

Mayor Ivan Jack during one of his many civic duties [RW1574/241781].

The Ivan Jack impact



at the archives
Wayne Doubleday

here is a short, but vital stretch of road between Trail and Best streets in Wagga, named in honour of a man named Ivan Jack.

The unveiling of the small monolith alongside the drive bearing his name was conducted in 1962 with no speeches being made and only a small gathering present. But the impact of Ivan Jack on the city of Wagga was not, in any way, small.

Ivan John Jack was born in 1892 in Oxley, Victoria. After not many years, he and his family had moved to the Wagga district and Jack became a farmer at Uranquinty. In 1915, he married Annie Lugsdin, the daughter of Frank Lugsdin, a farmer originally from Daylesford in Victoria, who later settled on "Connorton" at Uranquinty.

By 1929, Jack had left the land to become the managing director of Motor Car Sales and Service Agency as Ivan J Jack Pty Ltd, then Wagga Motors Pty Ltd in 1946.

Jack returned to farming in 1945 but only a few years later turned his attention to local government. Ivan Jack must have been a public-minded man, for when he was approached to run for the Wagga council in the 1948 by-election, he took up the offer.

His only opponent in the by-election was Mr Robert James "Bob" Harris, a schoolteacher and former alderman on the council.

The Daily Advertiser recorded Harris' magnanimous congratulations to Jack on winning the by-election: "I congratulate Mr Jack on his clear-cut victory. He conducted his campaign vigorously and in a most gentlemanly fashion. I am confident that the residents of Wagga will have an energetic and able representative in Mr Jack".

Jack served as an alderman of the Wagga City Council from 1948 to 1968. During that time, he also served as mayor for a total of 11 years (1955 to 1957 and 1959 to 1966).

A convincing demonstration of Ivan Jack's popularity with the people of Wagga came in the 1965 local government election when, according to Sherry Morris' *Wagga Wagga - A History*, he secured 48 per cent of the primary vote.

In December 1966, Alderman Harris (whom Jack defeated at the 1948 by-election) narrowly defeated Ald. Jack in the mayoral election, thus ending Jack's record run of eight successive years as Wagga's mayor.

Alderman FC White told *The Daily Advertiser*, "A feature of his (Ivan Jack's) long term as mayor was his weekly early-morning inspections of council works with the city engineer, Mr Knott. He always kept in touch with all council activities and found time for other aspects of the office. He was ever ready to welcome visiting dignitaries in a courteous manner and attend other local demands."

Alderman CW Toy said, "All the aldermen are conscious of his endeavours for the benefit of this city and also have an appreciation of his impartiality as a chairman. Upon reflection, he must have a feeling of great satisfaction at having been mayor in this city for such a long period".

Even the editor of the *Daily Advertiser* had only praise for Alderman Jack's contributions, saying, "No man has made a more indelible mark in the history of Wagga in recent years than the retiring Mayor of Wagga."

"He has been a popular and exceptionally competent leader of the civic administration which has brought Wagga to the pinnacle among provincial cities in New South Wales."

"It was also during Ald. Jack's administration that Wagga gained the Blhett Award, considered the hallmark in local government awards, and made to the council achieving the most outstanding progress in a 12 month period."

Honours and awards

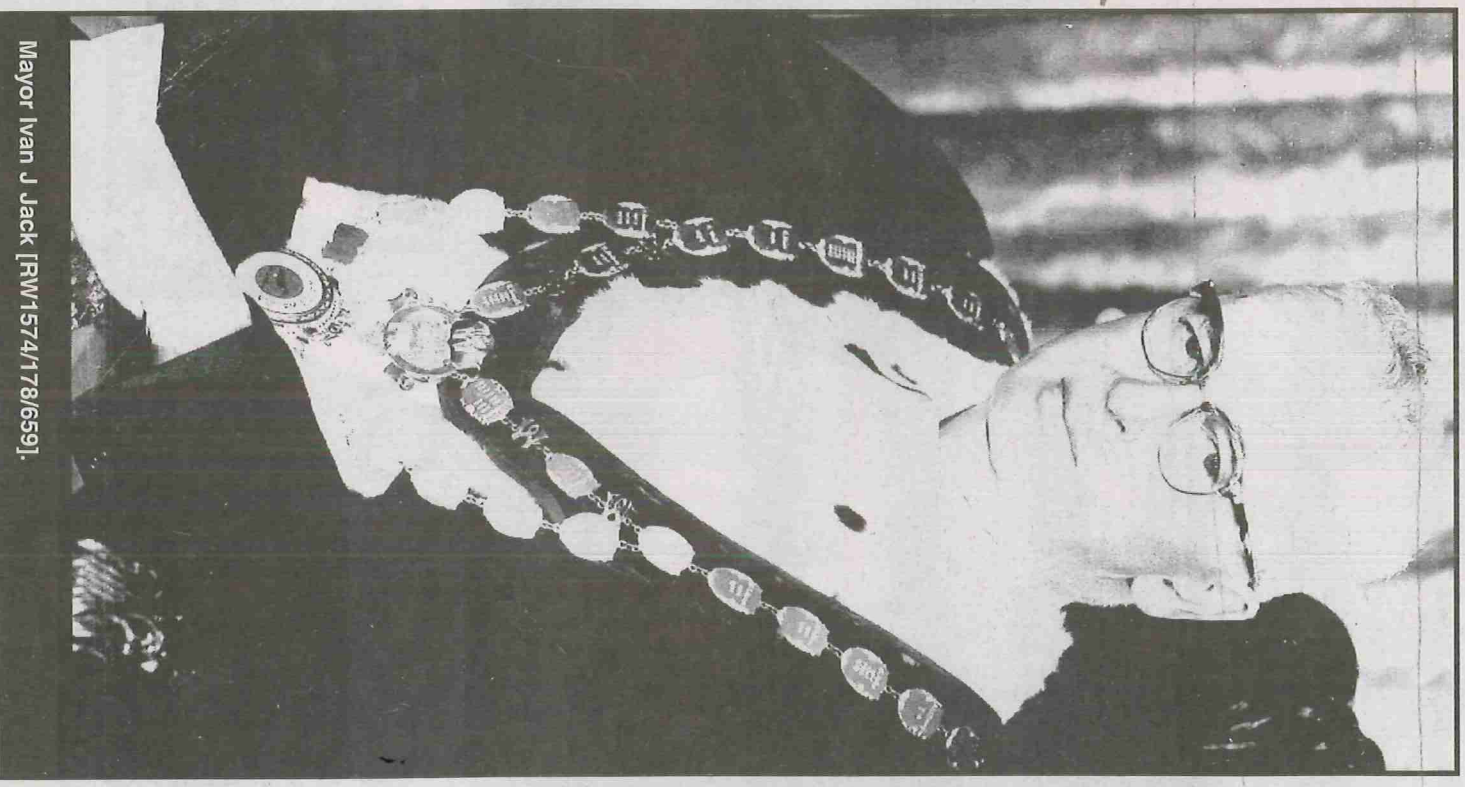
IN ADDITION to Ivan Jack Drive, which was officially named on November 23, 1962, Jack Avenue in Mount Austin was also named in honour of Ivan Jack.

He was awarded an MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire) by the Queen on January 1, 1966, for services to local government.

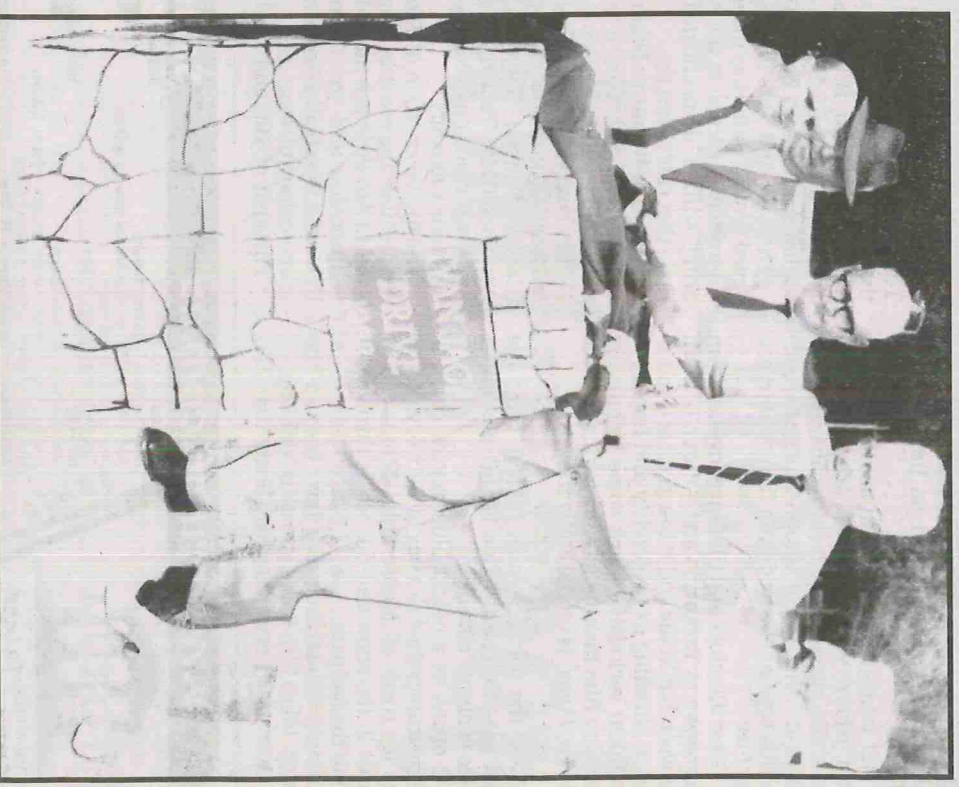
The following year, he became the fifth person to be granted the Freedom of the City of Wagga, the highest honour that could be bestowed upon a person by the council.

Ivan Jack died aged 80 on July 17, 1972 at Young. He was brought back to Wagga to be buried next to his wife in the Wagga Monumental Cemetery.

References: *The Daily Advertiser*: Nov 24, 1962, June 15, 1946, Oct 17, 1948, Oct 18, 1948, Dec 3, 1966; *Wagga Wagga - A History* by Sherry Morris; *The Street Names of Wagga Wagga* by William R. Ellis. Compiled by Jillian Kohlhagen.



Mayor Ivan J Jack [RW1574/178/659].



The unveiling of Ivan Jack Drive in 1962 [RW1574/178/659].

what you need to know

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