

WWDHS NEWSLETTER No. 425 June 2017 – July 2017 ISSN 2207-1016

Next Meeting Date:

Monday 19th June 2017,
at Museum of the Riverina,
Willans Hill site.
Committee Meeting @ 6:15pm
Special General Meeting @
7:30pm
General Meeting to follow.

The **general meeting in July** will be held on Friday 21st in the Railway Barracks at Wagga Wagga and will include a tour of the Railway Museum followed by lunch at the Astor hotel.

Schedule as follows:

10am - meet at railway barracks for meeting

10:30am - Tour of Railway Museums

12 noon - option for lunch at the Astor

Any questions please call Geoff Haddon (Ph: 6922 4403).

Please see inside for location map.

Membership Renewals

Members are reminded that annual fees will fall due on the 1st July 2017. A membership renewal form is included with this newsletter.

Can life members please confirm that they still require the newsletter. If no advice is received then it will be assumed said members no longer wish to receive the newsletter.

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

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

President: Casual Vacancy
Vice-President: Peter Gissing Ph 6922 3213
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See our web site for additional details.
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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.

Disclaimer: The Wagga Wagga & 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. Anyone acting on the information contained within this newsletter does so at their own risk.



Above: A contemporary photo of the Golden Fleece ram

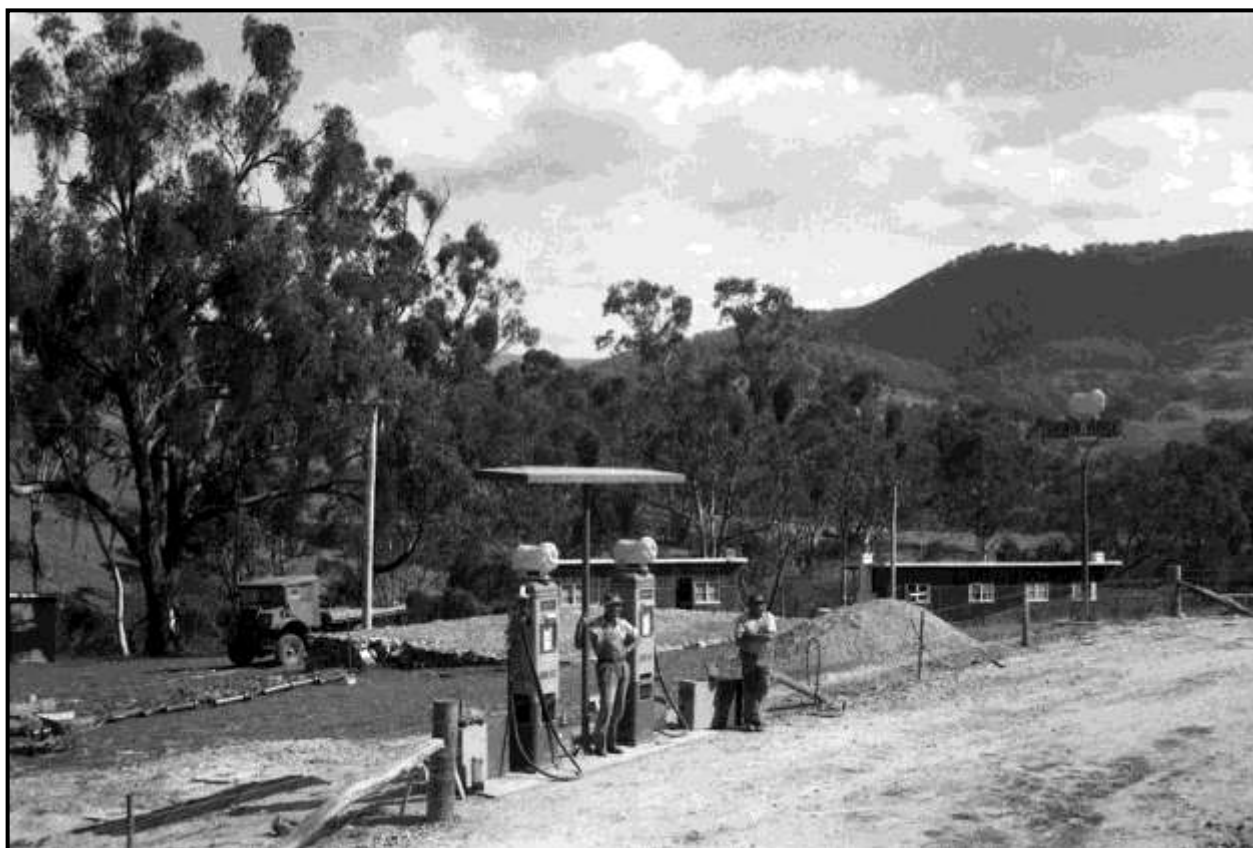
The historic Sir George Tavern has been totally refurbished and remodelled. This historic hotel now draws large numbers from both Canberra and Wagga Wagga, it being a convenient half way point between the two towns. Prices are very reasonable and an interesting day can be had exploring the features of the hotel and of Jugiong itself. Attractions include the Sergeant Parry Memorial.



Above & below: The Sir George Tavern



CSU Regional Archives continue to add historical photos to their digital gallery. The photo hereunder is Jack Bridles' service station at Talbingo, taken in April 1958. I love the three Golden Fleece rams. (From the Possum Greene Collection)



WWDHS web site - latest additions.

Back in 1914 James J Baylis wrote three articles on Early Wagga Wagga. Two of these have been transcribed to the web and a link to same now appears on our home page, along with details for accessing the 3rd article. These are very interesting recollections from the son of Henry Baylis.

We continue to add more oral recordings of past guest speakers — latest additions include Robyn McPherson talking about her family history.

More Digitised Records

OpenGov NSW is a searchable online repository for NSW Government publications. It contains annual reports, strategic plans, guides, policy documents, and open access information released under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act) which has been published by NSW Government agencies.

It can be accessed at, "<https://www.opengov.nsw.gov.au/main>".

Of interest to members will be documents such as the NSW Department of Main Roads Journals from 1929 through 1984. Another valuable resource for researchers.

NSW State Parliament Announces ON-LINE access to records of the First Legislative Council.

Over 60,000 documents, the **Digitised records of the First Legislative Council (1824 - 1855)**, are now available on the NSW Parliament's website

The First Legislative Council, the precursor to the current NSW Parliament, is the oldest legislative body in Australia, having been established in 1823 as an advisory body of 5 appointed members. Initially the Council's jurisdiction covered not only NSW, but also the colonies of Victoria, Tasmania, parts of Queensland, South Australia and even further afield.

RAHS President, Associate Professor Carol Liston, launched this fabulous collection of materials at Parliament House in March 2017. Examples are the Census Bill of 1828: an Act for ascertaining number, names and condition of the inhabitants of NSW; the Female Felons Factory Act 1829: an Act compelling married men to send for their wives, or to maintain them after the expiration of their sentence to the female factory, in order to save the expense to the public; and the University of Sydney Bill 1850, to name a few.

Many of the records are handwritten and over time some of the early original material has become faded and in some places illegible. The papers are available for download as pdf files, to assist with your research. The records can be accessed at, "<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/hansard/pages/first-council.aspx>", along with other parliamentary records

Vale Yvonne McMullen. It is our sad duty to report the loss of another of our members, Yvonne McMullen, who passed away at The Wendy Hucker Nursing Home on Wednesday 24th May 2017 at the age of seventy nine.



Yvonne lived most of her life in Wagga Wagga. After completing her schooling at Mt Erin School, she worked as a junior for 2WG and then as a receptionist for Dr Joseph. After her marriage, she lived in Malaya and then Darwin, before returning to Wagga Wagga. She loved reading, playing cards and music. She started a jazz program on Triple A which still goes today. She was active in many clubs and societies including Probus and the Wagga Wagga and District Historical Society. She had two boys, Geoffrey (deceased) and Terry.

Left: Yvonne (left) & Evelyn Patterson, on one of the society's excursions.

Guest Speakers:

June Meeting—There will be no guest speaker in April. Instead there will be a **show and tell session**. Members are invited to bring along a special photo, or other item of historical interest, which they can talk about.

In addition we will show a selection of photos and documents from the society's collection, which is held at CSU Regional Archives and which is currently being digitised. Lots of rare photographs from the past to stimulate members interest, followed by a cup of coffee or tea with supper.

It has been a while since the society has held such an event and they have proved immensely popular in the past. We look forward to seeing you all there.

July Meeting - Our July general meeting will be held in the railway sheds near the Mother's Bridge, on Friday 21st July. It will be followed by a tour of the railway station precinct, including the railway museum. There will also be the option to have lunch at the Astor hotel, at the end of the tour, for those who choose to do so.

August Meeting - Margaret Nowlan-Jones talking on the recently published book, *"Bimbi and District ANZACS"*, which was co-authored by Margaret and Bruce Robinson.

Plan of Railway Precinct areas - for July general meeting on 21st July 2017.



Above: Map of railway precinct areas. Courtesy Google Earth.

New Appointments - We are pleased to announce that Judy Buik has joined the management committee, effective 17th April 2017. Judy has also accepted the position of Honorary Archivist. We welcome Judy to these new roles and thank her for her commitment and look forward to her contribution.

Vale Jack Ellis.

It is our sad duty to report the passing of another of our members, John Albert Ellis, or Jack Ellis, as most of us knew him.

Jack passed away peacefully, in his home, on Thursday 6th April 2017, at the age of 93. His wife, Nola, had predeceased him.

Jack was a former member of the old Board of Directors and a tireless worker for the museum. He worked for Hardy's for many years and was a very handy carpenter and did much good work at the museum.

Jack was the younger brother of Bill Ellis, the well-known Town Clerk, who also predeceased him. Their parents were Bill & Doris Ellis.

Jack's good works were not confined to just our society. He was a mason and participant / supporter of men's groups. Many community groups benefited from his expertise and skills.



Above: Jack (centre with blue cap) at one of the many working bees he attended.

The first meeting of the **Museum Community Advisory Committee** for 2017 took place on 10th April 2017. Our vice presidents, Geoff Burch and Peter Gissing, were elected chair and deputy chair respectively. The main item of business was an update on the Botanic Gardens Master Plan (BGMP). The plan is due before the end of June 2017 and Peter Gissing, who is a member of the Steering Committee for the BGMP will keep us advised of progress.

Recent Four Societies Dinner.

The Four Societies shared a dinner at the RSL on the 3rd May and enjoyed the trivia quiz component of the evening. Congratulations to Brian Andrews and his table who took away the coveted winners' trophy.



Above: John & Leanne concentrating on the quiz.

The WWDHS would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Wagga Wagga RSL Club to this event. We thank the RSL board who kindly waived the normal booking fee of \$250. In return we would encourage members to support the RSL Club, where they feel comfortable to do so. Membership of the RSL is only \$5 and in return members have access to a variety of benefits, including the following:

- Discounts at over 80 Wagga businesses
- Redeem prizes, discounts and much more with Star Member loyalty program
- Member discounts on food and drinks (added to your card)
- Use of two clubs and all their facilities
- Discounts at the RSL Motel & Apartments
- Entry into all promotions including our daily membership draw
- Kidz Club, courtesy bus, pool and snooker tables
- Special member only discounts at selected resorts
- Express club entry for family and friends

A full list of the 80 Wagga Wagga businesses that offer discounts to members can be accessed at the following link, "<https://waggarisl.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Membership-Brochure-Wagga-RSL-v3.pdf>".

My fortnightly saving at the South Wagga Butchery is usually over \$10, so my membership, and my wife's, were recovered in one purchase.

Miss Wagga Wagga: 1949-1954. Part 2

December 1948 Carnival. This was the first year of the new carnival, which was now organised by the Wagga Wagga and District Chamber of Commerce.⁴⁸ Arrangements for New Year's Eve 1948 were much more extensive than for previous years. Seven city blocks were closed off for the carnival - an area bounded by Johnston, Forsyth, Peter and Tarcutta Streets - and the Miss Wagga Wagga and the Ugly Man competitions were primary features of the programme.

The procession commenced at 7 pm at the head of Baylis Street (at its intersection with Edward Street), travelled down Baylis Street and into Fitzmaurice Street, as far as Kincaid Street. The compere for the evening was Sydney radio hillbilly, and Columbia recording artist, Terry McNamara. The carnival featured street dancing, floats, plenty of confetti, and rides for the kids.⁴⁹

There was an enormous crowd in attendance, said to be as many as ten thousand people. The parade was led by a police motor truck, followed by three police motor bikes and then a fire engine and an ambulance. These were followed by the floats, the first of which was the Miss Wagga Wagga float, and the second was the Ugly Man float, which drew a lot of laughs. There were two other decorated floats.⁵⁰

Once the parade concluded the main attraction was a stream of entertainment from a stage at the council chambers' steps. Some twenty artists performed to an estimated crowd of some four thousand people. The entertainment ranged from mock trials, comedians, dance bands and hillbilly items. The comperes for the evening were Russ Ailling from radio station 2WG and Terry McNamara, a recording artist with Columbia Records in Sydney.

In the hour preceding midnight, Mr JA Johnstone was declared winner of the Ugly Man contest, he raising just over £700, well clear of his nearest competitor, Mr Kevin Carmody, who raised just over £130. The other two finalists in this completion were Charles Hartwig and J McPherson.



Left: A promotional badge for the 1948 Ugly Man contest, featuring the winner of the competition, Mr JA Johnston. Courtesy Sherry Morris.

The concept of an Ugly Man competition first appears during the period of WW1 and was a common means of raising funds for returned soldiers and the monuments associated with those who had fallen. The first such competition in Wagga Wagga appears to have been in 1921, as part of the Anzac week celebrations.⁵¹ The basic concept was to see who collected the most votes – the latter sometimes being awarded at the rate of one vote for each penny (or other value) donated.⁵²

⁴⁸ Daily Advertiser. 5th January 1952, p2.

⁴⁹ Daily Advertiser. 29th December 1948, p2.

⁵⁰ Daily Advertiser. 1st January 1949, p1.

⁵¹ Daily Advertiser. 17th March 1921, p4.

⁵² Western Champion (Parkes). 13th September, 1917, p19.



Miss Wagga 1949. There was much more interest in the Miss Wagga Wagga competition, with votes still being counted up until the last minutes. The eventual winner was Miss Thena Karofilis (Miss Cafes) who raised just over £1,636. Second place went to Miss Bernice Foster (Miss Sports) and third was Miss Joyce Peacock (Miss Commerce North), with Miss Doreen Waldon (Miss Commerce South) in fourth position.⁵³

When the clock struck midnight the crowd all joined hands and sang Auld Lang Syne, after which they all danced and sang some more.⁵⁴ Some two thousand people attended special midnight showings at the two picture theatres.⁵⁵

Left: Miss Wagga 1948, Thena Karofilis, with the winners sash. Courtesy Sherry Morris.



Above: Thena Karofilis wearing the Miss Wagga 1949 crown. On her left is Moirra Pattison and to the right is Norma Bickley. The gentleman is Alderman L Barrand⁵⁶, the then Mayor of Wagga Wagga. Courtesy Sherry Morris.

⁵³ Daily Advertiser. 1st January 1949, p1.

⁵⁴ The Land. 28th January 1949, p24.

⁵⁵ Daily Advertiser. 1st January 1949, p1.

⁵⁶ Daily Advertiser. 4th January 1949, p1.



Above: Left to right (excluding the two men at the back and the flower girls who are seated) – Frances Henderson, Joy Peacock, Dorothy Vonarx, Merle Fraser (page), Moira Pattison, Phoebe Andrews, Thena Karofilis (seated), Norma Bickley, Helen Lloyd (flower maiden), Bernice Foster, Norma Clare-Kennedy, Doreen Walden and Betty Collins. Details courtesy Rhonda Hull's, "A History of the Miss Wagga Wagga Quest, 1948-1988."



Miss Wagga 1950. In December 1949, thousands of Wagga Wagga citizens enjoyed the Wagga mardi gras on New Year's Eve. A highlight of the evening was the crowning of Miss Patricia Walker as Miss Wagga 1950. This was the second year of the carnival/mardi gras, and it was hosted by Harry Mossfield.

The full programme was spread over eight days, commencing on the 24th December and finishing on Saturday 31st December. There were events planned for every day except Xmas Day. The New Year's Eve programme featured a procession, headed by a police motor cycle flanked by two police cars, then followed by a fire engine, an ambulance and two armoured cars. After these came the Wagga City Band followed by the various floats and the crowds of people. The procession moved down Baylis Street, from Morgan Street to Johnson Streets. Radio 2WG broadcast from the street and street dancing continued into the New Year.

At 10 pm, a young Wagga Wagga bank clerk, Miss Patricia Walker was declared Miss Wagga Wagga, 1950. Miss Paula Glazier was runner up with Miss Patricia Spice placed third.

Left: Miss Wagga 1950, Patricia Walker. Courtesy Rhonda Hull's, "A History of the Miss Wagga Wagga Quest, 1948-1988."

The other contestants, for Miss Wagga 1951, were Kathleen Bullen, Elaine Ellis, An Harvey, Betty Morrow, Marjorie Johnson, Beatrice White, Rita Rath, Enid Pilcha and Patricia Cowley. The girls all appeared on stage, where they were introduced firstly to the Mayor, Alderman HE Gissing and Mrs Gissing, and then secondly to the crowd.⁵⁷

Miss Wagga 1951. The programme was spread over five days in 1950 with celebrations finishing in the early hours on Sunday 1st January 1951. All funds raised were to go towards the construction of a town hall in Wagga Wagga. Mr Harry Mossfield was the compere again.

The main attractions of the five day Mardi Gras and New Year's celebrations were as follows:

1. Riverina Talent Quest (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday).
2. Riverina Square Dance Championship (Friday).
3. Pillow Fight over Water Championship (Saturday afternoon).
4. Children's Bubble Gum Championship (Saturday afternoon).
5. Coronation 'Miss Wagga 1951' (Saturday).
6. Big Street Procession (Saturday afternoon, commencing 2.30).

Official advice had been received by the Secretary of the Wagga Chamber of Commerce (Mr. J. Hamill) that Cinesound Productions, of Sydney, would be sending a newsreel camera and crew to Wagga on December 29 to photograph the procession, the coronation of Miss Wagga and other features of the Mardi Gras and New Year celebrations. In addition, the Australian Broadcasting Commission would have a field unit in attendance on Saturday morning making wire recording of various features of the programme, and at night a direct broadcast was to be made, over Station 2CO, covering the coronation of Miss Wagga 1951.⁵⁸

The five days of events raised some £5,700 towards the erection of a town hall. With some sixteen thousand people looking on, Miss Marjorie Johnson (Miss Industry) was crowned Miss Wagga Wagga 1951, by the mayor, Alderman HE Gissing.



Miss Johnson had raised £2,412, whilst Miss Patricia McMullen (Miss Commerce South) came second with a tally of £1,841. Third place went to Miss June Lyford (Miss Public Service). The other candidates had been Miss Joan Tennison (Miss Cafes) and Miss Noela Koetz (Miss Sports).⁵⁹

Above: Left to right – Patricia McMullen, Marjorie Johnson (Miss Wagga 1951), and June Lyford.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Daily Advertiser. 2nd January 1950, p1.

⁵⁸ Daily Advertiser. 27th December 1950, p2.

⁵⁹ Daily Advertiser. 1st January 1951, p1.

⁶⁰ Daily Advertiser. 5th January 1951, p1.



Miss Wagga 1952. In December 1951 there were eleven nominations for Miss Wagga 1952. They were: Maureen O'Halloran, student; Jean Burness, clerk; Mildred Harris, bank employee; Sue Stubbs, teacher; Geraldine Foster, bank employee; Winsome Chapman, hairdresser; Fay McKinnon, shop assistant; Margaret Rutzou, receptionist; Clare Maloney, shop assistant, and two sisters, Bernlce and Muriel Henseleit. Bernlce was a telephonist and Muriel was a business girl. Margaret Rutzou had, in this year, been declared Bell of Balls at the Chamber of Commerce Community Ball.⁶¹

An estimated crowd of some eighteen thousand people witnessed the crowning of Miss Jean Burness as Miss Wagga Wagga 1952. Sydney radio identity, Mr Harry Mossfield was again the compere, whilst the presentation was made by the new mayor, Alderman WF Dunne. Miss Burness had lived in Wagga Wagga for some three years, her parents' home being at Wolseley Park, near Tumbarumba.⁶²

Above: Miss Wagga 1952, Jean Burness. Courtesy Rhonda Hull's, "A History of the Miss Wagga Wagga Quest, 1948-1988."



Miss Wagga 1953. The entrants for Miss Wagga Wagga, 1953, were: Miss Patricia Smith – Sydney University student; Miss Murlene L Bannon – jeweller's assistant; Miss Margaret Olive Preston – clerk typist; Miss Janice Ann Ratliff – shorthand typist; Miss Elvie Rose Birkinshaw – business executive; Miss Eve Beverley Birkin – sales girl; Miss Margaret Mary Rutzou – stenographer; Miss Margaret Patricia Candish – Technical College teacher, and Miss Ann Doreen Birkin – sales girl.⁶³

An estimated crowd of sixteen to seventeen thousand people watched as the Mayor, Alderman WF Dunne, crowned Miss Margaret Rutzou, as the 1953 Miss Wagga Wagga.⁶⁴

Left: Miss Wagga 1953, Margaret Rutzou.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Daily Advertiser. 12th December 1951, p2.

⁶² Daily Advertiser. 1st January 1952, p1.

⁶³ Daily Advertiser. 15th December 1952, p2.

⁶⁴ Daily Advertiser. 1st January 1953, p1.

⁶⁵ Daily Advertiser. 23rd December 1952, p1.

Miss Wagga 1954. In December 1953 there were thirteen candidates for the title of Miss Wagga 1954, including two sisters, Margaret Mary Murdoch (clerical assistant) and Barbara Mary Murdoch (telephonist). The other candidates were: Marjorie Patricia Candish (teacher); Patricia Clark (showroom assistant); Annette Clear (teacher of operatic ballet dancing); Marie Jennings (salesgirl); Margaret Preston (clerk); Jennice Ann Ratliff (stenographer) ; Beverley Robertson (bank officer); June Silverstone (hairdresser); Margaret Storey (student teacher); Enid Thomas (comptometer operator) ; and Patricia Dodwell (home duties).⁶⁶



The local press described the 1953 New Year's Eve mardi gras as the, "*gayest and brightest*," since 1946 and estimated the crowd at sixteen thousand people, with numbers being swelled by a large number of people from other towns. It was a fancy dress night and many people, mostly children, wore fancy hats and masks, and blew noisy trumpets. Fancy hats, along with the noisy trumpets and bugles could be purchased at a stall in front of the council chambers.⁶⁷

Margaret had been a contestant in the 1953 competition, but fared better in the 1954 contest.⁶⁸

Left: Miss Wagga 1954, Margaret Preston, with the mayor of Wagga Wagga, Alderman WF Dunne.⁶⁹

These early carnivals demonstrate just how significant the role of the Chamber of Commerce was in developing the Miss Wagga Wagga contests, and highlight the enjoyment brought to so many adults and children through the mardi gras concept, with crowds of up to eighteen thousand people - happy, singing and dancing in the streets, enjoying family entertainment.

The end.

Notes.

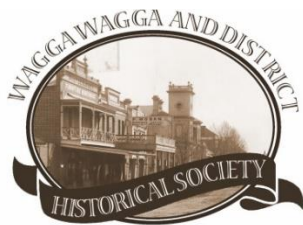
1. Those interested in the history of the Miss Wagga Wagga contests will enjoy reading Ronda Hulls 1988 publication, "A History of the Miss Wagga Wagga Quest, 1948-1988. [available Local Studies collection, Wagga Wagga City Library]
2. The Miss Wagga Wagga Quest web page may also be of interest.
(<http://www.misswaggaquest.com>)
3. My sincere thanks to Sherry Morris for some rare photos.

⁶⁶ Daily Advertiser. 10th December 1953, p2.

⁶⁷ Daily Advertiser. 1st January 1954, p2.

⁶⁸ Daily Advertiser. 6th January 1954, p4.

⁶⁹ Daily Advertiser. 5th January 1954, p3.



Wagga Wagga & District Historical Society Inc.

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Web: www.wwdhs.org.au

www.facebook.com/wagga.history

- Can all renewing members please return this form – duly completed. This will ensure that we have your correct details recorded.
- Membership renewal forms can be submitted at monthly meetings on the third Monday of the month, 7.30pm at the Museum of the Riverina (Botanic Gardens site) or sent via post or email.
- Payments can be by cash, cheque or electronic transfer. Please do not send cash by post.
- Membership subscriptions are due 1st July each year.
- Members who have joined after the 1st January 2017 are not required to submit this form or to make a further payment.
- Life members should submit the form but are not required to make a payment.

WW&DHS APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2017-2018

MEMBER DETAILS					
TITLE	NAME				
ADDRESS					
PHONE					
EMAIL					
If you currently receive your newsletter by post are you OK to switch to email:	<table><tr><td>YES</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>NO</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr></table>	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
YES	<input type="checkbox"/>				
NO	<input type="checkbox"/>				

MEMBERSHIP TYPE	TOTAL
Single membership \$20	<input type="checkbox"/>
Double membership \$30	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life-member	<input type="checkbox"/>
Donation	<input type="checkbox"/>
TOTAL PAYMENT	

PAYMENT METHOD	
CASH (At one of our monthly meetings. Please do not send cash through the post)	<input type="checkbox"/>
CHEQUE/MONEY ORDER	<input type="checkbox"/>
EFT (BSB 062600 Account Number 00800270) (Please record your surname in the reference field)	<input type="checkbox"/>

I hereby apply to renew membership of the Wagga Wagga & District Historical Society for 2016-17.
I confirm that my details above are current and correct. [Please add any missing details].

SIGNATURE

DATE