



# Wagga Wagga Community Heritage Study

VOLUME 2: THEMATIC HISTORY



MAY 2013





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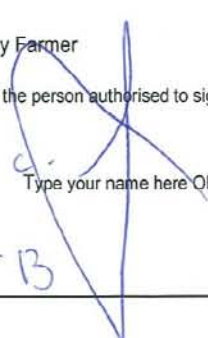
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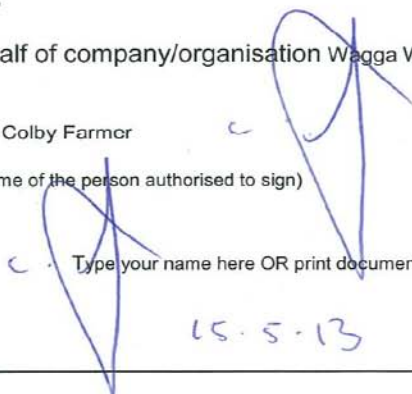
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## INTRODUCTION

This thematic history of Wagga Wagga is written using the Australian Historic Themes framework as outlined by the Australian Heritage Commission.<sup>1</sup> The methodology followed has been to divide the history of the Wagga Wagga local government area into themes suggested by the Heritage Council. As a result, some aspects and events appear repeatedly within the history as they appear across multiple themes. This is to ensure that the history is a useful and accessible ready reference of themes or subjects. It is not intended as a narrative history encompassing the entire area. Those wishing to read an historical narrative of the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area are encouraged to read Shelly Morris', *Wagga Wagga- A History* or Keith Swan's, *A History of Wagga Wagga*.

The time frame for the study begins with the evolution of the natural environment and also outlines some of the history of the local Wiradjuri tribe. Those wishing to learn more about the areas Indigenous inhabitants are directed to the Wiradjuri Heritage Study carried out by Dick Green, which is available from Wagga Wagga City Council. This study focuses on the first recorded presence of Europeans into the region in 1829, ending in the post war era of the 1950s. The geographical boundary is the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area that was formed in 1981 by the amalgamation of the City of Wagga Wagga with the Kyeamba and Mitchell shires.

The approach used has been to rely on secondary sources. Within a study of this scope, and using the time and resources available, it has not been practical nor necessary to undertake an extensive survey of primary sources.

Each section or theme is written to be understood without prior reading of other sections. As a result, there is some repetition. There are also references within the text to other themes where a connection exists to enable easier navigation of the document. When necessary, a brief definition is given to provide context and scope for that particular theme.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Heritage Commission, *Australian Heritage Themes: A framework for use in heritage assessment and management*, 2001



# 1 TRACING THE EVOLUTION OF THE AUSTRALIAN ENVIRONMENT

## 1.1 ENVIRONMENT: NATURALLY EVOLVED

*“The environment exists apart from being a construct of human consciousness. However, a thematic approach recognises the human factor in the natural environment, and how our understanding and appreciation of the environment has changed over time.”<sup>2</sup>*

Geologically speaking, Australia is one of the oldest countries in the world. The stability of the country combined with erosion make it one of the lowest and flattest land areas on Earth. Apart from the Great Dividing Range, which forms a long spine along eastern Australia, the country is low lying. This unique combination of geological forms and landscape has shaped the history of Australia’s inhabitants and determined settlement patterns.<sup>3</sup>

500 million years ago, Australia was part of the supercontinent Laurasia, which around 200 million years ago broke up into Gondwana land. Also part of Gondwana land was Antarctica, southern India, most of Africa, Madagascar, the majority of South America and the core island of New Zealand. Life evolved slowly over the next hundred million years, with single cell organisms becoming more complicated vertebrates. During the Silurian period, about 400 million years ago, large blocks of granite emerged, some “north-east of Wagga Wagga in the Oura-Wantabadgery area, at Collingullie, at Burrandana and in the upper catchment of the Kyeamba Valley.”<sup>4</sup> During the Devonian Period, volcanic activity saw outcrops of Sandstone, shale, chart, slate and quartzite emerge, examples being at Galore Hill and The Rock. Primitive amphibians evolved during this period. Dinosaurs roamed between 195 million years ago until 65 million years ago, when their dominance was replaced by mammals and birds.

Around 50 million years ago the continent of Australia broke away from Antarctica, and the landscape resembled life today. A humid subtropical climate produced thick rainforests, and monotremes, such as platypus and echidna, along with flightless birds and marsupials had evolved. The eastern highlands uplifted during this period, and the Murray-Darling Basin began to appear. Climate changes fifteen million years ago led to temperate pines, eucalypts, acacias, tea-trees and grasslands replacing the rainforests. During the Pleistocene period, two million years ago until 10,000 years ago, sea levels fluctuated because of temperature changes, resulting in ice ages interspersed with warmer and drier periods. During this period, around fifty to sixty thousand years ago, the first inhabitants are believed to have arrived on the Australian mainland.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Australian Heritage Commission, *Australian Heritage Themes: A framework for use in heritage assessment and management*, 2001

<sup>3</sup> David Johnson, *The Geology of Australia* (2<sup>nd</sup> edn), Cambridge University Press, Port Melbourne: Australia, 2009 (2004) p.14

<sup>4</sup> Sherry Morris, *Wagga Wagga- A History*, The Council of the City of Wagga Wagga, Wagga Wagga: Australia, p.1

<sup>5</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga- A History*, p.2-3



There are four large drainage groups in Australia, which are systems of water flow and rivers. Wagga Wagga is located in the Murray Darling drainage system, which drains most of inland New South Wales, along with parts of Southern Queensland and Victoria, towards Adelaide.<sup>6</sup> Drainage systems influence landscape development, by shaping mountain ranges and forming river systems. The rich soil formed in the highlands during the ice age was moved to lower areas by the drainage systems. A river is formed by an incised channel with raised levees on both sides. "These levees consist of sediments deposited from suspension as the water velocity drops when flood-waters overtop the bank. Stretching for vast distances either side of the channel and levees are the floodplains."<sup>7</sup> The floodplains are vegetated in wet areas.

The Holocene or present era began around 10,000 years ago. An increase in rainfall combined with milder temperatures rejuvenated the river systems. The Murrumbidgee River cut into the old sediments. The presence of a reliable water source meant that the Aboriginal population in the area increased.

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<sup>6</sup> Johnson, *The Geology of Australia*, p.14

<sup>7</sup> Johnson, *The Geology of Australia*, p.55

## 2 PEOPLING AUSTRALIA

*“This theme group recognises the pre-colonial occupations of Indigenous people, as well as the ongoing history of human occupation from diverse areas.”*

### 2.1 ABORIGINAL CULTURES AND INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER CULTURES

The Wagga Wagga Local Government Area is situated within Wiradjuri Country, which extends from the Blue Mountains south towards the Murray River, and from the snowy mountains west towards the plains and semi-arid. Therefore, Indigenous history relating to Wagga Wagga is part of a much larger region. It is not confined to council area, and as a result needs to be placed within its regional context with the surrounding Wiradjuri Country.<sup>8</sup>

Aboriginal culture was and remains a vibrant and dynamic culture. Wiradjuri does not refer to a large collective group, but to a shared language. As Peter Read explains:<sup>9</sup>

*“Geographical features formed their boundaries- the Blue Mountains in the east, the foot of the western slopes in the south, and away to the north and north-west, Wiradjuri was no longer spoken as a first language where the open eucalyptus forest gave way to the grassy plains and mallee scrub. Three great rivers, the Macquarie, the Lachlan and the Murrumbidgee, intersected Wiradjuri country and gave to the families associated with them some common bonds as river people.”<sup>10</sup>*

It was an area approximately of 60,000 square kilometres.<sup>11</sup> Wiradjuri were a hunter and collector community. The men fished from the Murrumbidgee and hunted animals such as kangaroo, emu or possum, using weapons such as spears, axes and clubs.<sup>12</sup> Women used their bush skills to dig for roots, including yams, kurrajong roots and water lily tubers, and also collected “nuts, fruits, berries, seeds, pods, sow thistle, dandelion, trefoil and manna.”<sup>13</sup> Edible grasses and seeds were dried, threshed and winnowed, before being grounded into flour. The flour was mixed with water and baked in ashes. Food hunting and collection took only a few hours a day, and the Aboriginal diet was varied and highly nutritious.

For food gathering and social life, clans were divided into smaller groups. These were formed of one or two extended families. For example, an old man, his wife or in some instances wives, his sons and their wives and children.<sup>14</sup> Ceremonies, kin-groupings and organisation are shared by clans and neighbouring tribes who may speak other languages.

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<sup>8</sup> Go Green, Wiradjuri Heritage Study, 2003

<sup>9</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.4

<sup>10</sup> Peter Read, *A Hundred Years War*, p.2-3

<sup>11</sup> Heritage Office, *Regional Histories: Regional Histories of New South Wales*, Heritage Office and Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, 1996

<sup>12</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.5

<sup>13</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.5

<sup>14</sup> Read, *A Hundred Years War*, p.3

For a more thorough and in depth account of Wiradjuri culture and customs, please refer to the Wiradjuri Heritage Study completed by Dick Green.<sup>15</sup>

Firestick farming was used by Wiradjuri to clear grass and underbrush. This provided grazing areas for kangaroos and emus, and also made it easier to hunt. Fire clearing encouraged the growth of eucalypts and pines. It created open grassy plains, which later encouraged early squatters to settle in the area with cattle.<sup>16</sup> However, prior to European settlement, Wiradjuri had felt the full brunt of European expansion as settlers crossing the Blue Mountains displaced Wiradjuri of the Bathurst region, with other groups unwilling or unable to absorb them.<sup>17</sup> The smallpox epidemics of the 1790s and 1830s had also decimated the population. Syphilis and influenza also took their toll from the 1830s on.<sup>18</sup>

The first European mention of Aboriginals in the Wagga Wagga region was by the explorers Hume and Hovell, who saw Aboriginal fires and footprints during their exploration of the rivers in 1824. In 1829 Charles Sturt was accompanied by two Wiradjuri men, who were given the Aboriginal names of Jemmy and Peter. They aided the explorers through the area with their extensive local knowledge.<sup>19</sup>

Within fifteen years of Sturt's exploration, most of the land fronting the Murrumbidgee had been occupied by Europeans, displacing the original inhabitants. Predictably conflict arose over cattle and the use of lands. A series of hostile incidents from 1839 to 1841 took place along the Murrumbidgee, and have become known as the 'Wiradjuri wars'.<sup>20</sup> Most of the fighting occurred closer to Narranderra, where many Wiradjuri had taken refuge. Most incidents involved cattle stealing and the spearing of a few stockmen, with European reprisals being brutal and in excess of the actions of the Aboriginals.<sup>21</sup> One local incident recorded was reported by Frank Jenkins of Bangus Station, who 'found that about 200 aborigines had surrounded a mob of his cattle and were ringing them around, and within the circle formed the blacks were riddling the cattle with spears all the time.'<sup>22</sup> Some of the earlier European settlers had no choice but to abandon the land they had taken up. However, by the end of the 1840s, the original inhabitants had been defeated. They were deprived of the lands they had lived on for generations, and tried to hold onto as much of their culture as possible. Many men were forced into work on stations as farm labourers, while women at times worked as domestic servants.

By the 1880s many Wiradjuri lived on Missions, such as Warangesda near Darlington Point or at Brungle Reserve between Gundagai and Tumut. Many still moved about the country. From the 1920s the status of Aboriginals in Australian society had deteriorated. Some were able to secure employment, but others were forced to move or live on the reserves. During this time welfare authorities took on a much more aggressive policy of child removal. Previously a magistrate had to approve that a child was being

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<sup>15</sup> Go Green, *Wiradjuri Heritage Study*, 2003

<sup>16</sup> George Main, *Heartland: the regeneration of rural place*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney: Australia, 2005, p.34

<sup>17</sup> Josephine Flood, *The Original Australians*, p.98

<sup>18</sup> *Regional Histories*, p.132

<sup>19</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.16

<sup>20</sup> Peter Read, *A Hundred Years War*, throughout

<sup>21</sup> Richard Broome, 'The Struggle for Australia: Aboriginal-European Warfare, 1770-1930' in Michael Mckernan and Margaret Browne (eds), *Australia: Two Centuries of War and Peace*, Allen and Unwin, Canberra: Australia 1988, p.113

<sup>22</sup> J. Gormly, "Exploration and Settlement on the Murray and Murrumbidgee", *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, 2 ii, 1906, p.40, quoted in *Regional Histories*

neglected by his or her parents. These changes meant that welfare authorities could remove children without additional approval. The children removed by welfare authorities were sent to either to the Cootamundra Girls' Home, and taught domestic duties, or to Kinchela Boys Home, where farm labouring was taught.<sup>23</sup> Attempts were also made to indoctrinate the children with white values. They were part of a group of children that have become known as the 'Stolen Generation.'

Despite massive disruption to their culture, lifestyle and families, Wiradjuri have been able to preserve parts of their heritage. As Josephine Flood concludes, "Thankfully, the world's oldest living culture has survived the disruption of colonisation and lives proudly on."<sup>24</sup>

## **2.2 CONVICTS**

Convicts were men and women convicted of crimes in England and sent to Australia for the term of their incarceration. Some were permitted to return to England, but many were required to spend the remainder of their lives in Australia following a period of labour.

The first convict to move through the Wagga Wagga area came with Captain Charles Sturt in 1829 when he was the first white explorer to travel over the future site of Wagga Wagga. He was accompanied by George Macleay, son of Colonial Secretary Alexander Macleay, three soldiers and nine convicts.<sup>25</sup>

Many of the first settlers to move into the Wagga Wagga area in the 1830s and 1840s were convicts, ex-convicts or the children of convicts. Wagga Wagga had a comparatively higher concentration of convicts than other locations. The NSW census papers from 1841 detail that 31.6% of the Wagga population were serving convicts and an additional 25% former convicts. By comparison, 20% of the NSW population were convicts and 15% former convicts.<sup>26</sup> Serving convicts were employed as workers on squatting properties, serving their sentence on assignment. About two out of every three convicts were placed in private assignment rather than government care.<sup>27</sup> It was thought that hard work and rural labour offered convicts the best chance of reform. It was also economically necessary, as colonists needed cheap convict labour to run their properties, and the government needed a cheap way to dispose of them. Settlement into the area was slow, as the combination of fire and flood gave the region a reputation for unpredictability and financial ruin.<sup>28</sup> As a result, the concentration of convicts at this time was higher than elsewhere. This situation also gave many former convicts the opportunity to become men of civic importance in the region. Notable early squatters who were former convicts include George Best, who acquired the Wagga Wagga pastoral station on the south side of the Murrumbidgee, and Charles Tompson, who held a run on the north bank called Eunonyhareenyha.<sup>29</sup>

Controlling convict servants and workers could be difficult. The nearest magistrate was in Yass, and taking a criminal to court involved considerable personal effort and expense. Drunkenness and blasphemy were

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<sup>23</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.167-168

<sup>24</sup> Flood, *The Original Australians*, p.264

<sup>25</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.15-16

<sup>26</sup> Keith Swan, *A History of Wagga Wagga*, p.26-27

<sup>27</sup> Alan Atkinson and Marian Aveling (eds), *Australian 1838*, Fairfax Syme and Weldon Associates, Broadway: Australia, 1987, p.275

<sup>28</sup> Jim Hagan, Ken Turner and Nancy Blacklow, 'The Riverina' in Jim Hagan (ed) *People and Politics in Regional New South Wales*, Vol.1 1856 to the 1950s, The Federation press, Sydney: Australia, 2006, p.222-223

<sup>29</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.18

of particular concern, along with a boundless 'immorality' with the Aboriginal women. The border police sent out by the Governor to maintain order and protect settlers along the frontier were inefficient, often drunk and engaging in criminal activity themselves.<sup>30</sup>

During the 1840s the settlement of free settlers in the region increased, altering the character of the community. The cessation of convict transportation to New South Wales in 1840 also led to a decrease in convicts, and by 1851 less than a quarter of the population were former convicts.

## **2.3 ETHNIC INFLUENCES**

Government policy and popular attitudes since settlement have tended to favour British descent and values. However, ethnic influences have played a role in shaping the Australian community. Although British whites dominated public life in Wagga Wagga, there are many occurrences of other nationalities contributing to community life. For example, the Basha Brothers from Lebanon operated a drapery on Fitzmaurice Street at the turn of the century.<sup>31</sup>

### **2.3.1 German Community**

Toward the end of the 1840s, three German families were contracted to establish a vineyard at 'Kyeamba'. In 1851 after they had fulfilled their two year contract they moved to Albury and established their own vineyards. John Smith of Kyeamba produced wine and in the 1850s sold his wine on the goldfields.<sup>32</sup> Lutheran churches were built at Mangoplah (1914) and Uranquinty (1922).

German born Joseph Menneke was a blacksmith operating in North Wagga in the 1860s. He imported all of his metal from Germany and of particular mention are the bells he made, which could be heard miles away.<sup>33</sup>

During the First World War, a strong anti-German feeling was felt by most of the community, with some incidences of violence or abuse. For the most part, the community was tolerant towards Germans living in the region. In both 1915 and 1917 Wagga Wagga Municipal Council voted against the internment of enemy aliens.<sup>34</sup>

### **2.3.2 Chinese Community**

In the 1870s and 1880s there was a large Chinese Camp at the lower end of Fitzmaurice Street. Originally welcomed as a 'peaceable' people, toward the end of the century they were seen as a 'heathen' race.<sup>35</sup>

Many Chinese came to the region to find work once the opportunities on the goldfields began to diminish. The spread of settlement in the 1870s increased opportunities for work on agricultural and pastoral stations. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s they were employed in ringbarking, land clearing,

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<sup>30</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga – A History*, pp.27-29

<sup>31</sup> State Records [2/8535] p.367

<sup>32</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga – A History*, p.45

<sup>33</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga – A History*, p.65

<sup>34</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga – A History*, pp.126-127

<sup>35</sup> Swan, *A History of Wagga Wagga*, p.153

suckering, dam building and other work that was often shunned by those of British descent.<sup>36</sup> Many Australian labourers were fearful that the Chinese would replace them as a cheap labour.<sup>37</sup>

Many Chinese ran small businesses as storekeepers and market gardeners, and were primarily patronised by Chinese workers employed as labour on farm selections. In Wagga, most market gardens were located in the lagoon area known as North Wagga Island. There were also small gardens in the Chinese Camp in Fitzmaurice Street and Tarcutta Road.<sup>38</sup> Gardens were often also set up on pastoral stations. A more prominent storekeeper in the region was James Wong Chuey, who was based in Junee but operated businesses in Wagga Wagga, Cootamundra, Tumut, Wyalong and Barmedman. Stores sold both European and Chinese goods, and also traded wool, skins and hides, along with organising contract labour to work on pastoral and agricultural properties.<sup>39</sup>

At its peak in 1883, the Chinese population in the Riverina was as high as 2200. By 1901 the number of Chinese living in the area had dropped to sixty males and eight females.<sup>40</sup> The decline was due to a number of factors. Many Chinese simply moved on in search of more work. In addition, the restrictions of the White Australia Policy saw Chinese immigration drop, and as a result fewer Chinese were travelling into the area.

In the Wagga Wagga region, the reception of the Chinese by Europeans was complicated and at times conflicting. With a substantial Chinese population living, working and providing goods for sale to the Europeans, it was difficult to ignore or dismiss them within the popular stereotypical and demeaning images. The Chinese provided fresh fruit and vegetables for European tables or undertook labour on farms necessary for opening up selections. At the same time, the prevailing opinion that those of white British descent were superior and the Chinese were inferior 'aliens' influenced interactions between the two groups.<sup>41</sup> As anti-Chinese sentiment increased at the close of the century, many families did their best to hide their background, one family even removing the Chinese inscriptions from their father's headstone.<sup>42</sup> As a result of this attitude there is little physical remnants that directly reflects the substantial presence and contribution of the Chinese in this region.

### **2.3.3 Post-war migration**

As part of a post-war reconstruction strategy, following the end of the Second World War the government undertook a series of economic and social measures aimed at improving the standard of living in Australia. As part of this program, the government sought out migrants from countries other than Britain, primarily continental Europeans. In 1949 two-thirds of migrants to Australia came from continental Europe.<sup>43</sup> However, this was not part of a conscious decision to create a multi-cultural

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<sup>36</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.56 and Barry McGowan, *Tracking the Dragon: A history of the Chinese in the Riverina*, Museum of the Riverina, Wagga Wagga : Australia, 2010 p.8

<sup>37</sup> Patricia Grimshaw, Marilyn Lake, Ann McGrath and Marian Quartly, *Creating a Nation*, Penguin, Ringwood : Australia, 1996, p.178

<sup>38</sup> McGowan, *Tracking the Dragon*, p.18

<sup>39</sup> McGowan, *Tracking the Dragon*, pp.27-33

<sup>40</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.63

<sup>41</sup> McGowan, *Tracking the Dragon*, p.104

<sup>42</sup> McGowan, *Tracking the Dragon*, p.78

<sup>43</sup> Davison *et. al.*, *OCAH*, p.527

country, nor as a humanitarian gesture to those suffering in war torn Europe. The purpose was to pursue a national agenda by undertaking building works such as the Snowy Mountains Project. Those who came to Australia were discouraged from maintaining their own cultures, and 'they were simply required to assimilate.'<sup>44</sup> In return for passage to Australia and accommodation, the migrants were required to work for the government for two years, at any location and in an occupation directed by the government. Usually the work was unskilled.

Migrants arrived in Australia and were provided with basic accommodation, often in former military bunkers. In the Wagga area, a Migrant Centre was established at Uranquinty on the former RAAF base. Uranquinty was designated as a camp for women and young children, where the male bread winner of the family had been sent to work on government directed projects. The first migrants arrived in October 1948, even though work on converting the camp from a military base to a migration camp had not been completed. The camp took some of the overflow from Bonegilla.

The Uranquinty migrant camp had a profound impact on the towns, as the post war migrants were part of the first wave of change that shifted Australia from a largely British to a multicultural society. Migrants travelled to town for shopping, and also spent time at local hotels. Although initially expected to discard their old life and adopt Australian attitudes and lifestyle, the majority did not.<sup>45</sup> Toward the end of 1951 it was decided to convert Uranquinty back into a RAAF base, to train pilots for service in Korea. At that time there were 900 residents at the Uranquinty Migrant Centre.<sup>46</sup> Many were moved to Bonegilla.

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<sup>44</sup> Eric Richards, *Destination Australia: migration to Australia since 1901*, UNSW Press, Sydney: Australia, 2008, p.200

<sup>45</sup> Janis Wilton and Richard Bosworth, *Old Worlds and New Australia: The post-war migrant experience*, Penguin Books, Ringwood: Australia, 1985

<sup>46</sup> Sherry Morris, *Uranquinty Remembers: a migrant experience 1948 to 1952*, Active Print, Wagga Wagga: Australia, 2001, p.151



## 3 DEVELOPING LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ECONOMIES

*"While Geoffrey Blainey conceived of Australian history as dominated by the 'tyranny of distance', this concept is alien to Indigenous Australians. Eighteenth and nineteenth century developments in technology made it possible to link the continent to distant marketplaces, and the incentive for almost every expedition by the first European 'explorers' was the search for valuable resources. Much subsequent Australian history has revolved around the search for a staple on which to base regional economic development."*

### 3.1 AGRICULTURE

Agriculture refers to the cultivation of plants and crops for human consumption. For information on animal husbandry and the raising of livestock, refer to Pastoralism (**Section 4.12**).

Agriculture farming of the Wagga Wagga region began prior to European settlement. Local Wiradjuri used firestick farming to manage the land, encouraging the growth of some plant species and limiting others. They also planted and monitored supplies of tubers.<sup>47</sup>

The first incidents of Europeans practising agriculture was on small home blocks growing vegetables, fruits and wheat for the use of the household was early agriculture used by European settlers. These products were at times sold to travellers or traded with others living in the area.

Beginning in 1851, the gold rushes brought to Australia an influx of newcomers. Those who had made a small fortune on the goldfields found that they were unable to purchase land because it was leased by pastoralists, who were not inclined to relinquish their position and power by dividing up their estates. Those who had worked hard and made their fortunes were spirited and resourceful men, who were not prepared to settle into a life of working for wages. The call began to 'Unlock the lands', and with the expiration of the 1847 Orders of Council due in 1861-2, the Robertsons Land Acts of 1861 were created in order to open up possession of the land for all.<sup>48</sup> (See **4.2 Land Tenure**)

The Acts did not apply to the inland districts, including the Wagga Wagga region, until 1866. Movement into the Wagga Wagga area was initially slow, with greater numbers taking up blocks from the 1870s.<sup>49</sup> Prior to the 1870s pastoralism was favoured to grain production. Usually an area of only 20-30 acres on a block was used for grain production, generally to meet the needs of the household and for animal feed. The extension of the railway line through Wagga Wagga in the late 1870s and early 1880s had the unintentional impact of increasing wheat production. Wheat is bulky and heavy, and the railway line made it possible to export large amounts of it out of the region for sale in Sydney.<sup>50</sup> Rapid advances in

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<sup>47</sup> Bill Gammage, *The Greatest Estate on Earth: how Aborigines made Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney: Australia, 2011, p.288-298

<sup>48</sup> Derrick I Stone and Donald S Garden, *Squatters and Selectors*, AH and AW Reed, Carlton: Australia, 1978, p.92

<sup>49</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.46-47

<sup>50</sup> Hagan, *People and Politics in Regional New South Wales*, p.229

technology that mechanised agriculture also allowed for increased production, as it overcame labour shortages.

Many Chinese migrants who came to the area seeking work as farm labourers established market gardens to sell produce to other Chinese in the region and also to residents in the growing Wagga Wagga town (see **Section 2.3 Ethnic Influences**).

In 1891 the Riverina accounted for less than one tenth of the area of NSW under cultivation, but by 1901 this had increased to around one third. There was the emergence of a clearly defined wheat belt, with NSW the primary producer of wheat and much of this concentrated in the Riverina.<sup>51</sup>

In 1895 the NSW colonial government passed the Crown Lands Act, which hoped to encourage closer settlement more successfully than the Robertson's Land Acts had. The Act allowed for the compulsory repurchase of large holdings of crown land, which was then subdivided and made available for selection with easy repayment terms. Closer settlement was intended to stimulate agricultural development. It also fostered the idealised image of a 'happy yeomanry', or small landholders living good honest lives cultivating the land.<sup>52</sup> Within the Wagga Wagga district these Acts served to break up the larger estates that had survived previous settlements acts mostly intact, such as 'Eunonyhareenyha' and 'Gobbogombalin'. They also brought to a close the monopoly of the squatters.<sup>53</sup>

During the twentieth century the distinction between pastoralism and agriculture became less distinct. Wheat farmers rested their fields with grazing sheep or cattle. Irrigation and dams, such as Burrinjuck Dam, supplied farmers with the ability to store water.

## **3.2 COMMERCE**

The first commercial activities to take place in Wagga Wagga were established by 1847. There was a hotel with a store attached located near a river crossing. A blacksmith opened near the juncture of Wollundry Lagoon and the river.<sup>54</sup> Early stores often opened at the location of river crossings, to service passing trade. By the mid 1850s there were two multipurpose or general stores in Wagga Wagga.

The establishment and development of commercial facilities was linked to the growth of the population of the town. During the gold rushes this initially slowed commercial growth as the population suddenly dropped, but an increase in travellers making their way to Victoria encouraged growth. The financial success of pastoralists who were able to make a substantial profit selling goods to the goldfields also increased the prosperity of the town. "The combination of money and people greatly expanded the market for goods, facilitating the expansion and transformation of shops across Australia."<sup>55</sup> Most stores were still specialist retailers, such as a tailor for clothes or a cabinet maker for furniture. The development of the department store in the capital cities revolutionised retailing, as the city stores

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<sup>51</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga – A History*, p.55

<sup>52</sup> Davison *et. al.*, *OCAH*, p.133

<sup>53</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga – A History*, p.55

<sup>54</sup> W.J. Garland, *The History of Wagga Wagga*, Centre for Library Studies, Riverina College of Archives and Records Service, first published 1913, reprinted 1984, p.2-5

<sup>55</sup> Kimberley Webber and Ian Hoskins with Joy McCann, *What's in Store? A History of retailing in Australia*, Powerhouse Publishing, Sydney: Australia, 2003, p.7

offered a wide range of goods for sale through mail order catalogues.<sup>56</sup> Local retailers responded by diversifying the goods available to their country customers, and establishing local department stores. Two substantial premises in Wagga Wagga was Hunters and Coplands Hall of Commerce. Hunters began operating in 1866 at the lower end of Fitzmaurice Street, and moved to premises higher up the hill in 1872. Copland and Co began operating in 1872, also on Fitzmaurice Street.<sup>57</sup>

Shopping came to be seen as a pleasurable activity, rather than a chore. Plate glass windows allowed for elaborate window displays, and roads and paths for pedestrians were constructed. The main street was a place to see and be seen. It was a meeting place and a measure of the town's prosperity. In the mid to late nineteenth century, the main area for this activity in Wagga Wagga was along Fitzmaurice Street. The completion of the railway station in 1879 at the end of Baylis Street encouraged many businesses to establish premises to higher ground, and the focus of town activity gradually began to shift. This was combined with the growth of residential areas in South Wagga.

Shopping habits among Australians remained largely unchanged until the end of the Second World War. Home refrigerators, a higher participation of women in the workforce and the wide spread ownership of motorcars altered commercial consumption patterns.<sup>58</sup> The emergence of the shopping centre in the 1960s was the result of these changes. In Wagga Wagga, the opening of the Sturt Mall in 1979 shifted the focus of commercial activity from Fitzmaurice Street to Baylis Street. The opening of the Marketplace in 1993 established Baylis Street as the primary shopping and commercial area in Wagga Wagga.

### **3.2.1 Banking**

The bank of New South Wales was established in 1917, and others soon followed. The early banks tended to be small in scale, revolving around private arrangements. Banking in Australia was transformed in the 1830s by the arrival of a number of British banks. Modelled on the Scottish system of lending and offering interest on deposits, these banks were generally run by better trained managers than the domestic banks. They acquired many of the local banks and opened up the market for other British competitors to follow in the 1850s. New Australian banks also opened up during this time, modelling themselves on the British banks and eroding the British market dominance. It was from this wave of banks that first appeared in Wagga Wagga from 1859. Previously, banking facilities were run by the post-master who cashed cheques and orders in connection with the Commercial bank of Sydney. The Australian Joint Stock Bank opened in 1859, with others following in the 1860s.<sup>59</sup>

In the early 1860s the newly independent colonies replaced the British Treasury as bank regulator. The restrictions on lending were lessened. As a result of these changes, lending throughout the 1870s and 1880s increased dramatically. As a reflection of the prosperity of these times, there were four banks operating on Fitzmaurice Street in Wagga Wagga.<sup>60</sup> Bank buildings from this period were often substantial constructions, giving the illusion of strength and prosperity. With lending high, popular opinion was shattered in the Depression of the 1890s. Many individuals lost their savings, others their

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<sup>56</sup> Joy McCann, *A Lot in Store: Celebrating our Shopping Heritage*, Heritage Branch, Office of Environment and Heritage, p.8

<sup>57</sup> Jill Harris, *Fitzmaurice Street- Now and Then*, Riverina Archives RMIHE, Wagga Wagga: Australia, 1989

<sup>58</sup> Robert Coupe, Sheena Coupe, Margo Lanagan, Keren Lavelle and Adrian van der Weel, *Australians: A Historical Dictionary*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Broadway: Australia, 1987, p.265

<sup>59</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga: A History*, p.58

<sup>60</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga: A History*, p.62

properties when they were unable to meet repayments on the extensive borrowings from the previous decades. During reconstruction, many banks became more conservative in their practices. The state governments introduced their own banks, and in 1912 the Commonwealth government established the Commonwealth Bank of Australia.<sup>61</sup>

### 3.3 COMMUNICATION

#### 3.3.1 Postal Services

In colonial New South Wales, the government held a monopoly on the collection and delivery of mail from 1825 with the first Postal Services Act. Although the postal service was a government body, many functions were carried out by private individuals, particularly the carriage and delivery of letters and parcels. The first post master appointed to Wagga Wagga on 1 January 1849 was Fred Tompson. Tompson was also the clerk of petty sessions. It was common for individuals to work both positions, as the workload of post master was not excessive, and most mail was of an official nature.<sup>62</sup> Tompson reported to the Postmaster general each month, forwarding a cheque for postages collected. Robert Best travelled from Wagga Wagga to Tarcutta and back weekly to collect and deliver the mail.<sup>63</sup> In 1856 this increased to a twice weekly service.

Settlement saw the expansion of the postal delivery service. The gold rushes also saw Wagga Wagga become an important junction, due to its location mid way between Sydney and Melbourne. By 1861 many of the lucrative contracts for carrying the mail were held by James Gormly.<sup>64</sup> Gormly had a large staff base and over 300 horses. In 1872 he sold out to Cobb and Co Coaches, who held half of the mail contracts in New South Wales at this time.<sup>65</sup> Cobb and Co. never attempted to compete with the railways, but tailored their services to act as feeders on the new inland railheads.<sup>66</sup>

In country towns, the post office was a focal centre of the town, and seen as a symbol of British civilisation.<sup>67</sup> By 1869 a two storey red brick building had been constructed on Fitzmaurice street. During this period the building was used as both the post office and the telegraph office.<sup>68</sup> In 1885 a new post office was begun, located on the corner of Fitzmaurice and Johnston streets.<sup>69</sup> In 1993 the post office was relocated to Best Place at the corner of Baylis and Morrow Streets, and in 1996 it moved to the Marketplace in line with the changing commercial centre of the city.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Davison *et. al.*, *OCAH*,

<sup>62</sup> *An Australian Post Office History: Wagga Wagga*, Posts and Telegraphs, Sydney, n.d., p.1

<sup>63</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.36

<sup>64</sup> *An Australian Post Office History*, p.8

<sup>65</sup> Kelly Burke, *The Stamp of the Nation*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest: Australia, 2009 p.57

<sup>66</sup> Sam Everingham, *Wild Ride: The Rise and Fall of Cobb and Co.*, p.71

<sup>67</sup> Robert Lee, *Linking a Nation*, heritage website (ref)

<sup>68</sup> *An Australian Post Office History: Wagga Wagga*

<sup>69</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.62

<sup>70</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, pp. 87-88; p.218

### 3.3.2 Newspapers

In the 1860s there were two newspapers operating in Wagga Wagga. The *Wagga Wagga Express and Murrumbidgee Advertiser* was founded by William Macleay and managed by James T. Brown. It was first published in 1858, and ceased circulating in 1939.

The *Wagga Wagga Advertiser and Riverine Reporter* was founded by pastoralists Auber George Jones and Thomas Darlow. It was first published on October 10, 1868. Originally a bi-weekly paper, in 1880 the paper was printed three times a week, and in late 1910 was published from Monday through to Saturday. The paper was distributed throughout the Riverina by rail and mail coach. In 1911 the name of the paper was changed to *The Daily Advertiser*.

Most small towns had their own local paper and it was not unusual for a town, such as Wagga Wagga, to have two competing papers. News items were often “outpourings of the editor’s (or journalist’s) views and values”, which was a continuation of nineteenth century newspaper conventions in England.<sup>71</sup> *The Daily Advertiser* sought to report on international, national, regional and local news items. In addition to the local papers, major metropolitan papers from Melbourne and Sydney circulated throughout the area, giving residents access to information about events outside of the local area.

### 3.3.3 Telegraph Line

Telegraph technology arrived in Australia in 1853, and was run by the colonial post office administration in each state. The telegraph was cheap to install, required no heavy engineering and telegraph machines were cheap and easy to manufacture. Consequently, the telegraph line connected major cities and towns in Australia from the 1860s onward. From 1872 Australia was connected to Europe and the world via the Overland Telegraph Line.<sup>72</sup>

In May 1861 Andrew McCracken was appointed the first telegraph station master and line inspector at Wagga Wagga. McCracken’s duties involved maintaining the telegraph line to a point half way between the nearest stations, Urana and Gundagai. Due to its position half way between Sydney and Melbourne, Wagga Wagga became one of the most important telegraph centres in the state.<sup>73</sup> In 1878 there were seven telegraph lines running through Wagga Wagga. In 1894 the post office and telegraph office were amalgamated, moving into the same building in 1895.<sup>74</sup> The telegraph remained the favoured form of long distance communication for Australians until after the Second World War.<sup>75</sup>

### 3.3.4 Telephone

Telephone exchanges began operating in capital cities in the 1880s, with long distance telephone services operating between Melbourne and larger Victorian cities, and Sydney and Newcastle in the 1890s. The Sydney-Melbourne line opened in 1907, with an Australia wide network achieved in 1930. The telephone

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<sup>71</sup> Nancy Margaret Blacklow, ‘Community Voices: The Role and Influence of the Riverina Local Press, 1910 to 1960’, PhD Thesis, April 1999, p.12

<sup>72</sup> Lee, *Linking a Nation*

<sup>73</sup> *An Australian Post Office History: Wagga Wagga*, p.2

<sup>74</sup> *An Australian Post Office History: Wagga Wagga*, p.2

<sup>75</sup> Davison et. al., *OCAH*, p.143

however did not surpass the telegraph as a favoured means of communication until after the Second World War.

The Wagga Wagga telephone exchange opened in June 1890, although it is not known if any private subscribers existed at the time. A public telephone bureau opened in November 1898, operating from 9 in the morning until 10 at night, closing on Sundays and public holidays. Private subscribers steadily grew in the first half of the twentieth century, and in 1913 work began on installing underground telephone cables.<sup>76</sup>

### **3.3.5 Radio**

EV and Nan Roberts began Radio 2WG in 1932, with the first broadcast being transmitted on June 29. For the initial few weeks transmission was limited to evening hours. On August 6, 1932, morning session also began to be scheduled. The radio station had a stated transmission of 75 miles (120 kilometres), and was located on Fitzmaurice Street.<sup>77</sup>

## **3.4 CULTURAL LANDSCAPE**

Cultural landscapes reflect modifications to the natural landscape that have been undertaken by humans. The landscape that was found by the first European settlers had been heavily modified by Aboriginal firestick farming.<sup>78</sup> The open, grassy plains were ideal for grazing cattle.

Timber felling, principally through ring-barking, took place from the mid-nineteenth century, which created open fields suitable for planting crops. This practise also undermined the soil structure, leading to erosion in many areas. Wheat and grain cultivation has contributed to the creation of a distinctive country landscape.

In 1900, water lilies were planted in the Wollundry Lagoon in an attempt to remove the smell caused by run-off from poor drainage and sewerage systems. 1500 willow trees were planted to preserve the river banks.<sup>79</sup> The Victory Memorial Gardens were established through public subscription and council funding during the 1920s. The gardens contain numerous war memorials commemorating the war service and sacrifice made by members of the local community and surrounding districts.

Following the floods of 1956, Council began planning to construct a levee bank to protect the town on the south flood plain. Work was begun in 1960 and completed in 1962. During this period North Wagga was not included in the flood protection plan, and attempts were made to encourage residents to move to higher ground on the south side of the river. North Wagga residents resisted, and in 1979 it was recommended that two levee banks be constructed to protect North Wagga, which was completed by the late 1980s.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> *An Australian Post Office: A History*

<sup>77</sup> Blacklow, 'Community Voices', pp77-79

<sup>78</sup> Main, *Heartland*, p.34

<sup>79</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.93

<sup>80</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.238

### 3.5 EVENTS

The earliest recorded events that took place within the Wagga Wagga area were corroborees and gatherings held by the local Wiradjuri. Initiation ceremonies for young men were held on the banks of the Murrumbidgee.<sup>81</sup> Wiradjuri men also attended the Bogong moth festival held in the Snowy Mountains each year.<sup>82</sup>

The impact of the Great War and the massive loss of life sustained by Australia led to the erection of memorials in towns across the district. There was much debate in Wagga Wagga about how to appropriately commemorate the fallen. A cenotaph located at the corner of Baylis and Morrow Streets was unveiled by Brigadier-General Thomas Blamey on 17 September 1922.<sup>83</sup> However, some favoured additional commemoration, with many returned soldiers agitating for additions to be made to the Town Hall. When funds could not be procured to cover the costs, conflict arose on how to use the monies raised. Following a lengthy public conflict, the Victory Memorial Gardens were begun in the late 1920s, with the memorial arch erected within the grounds.<sup>84</sup> Additional names were added to the cenotaph and arch following local involvement in the Second World War, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and other peacekeeping operations. The park is used multiple times a year in the continued commemoration of local fallen men.

In 1994 the National truck Drivers Memorial was unveiled at Tarcutta, commemorating those in the transport industry who have lost their lives on the Hume Highway. Each October a ceremony is held for those who have lost a family member on the roads.

Flood has also been a defining event for the people of the Wagga Wagga region. The first flood recorded by Europeans occurred in October 1844. In June 1852, flood waters swept through Wagga Wagga without warning, having already inundated the town of Gundagai, where 80 people died during the night. Although no lives were lost in Wagga Wagga, the flood wiped out most of the buildings that formed the basis of the town's commercial endeavours and also the homes of residents. Major flooding occurred in 1870, 1891, 1925, 1931, 1950, 1952 and 1956. Following the floods of 1956, council provided a levee bank protection plan. Although the waters have risen to heights to threaten the levee, since the bank was completed in 1962 flood waters have not reached the main town.

### 3.6 EXPLORATION

The first European explorers to travel through the Wagga area were Hamilton Hume and William Hovell in 1824-25. On their return to Sydney, they reported on the system of rivers and the excellent grazing country in the south.<sup>85</sup>

Charles Sturt and his party travelled over the future site of Wagga Wagga in 1829. During 1828-1830 Sturt explored the NSW river systems, including the Murrumbidgee, and formed a theory that the major rivers

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<sup>81</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.9-11

<sup>82</sup> Flood, *The Original Australians*, p.163; Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.7

<sup>83</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.140

<sup>84</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, pp.140-144

<sup>85</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History* p.14-15



were part of a river system, rather than running to an inland sea.<sup>86</sup> Following Sturts return to Sydney, there was a major increase in settlement in the area.<sup>87</sup>

By 1836, the Surveyor General Major Thomas Livingstone Mitchell passed through the area and noted that much of the area was settled. His route became the main overland route to Melbourne, originally called the Port Phillip Road and renamed the Hume Highway in 1928.

### **3.7 FISHING**

Fishing beyond a recreational nature has played a minor role in the history of Wagga Wagga.

### **3.8 FORESTRY**

Commercial forestry has been limited in the Wagga Wagga region. Timber that was cleared from farm lands was used in the construction of houses and buildings. It was also used to create the first fences on properties.

### **3.9 HEALTH**

In colonial Australia, as in Britain, health was not seen as being the responsibility of the government. The sick and ailing were cared for in their own homes by domestic help or other, primarily female, family members. Hospitals were for the poor or those who did not have a family to care for them.<sup>88</sup> Treating the sick was aimed at easing discomfort and relieving the symptoms of disease, as healthcare was primarily curative in nature. Many families did not have the money to send for a doctor, unless the situation was desperate. For those women who could read, books brought from England gave advice. Most homes had a well stocked medicine chest containing essential items such as cotton wool, lint, bandages, needles and cotton, scissors, thermometers, oiled silk, medicine glasses and droppers, tweezers and a variety of homemade, herbal and patent medicines.<sup>89</sup> Women living in rural areas had to make their own medical ointments, lineaments and tonics.

The Chemist was often seen as being more important than the Doctor. Doctors visited the sick and ailing in their homes, so therefore could not always be found. The chemist had the medicines available to treat the problem symptoms. Some chemists returned to England to receive training as doctors, such as T. W. Burgess, who returned to Wagga Wagga to open the hospital 'St. Elmo' in Morrow Street.

Hygiene and a lack of knowledge about germs and diseases were major contributors to mortality, especially for babies and children. Bathing was not seen as necessary, and it was not until the turn of the century that attitudes began to change in favour of a weekly bath.<sup>90</sup> Doctors often contributed to infection, as they did not always wash their hands or clothing in between seeing patients. The implementation of a drainage system (**Utilities, 4.4**) in the early years of the twentieth century combined with better bathing habits aided in decreasing infant mortality. A decline in the birth rate, caused by

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<sup>86</sup> Davison *et. al*, *OCAH*, p.622

<sup>87</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.17

<sup>88</sup> Davison *et. al*. *OCAH*, p.308

<sup>89</sup> Jennifer Haggart, *Australian Colonial Medicine*, Rigby, Adelaide: Australia, 1979, p.32

<sup>90</sup> Haggart, *Australian Colonial Medicine*, p.36

better access and knowledge of contraceptives, abortion and infanticide, improved the living conditions of many families, and also increased a child's chances of survival. Better survival rates meant that the need to have many children was removed, and as a result the birth rate dropped. Shifting attitudes toward contraception and sexuality also encouraged couples to limit the size of their families<sup>91</sup>.

The first hospital to open in Wagga Wagga was opened in a small slab cottage in Kincaid Street in July 1856. In the early 1860s, a new hospital was erected at the corner of Tarcutta and Little Gurwood Streets. Other smaller hospitals accommodating a few patients also existed in the town. Often these were run by midwives as maternity hospitals. The current public hospital opened on 7 September 1910. It has undergone a series of extensions and alterations since then, reflecting the growth of the community.

Lewisham (later Calvary) Hospital was established on 17 November 1926 by the Roman Catholic 'Blue Sisters' as a branch of the Lewisham Hospital of Sydney. The church purchased twenty acres of land on the Gormly Estate, which included Foxborough Hall. After alterations it opened as a temporary hospital named St Josephs Hospital. It was replaced by a new two storey hospital by March of 1930.<sup>92</sup>

In the post Second World War era, healthcare became increasingly focused on prevention rather than being curative as it had at the turn of the century. The availability of antibiotics, better hygiene standards, and the advent of Medicare has transformed the health system.

### **3.10 INDUSTRY**

Industry is the processing or manufacturing of goods, usually in response to local necessity. The local Wiradjuri manufactured stone and wooden implements and weapons to facilitate their nomadic lifestyle. Following contact, many acquired steel axes and other implements that they traded with the early colonisers.

Immediate needs instigated industry. The first blacksmith's shop was established by John Franklin during the early years of the village. Small operations were established in Wagga Wagga to meet local demand. In the nineteenth century, pastoralism and agriculture were the dominant activities, and other industries evolved in order to meet the needs of those working the land.

Blacksmiths, saddlers and coach builders all operated in Wagga Wagga. Wagga Wagga was an important half way point on the overland route between Sydney and Melbourne. Transport relied on horsepower, and horses were also an integral part of farming operations. In the nineteenth century there were several saddlers in Wagga Wagga, and four major coach builders.

There was a strong link between the types of industry that developed and the produce grown by local farmers and pastoralists. The first mechanical flour mill began operation in Fitzmaurice Street in 1857. The mill had two pairs of French burr millstones driven by a steam engine. A second mill was also erected at the corner of Kincaid and Trail Streets. A mill was built in North Wagga by John Jenkins to accommodate farmers who were complaining about having to pay the toll to cross the bridge into South Wagga to access the flour mills there.<sup>93</sup> In the 1880s roller mills were constructed. Local farmers and graziers combined to form Murrumbidgee Co-operative Milling over dissatisfaction with the prices charged by Henry Hayes, who had purchased the North Wagga mill. They opened a new roller mill near the railway station, the second largest in New South Wales outside of Sydney on 28 June 1890. The plant

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<sup>91</sup> Frank Bongiorno, *The Sex Lives of Australians: A History*, Black Inc, Collingwood: Australia, 2012, pp.66-87

<sup>92</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.159

<sup>93</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.66

bought in wheat from the local area and was capable of producing 2160 bags of flour per week.<sup>94</sup> The flour was sold as 'Wagga Lily' flour, and was exported to Europe, South Africa and Egypt.<sup>95</sup> At its peak, it was one of the highest employers of labour in the district. The mill was operated by Goodman Fielder Limited from 1987 until December 2000, when it ceased operations. It is currently marked for redevelopment.

The Wagga Cooperative Dairy Company was formed by local farmers in 1894 in order to purchase new expensive machinery for butter production. It operated in Edward Street near the flour mill. The Murrumbidgee Co-operative Dairy Company was formed in 1921 and opened a factory in 1923. In 1942 the company began pasteurising milk. In 2006 the Company was purchased by New Zealand based Fonterra, who changed the name of the company to Riverina Fresh.

Wool scouring, the process of removing the grease from the wool, was a prominent industry in the nineteenth century. Initially it was seen as necessary to wash wool prior to shearing. Sheep were washed in either dams or the river. It was extremely difficult work, and contracted Chinese workers gained a reputation for their skill at scouring. Wool was cleaned and scoured post shearing toward the end of the century. Two wool scouring plants were established in North Wagga. Greasy wool was later accepted for sale and the practise no longer continues.

To support the building of houses and public buildings in the town, brickworks were established in several locations. The most prolific local builder was Charles Hardy. Hardy & Co. were responsible for the construction of many public buildings in Wagga Wagga, such as council Chambers and the Murrumbidgee Turf Club grandstand. Hardy insisted on superior work and supervised much of the work personally. His son, Charles Hardy jnr, took over the company, while Charles Hardy the third formed a joinery business, Hardy's Limited, in 1920. Hardy the third studied afforestation in the United States and built four hazardous railway lines into Tumbarumba in order to harvest timber. His company received contracts to supply much of the timber for Canberra's housing projects.<sup>96</sup>

During the Second World War, factories were established in Wagga Wagga to meet wartime demand. A munitions factory manufacturing fuses was established. In addition, the Dunlop weatherproof factory began making military uniforms. The Dunlop factory continued operating as a garment factory after the war until its closure in March 1977.<sup>97</sup>

### **3.11 MINING**

In 1851 a small gold deposit was discovered in Humula. The town was known as American Yards or American Fields. Large numbers of people flocked to the area in hopes of finding their fortune. Alluvial mining and gold panning dominated.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> *Weekend Advertiser*, November 17-18 2007, p.30

<sup>95</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.153

<sup>96</sup> Moore, Andrew, 'Hardy, Charles Downey (1898–1941)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hardy-charles-downey-6561/text11283>, accessed 17 September 2012

<sup>97</sup> *Biographical Index of Wagga Wagga*, The progress of Wagga Wagga and District Historical Society

<sup>98</sup> Rural Heritage Study, p.22

### 3.12 PASTORALISM

The first squatters to move into the Wagga Wagga region were Sydney stockholders who moved into the area illegally during the 1830s. In the 1820s, the explorer Charles Throsby travelled through the area to the south of Yass and reported on the fertility of the countryside. Settlers moved into the area, and then continued to settle along the river.<sup>99</sup> Aboriginal fire management of the land had created open grassy plains, which squatters used for grazing and pastoralism.<sup>100</sup> From 1836 they were able to obtain licenses to depasture stock on their runs. Following demands for security of tenure, fourteen year leases were granted by the Orders in Council in 1847. Cattle were brought along the river front first, before moving into the minor tributaries to the north and south of the river. In the early stages of settlement, water was imperative for maintaining stock and as a result the settlements began along the Murrumbidgee.

Possibly the first settler in the district was emancipist Charles Tompson, who took up a run on the North bank of the Murrumbidgee in 1832, naming the property Eunonyhareenyha. Tompson ran the property with his sons, Frederick and Edwin.<sup>101</sup> The Wagga Wagga run was taken up by George Best on the south side of the river, although he relocated following the destructive 1852 floods.

During the 1840s there was an increase in sheep breeding and a decrease in cattle production, even though sheep production was more labour intensive. The growth of the textile trade in France and Europe influenced the change. The demand for wool from English manufacturers meant that wool prices were high.<sup>102</sup> In addition, the ships bringing gold seekers to the colony needed return cargo. Captains competed with one another to fill the hold with wool bales. As a result, sending wool to the other side of the world was profitable.<sup>103</sup>

The Victorian gold rushes of the 1850s led to an increased demand for meat to the south. Cattle were fetching up to £16 on the goldfields compared with £1 in Sydney, and sheep were selling for £3 as opposed to two shillings and sixpence in Sydney. Cattle and sheep were driven from the Riverina to Victoria, and the Riverina also became a key area for fattening stock before it was sent to Victoria.<sup>104</sup>

Amidst the boom of the 1870s and 1880s, squatters borrowed heavily to extend their flocks and make improvements to their property. This was so that they could increase their farming capacity and also the quality of their stock. Large scale improvements were undertaken on many properties. By the late 1880s the prosperity of the squatters was just a memory, as a series of bad seasons and a prolonged drought caused havoc. A decline in wool prices combined with an increase in wages and rents meant many squatters could barely afford the interest repayments on the loans they had so eagerly taken out during the boom. A cut in the wages paid to shearers caused conflict, and shearers unions were formed in the district. Major disturbances occurred at Brookong and Borambola.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Barry Gray, *The Riverina Story: Water, Wine and Wealth*, Rosenberg, Dural: Australia, 2009, p.21

<sup>100</sup> Main, *Heartland*, p.34

<sup>101</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.18

<sup>102</sup> Stone and Garden, *Squatters and Selectors*, p.127

<sup>103</sup> Stone and Garden, *Squatters and Selectors*, p.81

<sup>104</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.45

<sup>105</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, 108-111

The 1895 Settlement Acts broke up the last remaining large pastoral runs, and the monopoly of the squatters came to an end. Pastoralism emerged as an industry tied to agriculture in many cases, where wheat and other crops were run in combination with sheep and cattle on mixed farm enterprises.

### 3.13 SCIENCE

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, attitudes toward agriculture and food production began to change as the NSW government started investing in agricultural investigation and education. As part of this development, the Murrumbidgee Experimental Farm was established in North Wagga in 1892. The farm took students from 1896 (see **Section 6.1 Education**). It was used as a base for scientists, many of whom were interested in developing agricultural science as it applied to the Australian climate and environmental conditions. The most well known scientist to work at the farm is William Farrer. Farrer lived and conducted most of his experiments on his property on the Murrumbidgee around the current location of Canberra from the 1880s. He used the Murrumbidgee Experiment Farm as a base for his work on improving rust resistance in wheat. 'Federation' was an early maturing wheat variety, which enabled an inland extension of the wheat belt.<sup>106</sup> Farrer worked with Dr Nathan Cobb, who conducted hundreds of experiments at the Wagga Wagga farm, and also investigated fertilisers and bulk handling.<sup>107</sup> The Experimental farm evolved into the Wagga Agricultural College, which was founded in 1949.

### 3.14 TECHNOLOGY

Technology exists on many different levels and is demonstrated in multiple sections of this history. The adoption of new technologies and innovations were key features for the development of industry (section **3.10 Industry**). Communications (section **3.3 Communications**) and transport networks (section **3.15 Transport**) also relied on technological development. The provision of local services (section **4.4 Utilities**) was the result of technical development. Technology also existed in the application of individual solutions to small problems encountered in everyday life.<sup>108</sup>

Early in the establishments of properties and runs, most property owners relied on shepherds to control their flocks. A shortage of wire and the high labour cost of tree felling and fence construction made fencing impractical and expensive. Shepherds also carried the added advantage of protecting the flock from the threat of dingo attack and theft by Aboriginals. As the years progressed, the combination of available labour, dingo poisoning and Wiradjuri displacement meant that fencing became a practical option. Some crude fences were constructed using timber felled by ring barking, but many others were made from wood posts and iron or steel wire. It has been referred to as the most significant technological development in Australian pastoralism.<sup>109</sup> In the properties surrounding Wagga Wagga fencing allowed for clear definitions of property boundaries with the advent of closer settlement. It also made selective

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<sup>106</sup> Wrigley, C. W., 'Farrer, William James (1845–1906)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/farrer-william-james-6145/text10549>, accessed 17 September 2012 and Morris, *op. cit.*, p.56

<sup>107</sup> King, C. J., 'Cobb, Nathan Augustus (1859–1932)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/cobb-nathan-augustus-5697/text9629>, accessed 17 September 2012

<sup>108</sup> Geoff Raby, *Making Rural Australia: an economic history of technical and institutional creativity 1788-1860*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne: Australia, 1996, p.93

<sup>109</sup> John Pickard, 'The transition from Shepherding to Fencing in Colonial Australia', *Rural History*, Vol 18, issue 2, October 2007, pp.143-162

animal breeding possible. Fenced off farm lands are a common site and an integral part of the cultural landscape (**Section 4.4**)

Technology possibly had its greatest impact on the region with the mechanisation of agriculture. In the early years of the colony and during the gold rush, labour shortages had been a continual frustration for squatters and selectors. However, from the 1860s new machines were imported from the United States and Canada, or were developed locally. Post harvest machines were the first to emerge, which aided in the threshing, winnowing and stacking of harvested crops. Wider ploughs with three or four blades replaced single furrow ploughs, and larger areas of grasslands were cultivated for crops.<sup>110</sup>

### 3.15 TRANSPORT

Prior to European settlement, Wiradjuri tribes used pathways and trade routes to support their lifestyle and hunting. Most of these routes followed the water. Settlers who moved into the district used a combination of pre-existing pathways and forged their own transport networks.

Thomas Mitchell's 1836 route became the main overland route between Sydney and Melbourne. Named the Port Phillip Road, it was an extension of the Great Southern Road that linked Sydney and Goulburn. The Port Phillip Road closely followed the river or other reliable water sources, a necessity for the horses, bullocks and stock and the people travelling the road.<sup>111</sup> A river punt had existed on the Murrumbidgee, linking the inhabitants on the north and south sides of the river. A bridge was built in 1862 by a private company formed by local men when the government would not supply a bridge. The government purchased the bridge in 1884. The Hampden Bridge was built in 1895, replacing the older bridge which had become unsafe.<sup>112</sup>

Cobb and Co took over the mail and passenger run in 1872 when it purchased James Gormly's business.<sup>113</sup> The decline in demand for services following the end of the gold rush led to fares being reduced, and coach travel within the colony became an affordable experience for many.<sup>114</sup>

The arrival of the railways marked the end of the reliance on road transport, at least during the colonial period. In order to stem the amount of produce being lost to the Victorian goldfields and Melbourne, the NSW government extended the railway line into the Riverina in an attempt to recapture the lost trade.<sup>115</sup> The bridge built across the Murrumbidgee and flood prone river flats was at the time the largest and most expensive built in Australia. A four-span lattice girder bridge was constructed, along with a series of timber viaducts. Designed by John Fowler, it was set upon strong concrete filled cast iron cylinders. 1300 piles were driven to support the 7900 feet (2430 metres) of bridgework.<sup>116</sup> The railway reached North Wagga (Bomen) on 3 September 1878, and was extended the remaining 4.5 miles into Wagga Wagga, which was officially opened on 1 September 1879.

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<sup>110</sup> Main, *Heartland*, p.64

<sup>111</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.17

<sup>112</sup> Garland, *The History of Wagga Wagga*,

<sup>113</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.76

<sup>114</sup> Everingham, *Wild Ride*, p.71

<sup>115</sup> David Burke, *Making the Railways*, (State Library of NSW Press, 1995) p.65

<sup>116</sup> Burke, *Making the Railways*, p.67

Wagga railway station began in 1879 on an inexpensive and flood free site about 1km from the main commercial centre. As a result, businesses began opening up at this end of town. The arrival of the railways altered settlement patterns in the Wagga Wagga district, as it did elsewhere in the colony. Railways simplified travel between destinations, and opened up trade possibilities that were inconceivable just a decade before. On the alternative side, however, towns that relied on the business from passing coaches sank into near oblivion with the decline and eventual demise of Cobb and Co.

During the interwar years, it became necessary to upgrade the roads to accommodate the growing popularity of the motor car. Garages replaced blacksmiths, and trucks and lorries were used to transport goods. In the post Second World War era, road construction has become an important activity. The massive increase in popularity in motor cars during the 1950s encouraged the development of suburbia. In Wagga Wagga, residential developments in Tolland, Koorngal and further out at Lake Albert and Estella grew, and roads linking these new areas to the town centre were constructed. Better and safer river crossings were also deemed essential, with the Wiradjuri bridge replacing the Hampden bridge in 1995. Gobbagombalin bridge was opened in 1997, spanning the flood plains and providing a flood free route to Cartwrights Hill and the higher ground to the north of Wagga Wagga.<sup>117</sup>

### **3.15.1 Steamships and River Traffic**

From the 1860s, steamships were used to transport goods in and out of Wagga along the Murrumbidgee. The use of the river was preferred for many goods, and enabled glasses, crockery, glass windows and other fragile items to be brought into the area, which otherwise did not survive the journey by bullock over uneven roads.<sup>118</sup> River transport also enabled the transport of heavy and bulkier goods, such as wool or galvanised iron. Most pastoralists in the area sent their wool by steamboat to Goolwa, which was situated on the Murray River in South Australia. From Goolwa it was taken by train to Port Elliot, and then to any port for export. In 1864 the railway from Melbourne to Echuca was completed, and pastoralists sent their wool by either bullock or steamers to Echuca, and then on to Melbourne.

The river transport also made the cost of goods cheaper, as purchasing from Adelaide through the steamships was cheaper than purchasing from Sydney and sending the goods by carriage.<sup>119</sup> Many shopkeepers complained that the riverboats were stealing their trade.<sup>120</sup> This possibly influenced the decision of a group of townsmen to form the Wagga Wagga Steam Navigation Company in 1869. A steamship named *Victoria* was purchased and made several trips a year. As the steamship followed the river, the result was that much of the wealth from the Riverina region went to South Australia and particularly Victoria via Melbourne. In 1870 a wharf was constructed near the Company Bridge.<sup>121</sup>

The penetration of the railways into the region in the 1870s saw a mass decline in steamship traffic along the Murrumbidgee. With the arrival of the railway at North Wagga in 1878, many pastoralists sent their wool along the river to then be railed to Sydney. Gradually the railways came to dominate inland transport, and the steamships ran occasionally for sightseeing and fishing.

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<sup>117</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.239

<sup>118</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.76

<sup>119</sup> Ian Mudie, *Riverboats*, (Rigby limited, Adelaide, 1961) p.71

<sup>120</sup> Mudie, *Riverboats*, p.72

<sup>121</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History* p.77



## 4 BUILDING SETTLEMENTS, TOWNS AND CITIES

*"Although many people came to Australia in search of personal gain, they realised the need to co-operate in the building of safe, pleasant urban environments. Australian urbanisation and suburbanisation have special characteristics which set them apart from similar phenomena elsewhere in the world."*

### 4.1 ACCOMMODATION

The local Wiradjuri were a nomadic tribe that did not value long term settlement in a single location. They used temporary accommodation shelters that reflected the seasons and offered protection from the elements. Huts were sometimes constructed using tree branches covered with bark, boughs or grass, and waterproofed with animal skins or clay.<sup>122</sup> Some early European settlers employed local Aboriginals to help them build temporary accommodation when they arrived on their runs.<sup>123</sup> Their concept of ownership was sharply at odds with British commercialism, and this was one of the reasons for conflict on the frontier.

More substantial constructions followed, with houses built with mud brick walls and bark roofs. Houses were built from a range of materials in the mid-nineteenth century. The better houses were built of brick or stone, but the majority were wood, weatherboard, slab or other inferior materials. Some had shingle roofs, but the majority were bark. From the 1870s these houses were replaced by more substantial brick cottages.<sup>124</sup> The arrival of thousands of immigrants during the gold rush brought new sets of skills, experiences and tastes to Australia, and this was reflected in the houses built.<sup>125</sup> The prosperity of this era also saw the construction of substantial homesteads on some of the pastoral properties, as squatters who had worked hard establishing themselves felt inclined to enjoy their status and wealth.<sup>126</sup> Some of these original homesteads still remain, such as 'Big Springs'.

Many individuals lived in homes located above stores. These two story shopfronts give many main streets of Australia a characteristic look, and this is seen along the earliest commercial streets of Wagga Wagga, Fitzmaurice and Baylis Streets. Other work based places of residence were churches, schools, gaols and hospitals. Workers employed on the railways also lived in temporary camps, such as at Bomen.

Those unable to find permanent accommodation could find themselves in 'tent-town', located near the Hampton Bridge next to the river. Poorer sections of the community sheltered themselves in canvas or tin huts. During the 1930s Depression, tent town became over crowded as many families were forced from their rented premises through unemployment.

The end of the Second World War and the accompanying baby boom and prosperity caused by high employment saw home ownership become a primary aim for many Australians. Suburbs sprang up to

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<sup>122</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.7

<sup>123</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.18

<sup>124</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, pp.70-73

<sup>125</sup> Richard Apperley, Robert Irving, Peter Reynolds, 'A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture', Angus and Robertson, Sydney: Australia, 1989, p.41

<sup>126</sup> Stone and Garden, *Squatters and Selectors*, p.154

cater to this desire, with a home on the iconic quarter acre block a common feature. These suburbs were developed in the higher ground of Wagga, with developments in Koorinal, Tolland, and Ashmont.

## 4.2 LAND TENURE

For the original Wiradjuri inhabitants of Wagga Wagga, land tenure was a foreign concept. Ownership of the land along boundaries made no sense. The Wiradjuri saw themselves as custodians of the land, responsible for its responsible management and well being at the fate of their eternal souls.<sup>127</sup>

The first pastoralists to move into the Wagga Wagga area, and in other parts of the colony outside of the limits of location, were illegal squatters. Those who moved outside of the nineteen Counties as specified by the limits did so at their own risk. However, the government was not able to stop individuals from taking up runs, and they did not attempt to remove those who had extended their properties beyond government regulations.

From 1836, squatters were able to obtain leases to run stock on their properties. Fourteen year leases were granted by the Orders in Council in 1847 following demands for greater security from the pastoralists. The pastoralists owned large tracts of land, effectively 'locking in' ownership to a small group of individuals. For example, George Macleay, who had accompanied Sturt on his 1829 expedition through the region, owned properties on the lower Murrumbidgee as part of his massive estate of over 212,000 acres.<sup>128</sup>

The gold rush brought about a dramatic improvement to transport, communications and the availability of goods and services, but land tenure was an issue. Many diggers had initiative and money, but no way to purchase land of their own. The cry to 'unlock the lands' began, with calls to make land available for all with the expiration of the Orders in Council due in 1861-2.

The 1861 Robertson's Land Acts legislated that:

- Small farmers could select a small piece of land and pay it off over a period of years
- Between 40-320 acres of crown land could be selected, including land held by squatters
- Squatters had first right to select land
- A quarter of the £1 per acre fee was payable on the day of selection
- Selectors had to live on the land for a period of one year to show that he intended to farm it<sup>129</sup>

The Land Acts did not come into effect in Wagga Wagga and the inland districts until 1866. Despite their democratic intentions, the Robertson Land Acts were largely ineffective. The legislation was weak and full of loop holes, and those dedicated to maintaining their runs were able to exploit the Acts in ways that those in government had never imagined. Squatters employed workers to acquire land and then lease it back, or selected land around rivers and waterholes, making the surrounding land unusable. For example, the partners at 'Big Springs' station, George Wilson and George Paterson Wilson, made selections in the names of relatives and employees.<sup>130</sup> In this way they were able to retain a large part of the property.

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<sup>127</sup> Gammage, *The Greatest Estate on Earth*, throughout

<sup>128</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.43

<sup>129</sup> Stone and Garden, *Squatters and Selectors*, p.92

<sup>130</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.47

The Crown Lands Act was passed in 1895 with the hope of encouraging closer settlement. The Act allowed the Crown to compulsorily repurchase large holding of land, which were then subdivided and made available for selection.

Following the end of the First World War, many soldiers were settled on the land with the Repatriation Acts. This was tied to common notions about the natural farming abilities of Australians, and a misconception that most soldiers had come from the bush. In reality most came from urban areas. They were inexperienced farmers who were settled onto blocks that had not been taken up in the nineteenth century, which were often too small or dry to support a family.<sup>131</sup> Facing crippling debts and unable to earn a living to meet the cost of repayments, many simply walked off the land.<sup>132</sup> Post Second World War land settlement schemes were more successful, as candidates were more carefully selected and the government supervised their progress more closely.<sup>133</sup>

The soldier settlement schemes of the Second World War attempted to remedy the failings of the previous system. Applicants were better matched and more closely monitored.

### **4.3 TOWNS, SUBURBS AND VILLAGES**

While some towns emerged organically others were selected and planned by government planners. Wagga Wagga was originally planned by Surveyor Thomas Scott Townsend, who designed a town straddling the north and south of the Murrumbidgee River, with substantial street and public developments planned. Curiously, Townsend favoured the flood prone area of Wagga Wagga to higher land at Gumly Gumly, where a comparable settlement of a few stores and houses also existed at the time. The town plan was approved by the colonial government in 1849. However, major flooding occurred in 1852 and 1853, and the original town plan was altered. The primary part of the town was to be located on the south side of the river. Newtown, located on higher ground on the southern side, was subdivided in 1858, and quickly grew.<sup>134</sup>

#### **4.3.1 Forest Hill**

The Forest Hill estate was subdivided into small 50-400 acre blocks in 1892, with a further subdivision taking place in 1900. A school was opened in 1878. A Methodist church was built in 1897. Forest Hill had been selected as a site for RAAF expansion prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, and in 1940 Number 2 Service Flying Training School began operations. During the war other training units were based at Forest Hill. Following the end of hostilities, training continued at Forest Hill. Currently it is the home of the Headquarters of the RAAF College, and also No 1 Recruit Training Unit.

#### **4.3.2 Humula**

Humula was proclaimed a village in 1885. From 1895 it had a police station with one mounted constable. Humula North School operated from 1884-1905, and Humula school opened in 1879 and is still operating.

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<sup>131</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga – A History*, p.137

<sup>132</sup> Grimshaw *et. al.*, *Creating a Nation*, p.226

<sup>133</sup> Davison *et. al.*, *OCAH*, p.602

<sup>134</sup> Sheena Coupe, Margo Lanagan, Adrian van der Weel, *Australian: Events and Places*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, North Sydney: Australia, 1987, p.254

A church was opened in the 1880s, and used by both Anglican and Presbyterians.<sup>135</sup> A railway line to Humula opened in 1917, and the Humula to Tumbarumba extension was completed in 1923.

### **4.3.3 Kapooka**

Kapooka Army base began operating as an engineer training school from 1942. During the war over 47,000 soldiers graduated from training before being sent overseas on active service. Kapooka also served as a transit and training base for members of the Australian Women's Army Service. In May 1945 a grenade was accidentally detonated during a training exercise, and two officers and twenty-four trainees were killed. Two men were wounded, with one later dying in hospital. At the end of the war Kapooka ceased to be a training centre, but was reopened in 1951. It continues to operate as an Army training centre.<sup>136</sup>

### **4.3.4 The Rock**

'The Rock' station was selected by James Gormly in 1873 following the introduction of the Robertson Land Acts.<sup>137</sup> The railway line was extended to The Rock in 1880. A 'tent town' of railway workers and their families existed during the construction period. The Kings own hotel was built beside the railway station. In 1882 The Rock was gazetted as a village.<sup>138</sup> A small school existed during the 1880s to service the families of the railway workers. The Rock continued to grow and develop as a village, and in the 1920s boasted a good selection of small businesses and services.<sup>139</sup> Since the 1950s The Rock has seen a gradual decline in size and services.

### **4.3.5 Tarcutta**

The future site of Tarcutta was settled as a pastoral run in 1836 by Thomas Hodges Mate, a free settler from England. He opened an inn in 1839, along with the first general store between Gundagai and Albury. Other businesses began to operate alongside. The construction of the railway line to Wagga Wagga saw Tarcutta decline in importance. Tarcutta was gazetted as a village in 1890.<sup>140</sup> Two schools opened in 1873, with Tarcutta Lower closing in 1943. St. Marks Anglican church, also known as the Mate memorial church, was built in 1902, with a large percentage of the construction costs being donated by Thomas Mate.<sup>141</sup> The first soldier settlements in the district were located in Tarcutta, with soldiers taking up land from 1917.

### **4.3.6 Uranquinty**

The village of Glenrouth, later known as Uranquinty, was originally a railway siding, and a selection of stores and services developed around the railway station, where local farmers would bring their wheat to

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<sup>135</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.88

<sup>136</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, pp.197- 211 *passim*

<sup>137</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.50

<sup>138</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.78

<sup>139</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.153

<sup>140</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.78

<sup>141</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.87

be shipped to Sydney. It was proclaimed a village in 1888.<sup>142</sup> A school was built. Following the First World War, 70,000 acres was subdivided, with about 70 of these set aside for soldier settlement.<sup>143</sup> During the Second World War, Number 5 Service Flying Training School was established near by the village. The Air base served to train airmen under the Empire Air Training Scheme (See **Section 7.1 Defence**). In 1948 the air base was transformed into a migrant reception and housing centre before being transferred back to the RAAF in 1951 as a training camp, to train airmen for service in Korea until 1958.

#### **4.4 UTILITIES**

Utilities were provided by council under the Municipal Acts (1858). The provision of utilities and services were funded by rates, and also some special levies, such as the lighting levy. Utilities represent community growth and technological advancement, along with changing views about sanitation, hygiene and safety. Often covering the more mundane aspects of life, the provision of these services increased mortality and contributed to a better quality of life, along with providing employment.

**Lighting:** Kerosene lamps were used to provide lighting to the streets from 1876. Gas lamps were installed in Baylis, Fitzmaurice, Gurwood and Kincaid Streets, along with some streets in Newtown in 1881. No lights were installed in North Wagga, although the kerosene lamps had been removed.<sup>144</sup> In the 1920s electric lighting was introduced.

**Water:** The construction of a waterworks was discussed from the 1870s, but the cost was considered too prohibitive. By 1885 a pumping station by the river and a 900,000 gallon tank was built on Willans Hill. There were complaints about the water quality, and in the early 1900s a well was sunk to try and obtain a cleaner water source, but this proved unsuccessful.<sup>145</sup> In 1916 a second reservoir was built on Willans Hill. In 1929 reticulated water was supplied to the showgrounds, North Wagga and new residential land. That year council also replaced the 10" mains with 15" mains and added a third reservoir to Willans Hill, with a capacity of 200,000 gallons.

**Sewerage:** The earliest method for the disposal of human excreta was to dig a hole and build a lavatory over the top of it. When the hole was filled, the lavatory was moved to a new spot. From the 1870s Council tried to ban the use of cesspits, and encourage the use of earth closets. In the 1890s a 'night soil man' was employed to collect waste from residences and dispose of it at a depot north of Travers Street. On 23 January 1896 council passed a by-law making cess-pits illegal. In 1908 Council approved a sewerage scheme. By 1914 the majority of the main streets were sewered and a large concrete collecting well was almost completed.<sup>146</sup> By 1917, 390 buildings had been connected to the sewerage line, with more in progress.<sup>147</sup> Sewerage was extended to the Wagga Wagga District hospital and to towns and streets on the outskirts of town during the 1920s. The sewerage treatment works was also extended.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.78

<sup>143</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.137

<sup>144</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.90

<sup>145</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.90

<sup>146</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.91

<sup>147</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.131

<sup>148</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.162

Sewerage works continued to be extended to developing areas from the 1960s, and also sewer systems in Uranquinty, Tarcutta and Ladysmith were developed.

Gas: In 1881 a gasworks was constructed by the private company Wark Brothers. It was purchased by Council in 1888.<sup>149</sup>

Electricity: In 1920 WWCC purchased a second hand electricity plant from Great Cobar Limited and re-erected it at the Wagga Wagga Power House. On May 6 1922 electric power was switched on in Wagga Wagga amid much celebration. Electricity was used extensively by industries, such as the flour mill, the butter factory, the brick works, water supply and other services and utilities. Extensions took place in 1924 and in 1925 North Wagga was connected. From 25 March 1928 Wagga council received an electricity supply from the hydroelectricity works at Burrinjuck Dam. By the end of the 1920s most houses in Wagga Wagga used electric light.<sup>150</sup>

Garbage collection: Until 1962 garbage was collected by horse drawn cart, and dumped on the flats between Narrung Street and the river. It was then burnt and roughly covered over, leaving an unsightly mound. In 1962 motor lorries were introduced to collect the garbage. In 1971 a small front end loader was purchased so that a tip and fill method could be utilised. From the late 1970s the tip was located at Boiling Down Road in Gregadoo. In the late 1980s recycling programs were being introduced.<sup>151</sup>

Fire Station: The Fire Brigade was established in 1880, and was subsidised by the council until 1900. In 1902 the cottage used by the fire brigade was destroyed by fire, and council granted the brigade a site on the Wollundry Esplanade for another station.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.90

<sup>150</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.160-161

<sup>151</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.239

<sup>152</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History* p.93

## 5 WORKING

*"Although a lot of what we call work is related to the economy, most of it is not undertaken for profit. A great deal of work done in the home is neither paid nor counted as part of the national economy. Some of the most interesting recent social history written about Australia concerns work and workplaces."<sup>153</sup>*

### 5.1 LABOUR

Labour in the early years of settlement in Wagga Wagga was primarily undertaken on farms and pastoral runs. Convicts on assignment and some labourers comprised the bulk of the workforce. They undertook duties such as managing herds of cattle and later, flocks of sheep. Land clearing, building houses and sheds and constructing fences were also undertaken. The work undertaken was physically arduous, with tools requiring muscle power, such as axes, hammers, shovels and ploughs. As a result, the first European settlers had to be strong to survive, and it is from these men that the early legends of frontier society emerge.

The population boom brought about by the gold rushes combined with the sudden upsurge in affluence altered the nature of work. While arduous physical work was still undertaken on properties, it was in some cases supplemented by machines. Fences removed the need to shepherd stock, and as a result labourers were able to engage in other work. The growth of towns introduced the professional shopkeeper and retailing as a profession emerged. This also allowed for the introduction of professional services. As a result, the altering of the nature of work also changed the demographics of the Wagga Wagga population. Rather than being a working class comprised primarily of rural labourers and their masters, a town based population emerged, bringing with it different habits, social expectations and leisure activities.

Women largely worked at home, undertaking repetitive tasks, and as a result it was largely forgotten and its importance dismissed. Women also worked on farms, pulling heavy loads in the place of horses or carting water long distances. Domestic duties such as washing clothes in a copper, beating carpets and rugs, caring for the sick and poorly were physically demanding, and many of these activities were undertaken without domestic help and while pregnant or caring for young children.

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<sup>153</sup> Australian Historic Themes Framework, 2001.



## 6 EDUCATING

### 6.1 EDUCATION

The early colonists took particular interest in the education of their children, as they were seen as the future of Australia.<sup>154</sup> Traditionally in England, mothers were often responsible for the education of their children; however in an emerging society child and female labour were essential for growth. Alan Barcan notes that: "One of the attributes of society in a new land was a persistent shortage of labour, which encouraged short schooling, irregular attendance and a high proportion of infants in schools."<sup>155</sup> In 1848 the NSW government introduced a colonial school system which had as its core values that it be "free, compulsory and secular."<sup>156</sup> In 1849 an agent from the Board of Education toured rural New South Wales, encouraging parents to petition the government for a local school. Wagga Wagga was successful in receiving funding, and a public school was built in 1851. Delays in obtaining materials, such as desks and furniture, meant that it could not be opened that year. Before a single pupil was taught, the school was destroyed by the 1852 flood. The discovery of gold saw the population of Wagga Wagga sharply drop, and this combined with a general apathy meant that the school was not rebuilt immediately.

Private school was available for those inclined to send their children during this period. The first school to operate in Wagga Wagga was opened in 1849. Known as the Wagga Wagga Day and Boarding School, it was run by Edwin Tompson and his wife Ann.

In 1861 a National School was built in Little Gurwood street (later Sturt Street). The school consisted of only one room, and in 1865 an additional room was constructed. The school was located close to the unsanitary conditions offered by the gaol and hospital, and was unsuited to expansion. Therefore, in 1872 a new school house was constructed on higher ground at the corner of Gurwood and Simmons Street by Hardy & Co. Wagga Wagga Public School officially opened on 17 April 1872. Two rooms were added in 1878 and a new building of five classrooms was added in 1882.<sup>157</sup>

A combination of factors, primarily the decline of the gold rush, an increasing prosperity in the region and closer settlement led to an increase in the population. Farmers' children, the children of workers and labourers along with the children that accompanied the men building the railways were often sent to schools. Attendance was highest over winter, with many being called out of school to labour during the summer. As many as seventy schools operated in the Wagga Wagga district from the 1870s until the Great War began. The location of many is unknown. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, general literacy had been achieved in the colony.<sup>158</sup>

Lake Albert Public School opened in February 1868, although a private school had run on Henry Angel's property in 1865 and 1866. In 1867 the school moved to the eastern side of the lake. Following a petition by Lake Albert residents, public aid was approved for the school. On February 3 1868 the school became

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<sup>154</sup> Davison *et. al.*, *OCAH*, p.119

<sup>155</sup> Alan Barcan, *A History of Australian Education*, Oxford University press, Melbourne: Australia, 1980, p.408

<sup>156</sup> Barcan, *A History of Australian Education*, p.404

<sup>157</sup> *Brass Bells and Ink Wells: a history of Wagga Wagga Public School 1867-1997*; Morris, *Wagga Wagga – A History*, p.79

<sup>158</sup> Barcan, *A History of Australian Education*, p.404

known as Lake Albert Public School. A timber building was constructed and used from April 1869. In 1876 the school burnt down. Schooling continued in temporary accommodation at the Union Church buildings until a new school was constructed and opened in 1878. In October 1892 a new building was opened.<sup>159</sup>

North Wagga Public School opened in 1880 in buildings that had been formally the private school Pentlands Academy. In 1882 a new building was constructed owing to the number of students enrolled. A school also operated at Bomen from 1878 to 1882, primarily for the purpose of educating the children of railway workers. It closed once the railway works were completed. Enrolments at the North Wagga School also declined at this time.<sup>160</sup>

The growth of the town, particularly on the higher ground in the Newtown area behind the railway station, necessitated the construction of a second public school to service the town of Wagga Wagga. Fears were held for children walking too great a distance to school. The site for South Wagga Public School was unlikely to be flooded and could service the growing needs of the town. Approval was given by the Local Public School Board, with construction commencing in 1891, carried out by Charles Hardy & Co. The school began operating in January 1892.<sup>161</sup>

The abolition of state aid to religious education in the 1880s was an impetus to the Catholic church to establish its own schools, which until the 1970s operated outside of the state system. Many Catholics would not accept a secular education for their children,<sup>162</sup> and as a result the Catholic Church established hundreds of parish schools across Australia, many in isolated locations. It was common for the teachers in these schools to be sent from Ireland, which enhanced Catholic identification with its Irish, working class roots.<sup>163</sup> In 1874 five Presentation Sisters from Ireland were brought to Wagga Wagga to teach Catholic children of the area. In 1876 the Mount Erin convent was opened. The school also provided boarding for those not living close by, which allowed for many in isolated areas to send their children to school. The Christian Brothers also operated a school from 1913, the brothers living in a monastery adjacent to St Michaels Cathedral.

In many rural locations, secondary education was not valued as necessary during the colonial era. Those wanting to participate in secondary school education could do so at Wagga Public School, but many left the education system once they could read and write, and began working on family properties and businesses.<sup>164</sup> Wealthy land-owning families sent their children to boarding schools in the capital cities, and occasionally in England, for their secondary education. Following Federation, a growth in the demand for professional services led to a change in attitude toward secondary education. Wagga Wagga High School was opened in 1917 as a result of this shift in attitudes. The demand for secondary education once the baby boomer population reached high school age led to the construction of Mount Austin High in 1967. Koorungal High officially opened in 1975, although it had been accepting students for two years prior.

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<sup>159</sup> Lake Albert 1868-2008,(Lake Albert Public School, Lake Albert, 2008) pp.12-60

<sup>160</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.80

<sup>161</sup> The Belltower: A history of South Wagga Public School 1892-1992

<sup>162</sup> Davison *et. al.*, *OCAH*, p.207

<sup>163</sup> Hilary Carey, *Believing in Australia: a cultural history of religion*, (Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, 1996) p. 92

<sup>164</sup> Barcan, *A History of Australian Education*, p.409

## 7 GOVERNING

*"This theme group is as much about self government as it is about being governed. It includes all the business of politics, including hostility to acts of government."*

### 7.1 DEFENCE

The history of Australian defence has been dominated by not so much the defending of physical borders, but with the defence of ideals and the maintaining the British Empire in conflicts overseas. The Wagga Wagga district has had significant involvement in defence and armed conflict. This has been within Australia, with some involvement in conflicts against Aborigines who resisted White invasion, and also as a base for military training during armed conflicts. Members of the community have volunteered for service overseas, many sacrificing their lives in defence of the nation and the empire.

When Britain claimed sovereignty over Australia, the Australian Aborigines became British subjects. Therefore, according to British law, warfare within Australia could not exist. This view dominated Australian history until the 1970s, however the armed frontier conflicts that took place in Australia, including across the Riverina, had a deep impact on society at the time and also on future society.

Most recorded incidents to take place in the Wiradjuri Wars occurred in the areas around Bathurst, and at Narrandera. However, given that these locations are upstream and downstream of Wagga Wagga, it seems highly unlikely that no armed conflict with Aborigines took place in the region. Most conflicts were not carried out by armed forces, but by citizens and the police.<sup>165</sup> Although legal repercussions for killing Aborigines were rare, they did occur, therefore many who engaged in this type of warfare to secure ownership of their lands tended to not record their experiences. Recorded armed conflicts within the local government area are scarce, but it must be remembered that this boundary is a modern division.

The conflict in inland New South Wales petered out during the 1840s, although it is difficult to state exactly when fighting ceased. Aborigines continued to experience brutality and violence, which kept them in a subordinate and fearful state.<sup>166</sup>

During the 1860s and 1870s, British military forces were withdrawn from Australia. The British government had decided that the colonies had generated enough wealth and were able to supply their own defence forces. Following the British withdrawal, colonial defence units were raised in many locations, including Wagga Wagga and surrounds. The British military formed the basis of the organisation, customs, uniforms and traditions of the Australian forces.<sup>167</sup> G Company of the First Infantry Regiment was formed in Wagga Wagga in 1885. Men who volunteered to be part of such regiments were usually professional and employed men who looked upon part-time military service as their duty. G Force recruits took part in overseas operations in defence of the British Empire in the Sudan War and the Boer War. Local boy Joe Palazzi made the ultimate sacrifice for king and country during the

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<sup>165</sup> Peter Dennis, Jeffrey Grey, Ewan Morris, Robin Prior with John Connor, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Military History*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne: Australia, 1995, p.3-9

<sup>166</sup> Dennis *et.al*, *OCMH* p.3-9

<sup>167</sup> Ian Kuring, *Red Coats to Cams: A History of Australian Infantry 1788 to 2001*, Army History Unit, Canberra: Australia, 2004, p.19

Boer War, and his death is commemorated on a memorial in Newtown Park.<sup>168</sup> Other men from the area were praised for their skill and bravery in the war. In 1900, Major Holmes wrote to the mayor of Wagga, with the hopes that he would be invited to an official welcome celebration so that he could “bear full testimony to their personal bravery” and also to pay tribute to Palazzi, as “no braver man went to South Africa.”<sup>169</sup> Sentiments such as these were a source of local pride, and the commemoration of Palazzi had an impact on members of the town, including Thomas Blamey, who recalled that the memorial had “created a great impression on him” as a youth.<sup>170</sup> The importance of the Boer War and the values it fought to uphold seem vague and obscure looking back over a century of two massive conflicts, but for residents of Wagga Wagga living at the turn of the century, the war was an important expression of their growing national pride and also their continuing commitment and connection to Empire.

The Great War, 1914-1918, had a profound impact on Australian society. Patriotic sentiment in Wagga Wagga was strong. Participation in the defence of the empire involved local enlistment drives, and support of the men fighting overseas through various comforts funds. Many local men from the district volunteered for service. Local men were present at the landing at Gallipoli, the first Australian action of the war.<sup>171</sup>

The Kangaroo March was a 'snowball' recruitment march. Marches of this type began a march toward Sydney for enlistment, and attempted to gather additional recruits along the way. Of all the recruitment marches to take place during the war, the Kangaroo March was the longest at 350 miles. Eighty-eight recruits left Wagga Wagga on 1 December 1915, arriving in Sydney on 7 January 1916 with 220 recruits. Although military authorities attempted to stop the march at Goulburn to enter for training, the march continued on to Sydney, taking on recruits as far as Campbelltown in order to retain the march's country character.<sup>172</sup> Many of the recruits were allotted to the 55th Battalion, arriving in France in 1916.<sup>173</sup>

War Service Committees were another key way for locals, particularly women, to become involved in the war effort. In Wagga Wagga, the War Service Committee was established in December 1915, and was involved in fundraising for the war effort. The Red Cross League was also involved in fundraising, and send clothing, particularly socks, to the front line. The Wagga Wagga Soldiers' Comforts Fund also sent comforts to the front, but as their mission sent individual parcels to serving men from Wagga Wagga. In September 1917 the fund became branch of the War Chest Fund.<sup>174</sup> Committees such as these were the primary way for women to participate in the war effort, and they tended to be dominated by middle class women who had the time and resources to devote to such activities.<sup>175</sup>

The exact long term impact of the war is difficult to measure, but it had a profound effect on the district. Over 200 local men had died in the conflict, and many more returned home both physically and

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<sup>168</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p. 113-114

<sup>169</sup> 'Wagga's Soldiers Praised', Sydney Morning Herald, 6 September 1900 p.6

<sup>170</sup> Inglis, *Sacred Places*, p.220

<sup>171</sup> Morris, *A History of Wagga Wagga*, p.118-119

<sup>172</sup> [http://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/recruiting\\_march/kangaroos/](http://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/recruiting_march/kangaroos/)

<sup>173</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.122

<sup>174</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.130

<sup>175</sup> Pam Maclean, 'War and Australian Society' in Joan Beaumont (ed) *Australia's War 1914-18*, Allen & Unwin Sydney: Australia, p.68

emotionally broken men.<sup>176</sup> A deep gulf existed between those who had enlisted and those who stayed behind. War Memorials were constructed in every local town, and many schools have reminders of those years of conflicts, such as honour boards or memorial gates. These reminders are a physical reflection of a community grieving what it lost during those years.<sup>177</sup>

During the Second World War, Wagga Wagga was involved in fundraising activities, but also played a key part in the training of servicemen and women, with an Army base established at Kapooka in 1942 and a RAAF base at Uranquinty in 1939. Women were able to participate in the war effort within the Voluntary Aid Detachment, the Women's Auxiliary Air Force and Australian Women's Army Service.

During the Second World War, Wagga Wagga became a training base for both the Army and the Airforce. Service Flying Training Schools were formed as part of the Empire Air Training Scheme, which aimed to provide 28,000 aircrew each year to fly in the Royal Air Force. Some graduates of EATS served in distinctly Royal Australian Air Force squadrons, while others served within RAF squadrons. Forest Hill was selected as one training site within Australia. On 1 July 1940, No 2 Service Flying Training School was formed. At the SFTS, trainees were prepared for service, learning advanced skills such as "instrument, formation, and night flying; cross country navigation; complex aerobatics; gunnery; and dive bombing."<sup>178</sup> Some trainees also learned to fly Wirraways. It was exciting, but dangerous, with about 27% of aircraft lost by the RAAF during the war being in accidents at training schools.<sup>179</sup> Crashes occurred at Uranquinty, and were often remembered by members of the local community.<sup>180</sup> Throughout March and April of 1942, 2SFTS was disbanded and transferred to 5SFTS at Uranquinty and 7SFTS at Deniliquin. At the end of the war, 5SFTS was disbanded and its operations were shut down. From 1949 the base was used as a migrant centre, until it was needed to train troops for service in the Korean War. In December of 1951 No 1 Basic Flying Training School was formed. In December 1958 1BFTS was transferred to Point Cook.<sup>181</sup>

Kapooka Base was used during the war as a training centre for members of the Royal Australian Engineers. Soldiers were trained in engineering and basic soldiering skills, and thousands of regular soldiers were trained between 1942 and 1945. On 21 May 1945, a grenade explosion inside a training bunker killed two instructors and twenty-five trainees, with only one man surviving.<sup>182</sup> The funeral procession was so long that by the time the first cars reached the war cemetery in Koorringal, the tail end was just leaving the town of Wagga Wagga. Having closed at the conclusion of the war, Kapooka was reopened as a training centre in 1951.

Unlike the previous war, the Second World War provided women with the ability to join the war effort with active service. Many women were trained at military bases in the Wagga Wagga region. Members of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force trained at Forest Hill from February 1941. Kapooka was also used as a transit camp for the Australian Women's Army Service between 1942 and 1946. It was also a base for training members of the First Australian Anti-Aircraft Searchlight Training Regiment. The Voluntary Aid

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<sup>176</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga: A History*, p.133

<sup>177</sup> Inglis, *Sacred Places*, throughout

<sup>178</sup> Alan Stephens, *The Royal Australian Air Force*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne: Australia, 2001, pp.69-70

<sup>179</sup> Stephens, *The Royal Australian Air Force*, p.71

<sup>180</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga: A History*, p.196

<sup>181</sup> Ilbery, Peter, *Hatching an Air Force: 2 SFTS, 5 SFTS, 1 BFTS Uranquinty and Wagga-Wagga*, Banner Books, Maryborough, Queensland, 2002

<sup>182</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga: A History*, p.209

Detachment was formed by the Red Cross early in the war. Members of the VAD actively supported the military forces by running canteens, hospitals and fundraisers.

## 7.2 GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

The earliest forms of administration in Wagga Wagga were carried out by the Commissioner of Crown Lands.

In 1841, local squatters petitioned Governor Gipps for the establishment of a police magistrate. (See Section 7.3 Law and Order). The reasons given were that the area was a thoroughfare leading from Sydney to Melbourne and Adelaide, and as a result was exposed to those travelling through the area that may have been of questionable character. There was also concern about intoxicated employees. This request was denied. Another request was made in 1847 for the establishment of a court of petty sessions.<sup>183</sup> This second request was granted, and on 10 August 1847 the Court of Petty Sessions first sat in Wagga Wagga.

The Bench of Magistrates was a legal representative body in Wagga. In addition to settling disputes, usually between employees and employers, the magistrate issued publican and hawking licenses and supervised the expenditure of money on roads, bridges and other public works.<sup>184</sup>

Under the Municipalities Act of 1858, Wagga Wagga was gazetted as a village on 23 November 1849. A plan for the town of Wagga Wagga was prepared by Surveyor Thomas Scott Townsend, and approved in 1849. The plan provided for a dual settlement on either side of the river, with a slightly larger settlement on the south side.<sup>185</sup>

The Municipalities Act of 1858 allowed for the permissive or voluntary incorporation of urban and regional areas into a municipality. This allowed for an elective council to be elected by adult ratepayers. Revenues were drawn from rates, fees for services and government entitlement. Special rates could also be levied for water supply, sewerage and street lighting.<sup>186</sup> Wagga Wagga was incorporated as a Municipality on 15 March 1870, when the population numbered about 1200.<sup>187</sup> Council was dominated by men from business, industrial and professional backgrounds.<sup>188</sup> The main activities undertaken by council during its early years centred on<sup>189</sup>:

- Levelling, aligning and removing tree stumps from streets
- Gas lighting, and the purchase of a gas works in 1888
- Attempts to attain a pure water source, with a waterworks in 1885 and a well sunk in the early 1900s
- Drainage and sanitation, especially the problem of sewerage and waste
- Public library

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<sup>183</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.29

<sup>184</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.33

<sup>185</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.36

<sup>186</sup> F.A. Larcombe, *The Origins of Local Government in New South Wales 1831-58: a history of local government in New South Wales Vol 1*, (Sydney University Press, Sydney, 1973) p. 262

<sup>187</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.89

<sup>188</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.89

<sup>189</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, pp.89-93

- Street beautification and creating parks and gardens
- Saleyards
- Fire brigade

The Local Government Act of 1906 worked to overcome the deficiencies of the previous acts which meant that not enough areas were becoming incorporated. It introduced the shire in 1905, and compulsorily divided the state into local units.<sup>190</sup> Kyeamba and Mitchell Shires were established in 1906.<sup>191</sup> In 1981, under the Local Government Areas Amalgamation Act 1980[as amended] the NSW government forced the amalgamation of Kyeamba Shire, Mitchell Shire and Wagga Wagga City Council.

Federation in 1901 created three tiers of government in Australia. The first tier was the Federal government. The Wagga Wagga region is located within the Riverina federal electorate, one of the original 75 electorates created at Federation. From 1984-1991 the division was known as Riverina Darling, but it reverted to Riverina in the 1992 redistribution.

The second tier of government is state government, previously known as the colonial government. Wagga Wagga and its surrounds are part of the Murrumbidgee electorate, one of only two electorates that has been in continual existence since the first Legislative Assembly in 1856. Prior to 1913 it was known as 'The Murrumbidgee'.

The third tier of government created is local government, whose early origins are discussed above.

### **7.3 LAW AND ORDER**

In 1847 a bench of magistrates was established at Wagga, following requests from sixteen licensed pastoralists from the Murrumbidgee and Lachlan districts. The first sitting of the Court of Petty Sessions occurred on 10 August 1847.

On 1 January 1858 Henry Baylis was appointed the Police Magistrate, due to an increase in work for the Wagga Bench. Wagga had a reputation as a 'tough' town, with drunkenness accounting for about half of the cases brought before the magistrates' bench. The most common crimes in the colonies were 'convict offences', primarily absconding, absenting, neglect of work, disobedience, insolence, drunkenness and disorderly conduct.<sup>192</sup>

In 1861 a Court of Quarter Sessions was established in Wagga for the southern districts, which included Goulburn, Yass, Gundagai and Wagga. The first district court judge was Thomas Callaghan. Wagga's police strength at that time was one sub-inspector, one sergeant, one senior constable, and seven constables. In 1862 a larger courthouse and gaol were built to accommodate the growing needs of the village. As Wagga grew, residents began to complain about the location of the gaol, described as an 'eyesore' at the time, in the business centre of town. By 1896 the Wagga gaol was used as a lock up for minor offences and prisoners awaiting trial. It was eventually demolished in 1919. The single story lock up was retained.

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<sup>190</sup> F.A. Larcombe, *A History of Local Government in New South Wales*, New Century Press, Sydney: Australia, 1955, p.11-13

<sup>191</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, p.93

<sup>192</sup> Alan Atkinson and Marian Aveling (eds), *Australians 1838*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Broadway: Australia, 1987, p.275



## 7.4 WELFARE

Welfare generally refers to provisions that are made for individuals who, for a variety of mostly social and economic reasons, are unable to be involved in community activities such as working, housing, health care and similar ways of self provision. Welfare recipients in Australian history have included destitute children, the aged poor, widows, and the sick poor. At various times it has also included individuals unable to find employment.<sup>193</sup> In the early years of the colony, the attitude of those with influence and money held the dominant opinion that individuals must prove themselves as 'worthy' of receiving assistance. This usually meant proving they held morals that reflected middle class sensibilities, such as sobriety and sexual modesty. Throughout Australian history, this attitude has been challenged and altered.

Welfare in the early years of settlement around Wagga Wagga mostly relied on family. Those unable to care for themselves, such as orphans or the mentally ill, were often sent to orphanages or asylums in Sydney. A Benevolent Society was operating before the end of the nineteenth century, and dispensed aid to women with families and the elderly.<sup>194</sup> St. Vincents de Paul Society began operating in the district (info in here).

The period of the Great Depression in the 1930s caused considerable hardship to many individuals and their families. The Benevolent Society and St. Vincents were active in Wagga Wagga collecting and distributing clothing, food and money to those in need.<sup>195</sup> The Rotary Club was also involved in helping the alleviate circumstances, by distributing milk to mothers and babies up to two years of age, and when the Public Health Department began distributing milk to babies up to one year, the Rotary Club continued to supply milk for babies between the ages of one and two.<sup>196</sup>

Institutions aimed at social welfare continued to be a feature of community life throughout the Second World War and after. The scope of these organisations has changed as the government has taken on an increasing role in providing for vulnerable groups.

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<sup>193</sup> Brian Dickey, *No Charity There: A Short History of Welfare in Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1987(1980), p.xi-xii

<sup>194</sup> *Sydney Mail*, 26 February 1898

<sup>195</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga: A History*, p.173

<sup>196</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga: A History*, p.176

## 8 DEVELOPING AUSTRALIA'S CULTURAL LIFE

*"Australians are more likely to express their sense of identity in terms of a way of life rather than allegiance to an abstract political ideal. One of the achievements of this society has been the creation of a rich existence away from the workplace. While some of the activities encompassed in this theme are pursued for profit- horse racing and cinema, for instance- their reason for being is the sheer enjoyment of spectators. While many people could not pursue careers in art, literature, science, entertainment or the church without being paid, those activities do not fit easily into the categories of economy or workplace."*

### 8.1 CREATIVE ENDEAVOUR

Creative endeavour is undertaken by many people, at varying levels of skill and commitment. Creativity allows individuals to express themselves using means that they are confident with. At times these activities remain within the private realm, while others have found notoriety through their creative expression. Architecture and landscaping offer individuals and groups the chance for large scale and public creative expression. Other activities such as painting, writing, playing music, acting, needlework and crochet have been undertaken by individuals as forms of creative endeavour.

Dame Mary Gilmore was born near Goulburn in 1865, and spent part of her childhood and adolescence in Brucedale, near Wagga Wagga. She attended Brucedale school and Wagga Wagga Public School. She was to become one of Australia's most celebrated literary figures. Her book *Old Days Old Ways: a book of recollections* (1934) recalled her childhood growing up in the district. Although she often romanticised the past and admitted to never letting the truth stand in the way of a good story, her vignettes of pioneer life offer a fascinating insight into not only the history of Wagga Wagga, but of frontier society.<sup>197</sup>

### 8.2 DOMESTIC LIFE

The domestic situation of the early settlers was rough and heavily masculine. Dangers posed by Aboriginals defending their land, an unfamiliar terrain and climate, coupled with the fact that there were no houses or amenities in existence, meant that most men worked on their runs while their wives remained in the more settled capital cities of either Sydney or Melbourne. Settlers and emancipists lived, worked and ate with their labourers and convict assignees. Lines of distinction between the two groups were blurred because of the particular demands of pioneer life.

With the rise of the Victorian era, the family came to dominate as a social ideal. Christian values formed the basis of family life, with monogamous marriage the centre of the unit. Women were believed to have a domesticating influence on the rough and at times morally questionable actions of men, especially in frontier societies.<sup>198</sup> With the construction of more solid homes, the emergence of a village containing a few shops and a decline in fears of Aboriginal violence, women joined men in Wagga Wagga in greater

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<sup>197</sup> Wilde, W. H., 'Gilmore, Dame Mary Jean (1865–1962)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/gilmore-dame-mary-jean-6391/text10923>, accessed 19 September 2012.

<sup>198</sup> Bongiorno, *The Sex Lives of Australians*, p.23

numbers. Home and the family were cherished as bulwarks against disorder.<sup>199</sup> Typically the husband of the family was the breadwinner, with other family members carrying out crucial tasks in the home and elsewhere if necessary. Many women worked alongside their husbands on farms, or stayed behind with the family alone if he had to travel in search of work. Prior to the development of household technologies, such as electricity, running water and sewerage, carrying out household chores was dirty and physically demanding work for many women. While some households employed a servant to undertake such work, the majority of it was carried out by wives and daughters.<sup>200</sup> For middle class women of this period it was possible to employ domestic servants, lessening the workload of the mother and children and enabling the development of a more emotional relationship between husband and wife and a mother and her children.<sup>201</sup>

While domestic life and the role of the wife and mother were valued on a philosophical level by society, in reality many women were vulnerable to the tempers of their husbands. In 1860, Thomas Cartwright who owned a run at what is now known as Cartwrights Hill, beat his wife to death with a fire shovel. In his finding the judge noted that *“it seemed to be a mistaken notion with many that they were quite at liberty to beat their wives as they chose”*,<sup>202</sup> suggesting that violence was a harsh aspect of domestic life for many women in rural areas.

In the twentieth century, a greater provision of utilities and improved technology made household management easier. Freed from the severe drudgery of previous generations, the family and domestic life came to focus on mutually rewarding relationships and the nurturing of the individual.

### 8.3 LEISURE

Leisure activities are often seen as communal activities, allowing for the fostering of social relationships. Leisure time can be spent in a multitude of ways, such as with sporting activities (Section 8.6 Sport) or private pursuits. Although leisure is seen as a social ideal, it is restrictive in its nature and relies on time, money, access and social acceptance in order to be undertaken. Despite this, leisure provides a break from the monotony of work and allows for social interaction and the development of community spirit. Some of the more popular activities, or those reflected in the heritage register are mentioned below, but many other clubs, groups and associations existed in the town. In addition, individuals passed their leisure time in unstructured ways, such as with sewing and embroidery, reading, board games, gardening and casual sporting activities.

Early leisure revolved around public houses, often involving drinking and gambling, simply because there was little else available. In 1859 the Mechanics Institute and School of Arts were formed by leading pastoralists and townsmen who were concerned that the only leisure activities provided for in the town revolved around the hotels. Aimed at providing skilled workers with access to intellectual pursuits, the society encouraged reading and chess playing. In 1902 a billiard room was included.

Dancing was a not uncommon activity during the 1920s, and in Wagga Wagga many public dances were held at ‘Dixieland’, an outdoor dance hall located at the end of Sturt Street, known as Little Gurwood

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<sup>199</sup> Graeme Davison, J.W. McCarty, Ailsa McLeary (eds) *Australians 1888*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Broadway: Australia, 1987, p.257

<sup>200</sup> Davison, *OCAH*, p.194

<sup>201</sup> Davison, *OCAH*, p.242

<sup>202</sup> *Goulburn Herald*, 31 March 1860

Street at the time. Dances, children's fancy dress parties along with dance competitions were held beneath the willow trees. The dance floor was located on the banks of the river.<sup>203</sup>

Another important leisure activity in Wagga Wagga was the annual show. The first show was held in Wagga Wagga in November 1865. Early exhibits included cattle, sheep and horses. While shows were partly educational in nature and attached to work, the relaxed atmosphere and ability to socialise carved them as a pleasant break from routine.<sup>204</sup> From the early 1900s exhibits on food, cookery and other domestic activities were included, providing women, including wives and mothers, with an opportunity to not only observe but participate in public life.

## 8.4 RELIGION

Religion and spiritual beliefs are difficult to measure, as internal commitments and faiths are not always openly expressed and displayed. Therefore, this section will discuss organised religion with a focus on Christianity, the dominant religion in the history of the Wagga Wagga region. Many Christian churches appear on the heritage register.

Since settlement, religion in Australia has been dominated by Christianity. Those migrating to Australia tended to bring their own religious values with them. Convicts brought three main denominations with them: Anglicanism, Catholicism, and evangelical Protestantism.<sup>205</sup> Organised Christianity was largely rejected by convicts and the working classes, with the exception of the Irish who remained attached to Catholicism. The state often looked to the Church of England to help them impose moral order. Due to the religious affiliations of administrators, the Church of England dominated religious life in early Australia. Many prominent pastoralists were Anglican; however in Wagga Wagga the land owning class was not dominated by Anglicanism as in areas closer to Sydney. Prominent locals with strong affiliations to the Catholic Church include John Cox of Mangoplah, who donated £100 toward the building of St. Michaels cathedral, about one tenth of the total required.

Until the late 1850s, residents of Wagga Wagga did not have a local minister, and their religious needs, such as weddings and baptisms, were serviced by travelling ministers. Churches were built on what has come to be known as 'Church Hill' from 1859, with St. Michaels Roman Catholic Church being the first completed. The first Anglican Church was built in 1861, and was replaced with a new and more imposing structure in 1876. Anglican and Catholic churches were built in other parts of the town and district, with some centres being serviced by travelling ministers. Churches were also constructed by Presbyterians, Methodists and the Salvation Army Church.<sup>206</sup> Although Church attendance fluctuated, approximately three quarters of the population identified themselves as Christian, and the influence of the church in imposing social values on society cannot be overlooked.<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Wayne Doubleday, 'Dixieland' <http://waggalocalhistory.wetpaint.com/page/Dixieland> accessed 30 January 2013

<sup>204</sup> Raby, *Making Rural Australia*, p.133

<sup>205</sup> Carey, *Believing in Australia*, p.2

<sup>206</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga – A History*, pp.86-88

<sup>207</sup> Davison *et. al.*, *OCAH*, p.556

## 8.5 SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Social Institutions are linked to many other aspects of an individual's life, such as gender, class, politics, religion and class. Involvement in social institutions is also tied to leisure (**Section 8.3**) and working (**Section 5.1**). The aim of many social institutions was to foster and encourage self-improvement, and also to allow for connections to be made between like minded individuals. Some local societies prominent in the areas history are discussed in this section, but this is not a comprehensive overview of the many groups and connections community members have made with one another.

The Mechanics Institute and School of Arts was formed in 1859 by leading pastoralists and townsmen who were concerned with the limited education and entertainment venues in the town, apart from hotels. A building was erected on Johnston Street in the early 1860s, and was dedicated to the Society on 16 July 1863. The building was extended in September of 1871 and two years later additional land was purchased, giving the building frontage on Fitzmaurice Street. Major alterations to the building were undertaken in 1902. The building at that time was comprised of a reading room on the ground floor, and upstairs there was a library, recreation room and billiard room. The downstairs room of the old building which fronted Fitzmaurice Street was leased out as a shop. The additions were officially opened by the society president James Gormly on 11 November 1902.

The first branch of the Country Women's Association was established in 1922, with a Wagga Wagga branch formed in 1924. The association is a non-profit community based organisation which focused its activities on the health and welfare of country women and their children. During the Great Depression, the CWA aided single unemployed women and married women with unemployed husbands in finding work, and also collected and distributed donations to those suffering from poverty.<sup>208</sup> In 1938 the Association succeeded in campaigning for a maternity ward to be added to the Wagga Wagga Base Hospital. During the Second World War the CWA worked in supporting the war effort, through the making of comforts and war provisions. The CWA has worked with dedication and commitment to improving the living conditions of women in country areas, which are reflected in their active role in Wagga Wagga and district.

The Returned Service League, originally known as the 'Returned sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia' (with Airmen added during the Second World War) was formed in Brisbane in 1916, with a sub branch being formed in Wagga Wagga December 1918, following a failed attempt the previous year. The club had a rocky start, disbanding in January 1919. It was established on a permanent basis later that year. The branch had a vocal role in public affairs, advocating for employment opportunities for returned soldiers and coming into conflict with council about appropriate commemoration of the fallen.<sup>209</sup>

## 8.6 SPORT

Involvement in organised sporting activities, like all leisure activities, is a reflection of social values and participation relies upon the availability of time and money. Sports were transported from England. Early participants in sporting activities in Wagga Wagga tended to be the more affluent, male members of the community. Sports such as cricket, which required an extended period of play and the availability of a white uniform, were mostly engaged in by the pastoralists and their sons. However, changes to working hours from the 1880s increased available leisure time for the middle classes and gradually the working

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<sup>208</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga – A History*, p.171 & p.174

<sup>209</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga: A History*, pp.137-144

classes, and organised sport became accessible to a wider group of individuals. Sport held an important role in connecting members of newly formed communities and reinforcing identity and the social hierarchy.<sup>210</sup> In Wagga Wagga this is reflected by the growing popularity of various sporting clubs. Competitions also took place across the region, particularly with Albury, as a result of the expanding railway and transport networks (**3.15 Transport**). Across the Riverina, “[m]ail trains, or even special trains, were filled to capacity with the team and hundreds of supporters who left their town in the early morning, not to return till late at night or even the next day.”<sup>211</sup> Sporting activities that are reflected on the heritage register are discussed below, but other popular sporting activities also included cricket, football, golf, rowing, cycling and swimming.<sup>212</sup>

#### 9.6.1 Tennis

The sport of tennis was imported from England, and became popular in the 1880s. During this period, tennis was seen as a socially accessible sport available to all, although in practise most clubs were dominated by the middle class. It was exceptional from other sports in that women were not only able to be spectators, but were also permitted to play.<sup>213</sup>

In Wagga Wagga, lawn courts were attached to some residences, with private play occurring between families. In 1895 the Wagga Lawn tennis Club formally opened a lawn between Gurwood and Marne Streets, although it was reported in the *Daily Advertiser* that tennis had been played in Wagga Wagga and surrounds for ten years.<sup>214</sup> Matches were played between local clubs of the district, with annual tournaments taking place between Wagga Wagga and Albury. Visiting clubs came from Junee, Newcastle, Melbourne University and Sydney Grammar to play the Wagga Wagga club. The *Daily Advertiser* noted in 1899:

“Tennis should be played in every settlement, as it is a very pleasant game, requiring the exercise of all the muscles, and is also a means of inducing social intercourse of a hearty nature.”<sup>215</sup>

Women dominated the spectator stands, and also generally provided the catering, while men took on positions on the committee. In addition men and women played singles, doubles and mixed doubles. It was this availability of the sport to both men and women and varying levels of involvement that contributed to the popularity of tennis in rural Australia. The popularity of tennis in Wagga Wagga and the surrounding region is reflected by the many community accessible tennis courts that are scattered throughout the region.

#### 9.6.2 Horse Racing

The Murrumbidgee Turf Club was established in 1860, with a grandstand erected by Hardy & Co by 1867. Race meetings began as a way for squatters to show the pace and style of their horses. Originally, a squatter rode his own horse, but later jockeys were employed. There was a competitive spirit between squatters. Their participation in racing was one of the ways that the wealthy, land owning group

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<sup>210</sup> Richard Cashman, *Paradise of Sport: The Rise of Organised Sport in Australia*, (Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1995) p.98

<sup>211</sup> Cashman, *Paradise of Sport*, p.99

<sup>212</sup> For a summary on these and other sports in Wagga Wagga, refer to Morris, *Wagga Wagga –A History*, pp.94-102

<sup>213</sup> Kinross-Smith pp.133-145

<sup>214</sup> *Daily Advertiser*, 14/5/1889

<sup>215</sup> *Daily Advertiser*, 29/4/1899

attempted to define themselves as a pseudo-aristocracy.<sup>216</sup> Races also allowed for the maintenance of the social hierarchy while upholding the ideal of homogenous community.<sup>217</sup> In 1875 the Murrumbidgee Turf Club awarded more prize money than the Melbourne Cup. The following year, the Wagga Gold Cup was inaugurated, with a gold cup valued at 100 guineas donated by John Cox of Mangoplah.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Stone and Garden, *Squatters and Selectors*, p.144 & 154

<sup>217</sup> Richard Cashman, *Paradise of Sport*, p.99

<sup>218</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga: A History*, p.94-95



## 9 MARKING THE PHASES OF LIFE

"Although much of the experience of growing up and growing old does not readily relate to particular heritage sites, there are places that can illustrate this important theme. Most of the phases of life...are universal experiences."

### 9.1 BIRTH AND DEATH

Childbirth in pioneer societies was a hazardous experience, and one which many mothers and babies did not survive. Childbirth was painful with no relief available. This suffering was seen as part of women's lot in life, necessary to pay for the sins of Eve.<sup>219</sup> Many women approached childbirth full of fear.<sup>220</sup> Women laboured with only the assistance of a female relative or neighbour. Some women acquired midwifery skills by assisting the ship's doctor on the voyage to Australia, and were able to apply this knowledge to assist family members and friends in their labours upon arrival in the colony.<sup>221</sup> Aboriginal midwives also attended pioneer births in the early days of settlement.<sup>222</sup> For women with no clean linen, Aboriginal women made a bed of fresh eucalyptus leaves, the oil sterilising the birthing site.<sup>223</sup>

Childbirth in the colonies was significantly safer than in England, and in the mid nineteenth century one in five births ended in death in Australia, compared to one in three in England.<sup>224</sup> In rural and remote areas, the risks were significantly higher as the limited availability of doctors and isolation on properties meant that medical assistance was often not available. Babies were often not named for days or even months, as parents were fearful of becoming too attached in case the child died. The death or stillbirth of a baby caused immense emotional grief and suffering among women, and this grief was carried to the grave.<sup>225</sup> At times babies who were premature or stillborn were buried in the midwives garden of her home, and were colloquially known as the "Midwives cemetery".<sup>226</sup>

Greater settlement to the town saw the establishment of private maternity hospitals, although these were mostly made use of by the wealthy.<sup>227</sup> The majority of women still laboured at home with a midwife in attendance. The midwife moved into the home during confinement and assisted with the cooking and cleaning, along with the care of the mother, the new baby and any other children in the house. Ten days after the birth, the midwife left, often paid in kind with fruits, vegetables and other available produce.<sup>228</sup> During the nineteenth and early twentieth century, hospitals were primarily for complicated labours and

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<sup>219</sup> Hagar, *Australian Colonial Medicine*, p.121-123

<sup>220</sup> Grimshaw *et. al.*, *Creating a Nation*, p.118

<sup>221</sup> Mavis Gaff Smith, *No Births on Monday*, p.25

<sup>222</sup> Mavis Gaff-Smith, *Riverina Midwives: from the Mountains to the Plains*, Triple D Books, Wagga Wagga: Australia, 2004

<sup>223</sup> Hagar, *Australian Colonial Medicine*, 118-119

<sup>224</sup> Atkinson and Aveling, *Australians 1838*, p.82

<sup>225</sup> Gaff Smith, *No Births on Monday*, p.189

<sup>226</sup> Gaff Smith, *No Births on Monday*, p.189

<sup>227</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga- A History*, p.159

<sup>228</sup> Gaff Smith, *No Births on Monday*, p.30

pregnancies. However, the 1924 Nures Registration Act regulated the training of nurses and midwives in New South Wales, and this began a steady shift from home to hospital births.<sup>229</sup> In 1925 the Wagga Wagga District Hospital allowed for the admission of uncomplicated pregnancy cases.<sup>230</sup> As a result of efforts from the Country Women's Association, a maternity ward opened at the Wagga Wagga Base Hospital on 22 March 1938. The maternity ward at the private Calvary Hospital was opened in the 1990s.<sup>231</sup>

The hardships of life in the Australian bush necessitated that the familiar rituals of death and burial that many early settlers remembered from England were not only impractical, but impossible to carry out.<sup>232</sup> Many were buried in the bush or close to family properties, with a lack of churches and ceremonies in the early years of European settlement. One such example of a family cemetery that was located near the early homesteads is the Best family cemetery, located in Ashmont. This cemetery was established in 1853, and was used for family burials until 1910.<sup>233</sup> There also exist 'lone graves', small one or two plot cemeteries scattered on farming properties, testament to the isolation, loneliness and hardships many faced during the pioneer years.

Originally, a cemetery used by residents of Wagga Wagga was located on the river bank, close to Church Hill. In 1856 the cemetery was moved to Koorinal Road, and all internments from the river bank were relocated with their headstones to the new location. In 1941 the Turvey Family Vault was also relocated to the Wagga Wagga Monumental Cemetery. Initially built for the Turvey family members who resided on the property at Turvey Park, it was moved to allow for the construction of Best Street.

In 1971 the main burial ground became the Wagga Wagga Lawn Cemetery. Burials began on August 10, with the first cremation taking place on August 11. Some individuals are still interned in family plots at the Monumental cemetery.

Although these are the dominant places for the burial or cremation of loved ones, they are not exclusive, with burials taking place in church yards and at the Botanic Gardens.

Following the devastation of the Great War, war memorials were erected. The cost and distance required to travel to the battlefields to the graveside of lost sons, brothers and husbands led to the prolific creation of War memorials across Australia, etched with the names of those that died. These became 'sacred places' and were the focus of post war bereavement with the absence of the graveside. Most towns have a small memorial, etched with names, and were the focus of Anzac Day and Remembrance Day Commemorations.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>229</sup> Gaff-Smith, *No Births on Monday*, p.29

<sup>230</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga- A History*, p.160

<sup>231</sup> Morris, *Wagga Wagga: A History*, p.231

<sup>232</sup> Pat Jalland, *Australian Ways of Death: a social and cultural history 1840-1918* (Oxford University Press, South Melbourne, 2002) p.244

<sup>233</sup> *The Best Family Cemetery Wagga Wagga Conservation Management Plan*, Friends of the cemetery, Wagga Wagga, October 2003

<sup>234</sup> Ken Inglis, *Sacred Places*, throughout