nationally uncommemorative because they have no history. It is largely by keeping alive the memory of its own citizens who have contributed worthily to the city's life and society that a tradition is built up. Surely the men who contributed so much in the early days in Wagga's tradition of tree planting will himself inspire such a tribute that will carry on the memory and record his work.

Yours, etc,  
FLORA R. STEPHENSON,  
Bedford, Wagga.

Printed and Published by A and F. Sullivan, 48 Trail Street, Wagga.

Left: Daily Advertiser. 11th January 1954, p2.

Above: Daily Advertiser. 7th January 1954, p2.

## Miss Wagga Wagga: 1949-1954. Part 1

### The Influence of the Chamber of Commerce

The history of the Miss Wagga Wagga quests is inextricably linked to the workings of the Wagga Wagga Chamber of Commerce. There were at least three attempts to establish a Chamber of Commerce in Wagga Wagga, and it would be the third of these that established the link with the Miss Wagga Wagga contests.

**The First Chamber of Commerce** - A Chamber of Commerce existed in Wagga Wagga as early as 1878, when Mr WC Hunter was the honorary secretary.<sup>1</sup> In August 1878 it was reported that the Wagga Wagga Postal Reform Committee, which had existed for some four years, was limited by its name and the committee's secretary, Mr WC Hunter, proposed forming a Chamber of Commerce so the committee could act on an extended range of issues.<sup>2</sup>

On the first November 1878 a meeting of interested persons met at the Pastoral hotel and resolved to proceed with the formation of the Wagga Chamber of Commerce. An interim committee was chosen, consisting of Messrs Russell, Roberts, Copland, Shaw, Minchin, Hunter and Bolton. Mr Russell was elected chairman, and Mr Hunter was elected honorary secretary and treasurer.<sup>3</sup> This early chamber appears to have folded within a couple of years.

**The Second Chamber of Commerce** - A new Chamber of Commerce was formed in June 1908, when a number of prominent business men met to discuss forming, "*a traders' association*". Mr J Hanson moved that the association be called the Wagga Chamber of Commerce - seconded by Mr Gelme and carried unanimously. The elected officials were; Mr Thomas Dobney, president; Mr WF Du Rieu, treasurer; and Mr WF Shaw, secretary.<sup>4</sup> This association appears to have been in trouble by 1914 when the secretary of the Sydney Chamber of Commerce visited Wagga Wagga with the objective of strengthening the local body<sup>5</sup> – presumably numbers were down and it appears that there were no regular meetings held. No doubt WW1 contributed to the decline in interest and by 1917 there were no mentions of the association in the local press. There is a meeting reported in March 1921,<sup>6</sup> and the association may have existed, in name only, for some years after.

**The Third Chamber of Commerce** - At a dinner on the 19<sup>th</sup> August 1936 the Wagga Storekeepers' Association formed a committee to explore the establishment of a Chamber of Commerce in Wagga Wagga.<sup>7</sup> At a public meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> September, in the Town Hall, it was resolved to form the Wagga Chamber of Commerce. A provisional committee was formed consisting of Messrs E Kershaw, VG Slattery, EV Mahoney, GP Turner, F Wennerbom, Lawrence, GM Cox, HL Condon and EF Lusher. Elected officials – all pro tem – were Mr VG Slattery, chairman; Mr LS Castles, honorary treasurer; and Mr SA Pinkstone, honorary secretary.<sup>8</sup>

Initially the association was called the Wagga Chamber of Commerce (only one Wagga) but at the AGM in October 1938 the meeting resolved to use the correct double term, and the association officially became the Wagga Wagga Chamber of Commerce.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 14<sup>th</sup> June 1879, p4.

<sup>2</sup> Sydney Mail & NSW Advertiser. 10<sup>th</sup> August 1878, p233.

<sup>3</sup> Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1878, p4.

<sup>4</sup> Wagga Wagga Express. 25<sup>th</sup> June 1908, p2.

<sup>5</sup> Daily Advertiser. 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1914, p2.

<sup>6</sup> Daily Advertiser. 30<sup>th</sup> March 1921, p2.

<sup>7</sup> Daily Advertiser. 10<sup>th</sup> September 1936, p2.

<sup>8</sup> Daily Advertiser. 19<sup>th</sup> September 1936, p10. / Wagga Wagga Express. 19<sup>th</sup> September 1936, p3.

<sup>9</sup> Daily Advertiser. 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1938, p2.

**The Community Advancement Fund.** - The chamber continued to play an ever expanding role over the next decade and in May 1946, with Mr HP Davis as president and Mr J Hamill as secretary, the chamber amended the rules of the association so as to establish a community advancement fund, with the objectives of furthering, "*sporting, social, cultural, educational and recreational activities*," in Wagga Wagga.<sup>10</sup> Through this new fund the Chamber of Commerce was able to provide support for a variety of sporting, artistic and cultural events, but it was not until some two years later that the fund directed support towards the holding of a Miss Wagga Wagga competition.

In April 1948, at the monthly meeting of the Chamber of Commerce the Community Advancement Committee was asked to prepare and submit plans, to the next meeting, for a New Year's Eve Carnival, to be held on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1948. The intent was that this would be an annual event.<sup>11</sup>

New Year's festivities were held prior to 1948 but they were limited in their scope. New Year's Eve celebrations in 1947, for example, consisted of the Wagga Gift foot race at the showground (the major attraction), and a midnight vaudeville and film programme at the Capitol Theatre.<sup>12</sup>

The sub-committee reported back to the May meeting, with a detailed plan. The carnival was to consist of the following components:<sup>13</sup>

1. A street procession starting at the intersection of Edward and Baylis Streets and proceeding down Baylis Street, into Fitzmaurice Street and down same as far as Kincaid Street. The procession was to feature decorated floats.
2. Street dancing and singing, featuring singers, a mock court, bands, et al.
3. Both, Miss Wagga Wagga and Mr Ugly competitions.

**Earlier Contests.** - There were queen contests prior to the Miss Wagga Wagga competitions. Sporting, religious and other community bodies often selected a *queen* as a means of raising funds for a specific cause. Such events go back certainly as far as 1915,<sup>14</sup> and probably earlier.



Other reference are scattered and without continuity. In May 1931 there is a reference to a Miss Wagga competition to be launched at the Dixieland Winter Palais (Wonderland Theatre), with the winner to receive a, "*trousseau of Kaiser lingerie*,"<sup>15</sup> valued at £15. 15s.<sup>16</sup> No record could be found of the winner.

**Above:** Advertisement for the 1931 Miss Wagga competition.

In 1932, the Murrumbidgee Pastoral & Agricultural Association ran a, "*popular girl*," contest, in which the Misses Erella Garland, Isabel Burnet, and Jean Lamont competed.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Daily Advertiser. 1<sup>st</sup> May 1946, p3, and 4<sup>th</sup> May 1946, p2.

<sup>11</sup> Daily Advertiser. 15<sup>th</sup> April 1948, p2.

<sup>12</sup> Daily Advertiser. 30<sup>th</sup> December 1947, p2.

<sup>13</sup> Daily Advertiser. 12<sup>th</sup> May 1948, p1.

<sup>14</sup> Daily Advertiser. 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1915, p2.

<sup>15</sup> Daily Advertiser. 1<sup>st</sup> May 1931, p1.

<sup>16</sup> Daily Advertiser. 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1931, p5.

<sup>17</sup> Daily Advertiser. 26<sup>th</sup> May 1932, p2.

In 1942, Miss Mittie Commins, was nominated by the Wagga Wagga branch of the Red Cross, to represent Wagga Wagga in the upcoming inter-town competition to determine Miss Red Cross. Mrs HE Gissing chaired the meeting, where Miss Commins was referred to as Miss Wagga. The winner was to be determined on the 28<sup>th</sup> November.<sup>18</sup> Miss Commins did not win the title, coming fifth in the section covering towns with a population of more than five thousand people. The winner appeared to be the one who raised the most money, on a per capita basis.<sup>19</sup> Miss Commins may have been representing Wagga Wagga, but she did so as a representative of the Red Cross, and not the broader Wagga Wagga community. There does not appear to have been a selection process in choosing Miss Commins.

### **The First Miss Wagga Wagga.**

The first competition to select a representative from the broader community was initiated in April 1945 when a public meeting was called to consider launching a Miss Wagga competition, to raise funds for the Australian Comforts Fund.<sup>20</sup> At a subsequent meeting, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April, Mr FH Burns, prompted by the mayor, Alderman JV Doyle, moved a motion that the various groups, “*inaugurate a Miss Wagga competition for 1945.*” The motion was seconded by Mr Tooth, and carried. The various entities present were divided into three main groups, with each group to be represented by a *queen*, one of whom would be crowned Miss Wagga.<sup>21</sup>

The three groups covered a broad spectrum of the community and were as follows:

Group 1: Police, Postal employees, Master Butchers, South Side Progress Association, Country Golf Club, Wagga Bowling Club, Banks, Cafes.

Group 2: C.U.S.A., Trades and Labor Council, C.W.A., Hathaway Shop, Chamber of Commerce, R.S.S.A.I.L.A., W.E.S.C., Wagga Golf Club, Eight Hour Association, Scouts and Guides, Kennel Club.

Group 3: Rotary, Legacy, 2WG Women’s Club, Licensed Victuallers, Apex, Teachers' Federation, Women's League of Health, Musical Society, Taxi service and Professions.

Others wishing to join could choose which group they would to be part of.<sup>22</sup>

The three queens were: Group 1, Miss Pat Webster; Group 2, Miss Iris Trengrove; and Group 3, Miss Jan Buckridge. The winner was announced at a concert in the Plaza Theatre, on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 1945, with the title of Miss Wagga going to Miss Iris Trengrove who had raised £1,583. 9s, which equated to 380,028 votes (1 penny equalled one vote).<sup>23</sup>

Mr CA Bender was described as the “*chancellor for the crowning ceremony,*” with Miss Shirley King as the “*herald.*” These two officials were dressed in “*traditional robes.*”

A trumpet blast announced the arrival of each contestant, who then entered through the main entrance and walked through the crowd, to reach the stage, where they were introduced by Miss King.

The stage featured a row of potted aspidistra across the footlights, with a large Union Jack in the background, whilst a smaller stage, “*in front of the main stage was draped with the flags of the Allied countries.*”

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<sup>18</sup> Daily Advertiser. 14<sup>th</sup> October 1942, p2, 4<sup>th</sup> November 1942, p2.

<sup>19</sup> Daily Advertiser. 14<sup>th</sup> December 1942, p3.

<sup>20</sup> Daily Advertiser. 21<sup>st</sup> April 1945, p4.

<sup>21</sup> Daily Advertiser. 24<sup>th</sup> April 1945, p2.

<sup>22</sup> Daily Advertiser. 24<sup>th</sup> April 1945, p2.

<sup>23</sup> Daily Advertiser. 11<sup>th</sup> September 1945, p2, 12<sup>th</sup> September 1945, p4.

The crowning ceremony was followed by a concert featuring a host of performers, including: the Wagga Concert Orchestra (led by Cyril Jones); the Harmony Girls (Dot Ball, Mary Cullen, Roma King and Betty Chaston); The Gay 90's Orchestra; the Wagga Male Choir (Arthur Galloway, conductor); the Glynde Quartet (Messrs Langdon, Cox, Galloway and Clare); and a variety of other individuals and groups.

Miss Wagga's prize was an interstate trip, or the equivalent value in cash. Prizes were also awarded to the runners up.<sup>24</sup>



It is almost certain that the organisation of this event strongly influenced arrangements for the subsequent New Year's Eve Carnival that evolved from 1948 onwards, under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce.

Mrs Edmund Price, better known to Waggarites as Miss Phoebe Andrews was largely responsible for the organisation of the 1945 competition and was involved with the running of the Miss Wagga 1949 competition.<sup>25</sup>

**Left:** Miss Phoebe Andrews in December 1948

The Church of England Youth Movement also ran a "*queen competition*," between September and December 1945, raising some £2,000. Miss Wagga, Lorraine Woods, raised some £729; Miss South Wagga, Phyllis Graham raised some £679; and Miss North Wagga, Eris Campbell raised some £281. There were also three Miss Country South candidates. Specifically; Miss Wath Linsell, Ladysmith; Miss Edna Post, Book Book; and Miss Dot Angel, Lake Albert/Gregadoo.

There does not appear to have been a Miss Wagga contest for 1946 or 1947, although there was a Miss Commerce competition in September 1947, in which Mrs Phoebe Price (aka Phoebe Andrews) tutored the contestants, and acted as compere for the event.<sup>26</sup>

Importantly, in 1948 the Chamber of Commerce proceeded, as alluded to earlier, to develop what was to become a very successful annual event that continued into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Iris Merle Trengrove – Miss Wagga 1949.**

Iris Trengrove was the daughter of Thomas James and Mabel Alice Trengrove.<sup>27</sup> Thomas was related to the Trengroves of Numurka, Victoria, which family had conducted general merchandise businesses in the towns of Numurka, Cobram, Waaia, Wunghnu, Nathalia and Strathmerton, for over forty years.<sup>28</sup> Thomas James Trengrove was born at Numurka around 1885, the son of Thomas Henry Trengrove and Susannah Trengrove (nee Black).<sup>29</sup> In 1912, Thomas married Alice Mabel

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<sup>24</sup> Daily Advertiser. 11<sup>th</sup> September 1945, p2.

<sup>25</sup> Daily Advertiser. 8<sup>th</sup> June 1945, p6.

<sup>26</sup> Daily Advertiser.

<sup>27</sup> Daily Advertiser. 18<sup>th</sup> May 1939, p4. / Sydney Morning Herald. 19<sup>th</sup> May 1939, p10. / The Age (Melbourne). 18<sup>th</sup> May 1939, p1.

<sup>28</sup> Daily Advertiser. 15<sup>th</sup> October 1929, p2.

<sup>29</sup> Australia, Birth Index, 1788-1922. Birth registration # 12380.



Jewers (or Yewers),<sup>30</sup> and they had two children, Thomas Noel, born 1915, and Iris Merle, born c.1916. Thomas junior died in 1916.<sup>31</sup>

Thomas moved to Wagga Wagga in 1924 to manage the drapery department of Edmundson & Co. Nine years later he started his own business, firstly in the old CBA building in Fitzmaurice Street, and then later in premises adjacent to the lagoon bridge. He was a competent tennis player and at one time a member of the Half Holiday Tennis Club.

Thomas died on the 17<sup>th</sup> May 1939 at Burnside private hospital, Elsternwick, Victoria. His occupation was declared as, "*draper*."<sup>32</sup>

In 1930 the family was residing at no. 38 Morrow Street, Wagga Wagga, with Thomas's occupation listed as, "*salesman*".<sup>33</sup> By 1934 Iris is registered at the same address with her occupation listed as typist.<sup>34</sup> The three were still at this address in 1936.<sup>35</sup> By 1943 Iris was living at 16 Fitzmaurice Street, with her mother, Mabel Alice Trengrove.<sup>36</sup>

Iris's mother, Mabel, had musical talent, having performed (singer) with the Wagga Brass Band, and as a solo artist.<sup>37</sup> She played a prominent role in musical and croquet circles in Wagga Wagga.<sup>38</sup> It is believed that Mabel died in 1969.

No doubt Iris would have been heavily influenced by her mother's involvement with, and love of, music and singing.

There are glimpses of Iris as she grows up, showing a strong involvement with community and with performing.

In November 1927, twelve year old Iris swallowed a penny which stuck in the base of her throat. Local doctors were unable to dislodge the penny and Iris was sent to Melbourne to see a specialist, where it was expected the penny would be removed, "*with little danger*."<sup>39</sup>

In September 1930, as part of the Wagga Eisteddfod, fifteen year old Iris competed in the Junior Recitation in Character (under eighteen) section, performing the potion scene from Romeo & Juliet.<sup>40</sup>

In May 1932 she participated in Miss Jean Lamont's presentation, as part of the Murrumbidgee Pastoral & Agricultural Association's, "*popular girl*" contest.<sup>41</sup> At this time she was also secretary, along with Jean Dunn, of the Wagga Eisteddfod Younger Set.<sup>42</sup> It was in the early thirties that Iris learnt typing at the Wagga Commercial College.<sup>43</sup>

In 1934, Iris was one of two treasurers serving the Wagga District Hospital Younger Set.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Australia, Marriage Index, 1788-1950. Marriage registration # 2642.

<sup>31</sup> Victorian Births, Deaths & Marriages. Death registration # 7395.

<sup>32</sup> NSW, Australia, Index to Deceased Estate Files, 1859-1958. # A7875. / Death registration # 4426.

<sup>33</sup> Australian Electoral Rolls. 1930. Records 6719-6720, p113.

<sup>34</sup> Australian Electoral Rolls. 1934. Record 8511, p9.

<sup>35</sup> Australian Electoral Rolls. 1936. Records 7560-7562, p127.

<sup>36</sup> Australian Electoral Rolls. 1943. Records 9139-9140, p153.

<sup>37</sup> Daily Advertiser. 18<sup>th</sup> July 1925, p4, 26<sup>th</sup> September 1924, p2.

<sup>38</sup> Daily Advertiser. 18<sup>th</sup> May 1939, p4.

<sup>39</sup> Goulburn Herald. 8<sup>th</sup> November 1927, p2.

<sup>40</sup> Daily Advertiser. 25<sup>th</sup> September 1930, p2.

<sup>41</sup> Daily Advertiser. 26<sup>th</sup> May 1932, p2.

<sup>42</sup> Daily Advertiser. 16<sup>th</sup> May 1932, p2.

<sup>43</sup> Daily Advertiser. 16<sup>th</sup> September 1935, p4.

<sup>44</sup> Daily Advertiser. 10<sup>th</sup> May 1934, p2.

## **The Wagga Wagga Chamber of Commerce and the Contemporary Miss Wagga Wagga Contests**

**The First of the Contemporary Contests.** – By May 1948 the Chamber of Commerce, through the Community Advancement Fund, have developed a concept for the first New Year's Eve Carnival, a primary feature of which is Miss Wagga competition.

The Community Advancement Committee chose to hold a preliminary carnival on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> September, in the New Moon Gardens, at which the finalists in the Miss Wagga Wagga competition would be presented. Four groups were invited to nominate candidates under the following banners: Miss Sports (sporting bodies); Miss Public Service (public service); Miss Commerce South (business houses south of the Wollundry bridge); and Miss Commerce North (business houses north of the Wollundry bridge).<sup>45</sup>

When the preliminary carnival eventuated the Miss Public Service group had been replaced with the Miss Cafes group. There were fifteen candidates still running, and a final four were determined, based on funds raised.<sup>46</sup> These four continued to raise funds pending the final choice on the 31<sup>st</sup> December.

The final fifteen were as follows:

1. Cafes: Thena Karofilis (Bridge), Moir Pattison (Wallace and Ryan), Norma Bickley (Alpine), Josie Loughrey (Bristol).
2. Sports: Bernice Foster (tennis), Norma Clarke-Kennedy (motor cycling), Betty Collins (Australian Rules), Peggy Brentnall (rugby), Dorothy Hudson (Baseball).
3. Commerce North: Joy Peacock (Edmondson's), Dorothy Vonarx (Coles), Frances Henderson (Hoyts).
4. Commerce South: Doreen Walden (Kelso), Heather Stearman (Pauls), June Pertzel (Dunlops).



The four finalists were: Miss Cafes, Thena Karofilis; Miss Sport, Bernice Foster; Miss Commerce South, Doreen Walden; and Miss Commerce North, Joy Peacock.

Other highlights of the carnival were the stalls, a merry-go-round, monkeys riding in midget racing cars, and a variety of competitions, including a quiz session hosted by Leo Packham. Another interesting entertainment was provided by the visiting Canadian yodeller, Donn Reynolds.<sup>47</sup>

**Left:** Canadian country music singer and yodeller, Donn Reynolds.

**To be continued.**

<sup>45</sup> Daily Advertiser. 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1948, p2.

<sup>46</sup> Daily Advertiser. 1<sup>st</sup> October 1948, p2.

<sup>47</sup> Daily Advertiser. 1<sup>st</sup> October 1948, p2.