

Rava and Company, corner of Baylis and Thompson streets, c.1960 (Tom Lennon Collection RW1574).

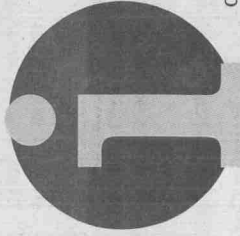
Business as Usual

what you need to know

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at the archives
Wayne Doubleday



In September 1939, Mr Menzies, the Prime Minister of Australia, appealed to business men to adopt the working rule of "Business as Usual" during the crisis that Australia faced with the outbreak of World War II. To assist the purchasing public of Wagga to support the local businesses, Mr Madden and the staff of *The Daily Advertiser* compiled the article, "Who's Who in Wagga" with the hope that this would add to "Wagga's solidarity" and that customers would loyally support the national slogan "Business as Usual". The following Baylis Street businesses were listed in *The Daily Advertiser* on March 24, 1942. These are just a few of the businesses that were operating in Wagga in the 1940s and we shall aim to focus on more of them in the following months.

Anderson Bros - plumbers and electricians of 191 Baylis Street. Mr Anderson and Mr Lamont established this business in 1885 and their partnership continued until Mr Lamont retired in 1907.

In 1919, the son of the original partner, J Anderson, joined the firm and they traded as Anderson Bros. They were considered experts in the field of sewerage plumbing as well as being hot water engineers and installers of gas and electric systems. Their work entailed some of the largest plumbing jobs in the Riverina. Furniture manufacturer DG Rienits operated on the policy "Better Furniture at Lower Prices" and his workshop and showrooms were situated at 30 Baylis Street.

Mr Rienits was a first-class craftsman who opened his business in Wagga in the early 1930s. He made luxury highly polished dining room and bedroom furniture and had the reputation of styling furniture to personal preference and

special requirements, which was built with the intention of lasting a lifetime.

Great Southern Motors - Ford dealers, was situated at 241 to 247 Baylis Street.

The principals, Mr HI Condon and Mr HB Taylor, had been the Ford dealers since 1923. They held the agency for the distribution of Ford cars, trucks and utilities, and were also the official service engineers for the district.

With "up to date" equipment, their engineers were able to satisfy their customers with reliable repairs as well as specialising in electrical and battery services, welding, body repairs and trimming.

There was not an engineering job that was too difficult for them.

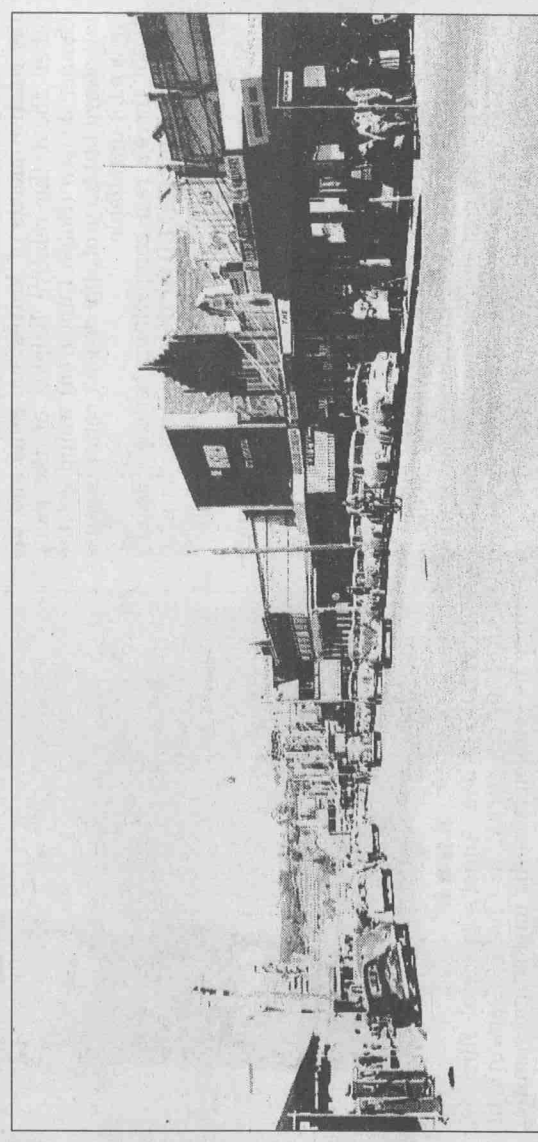
Nesbitts Limited, south side furniture warehouse was situated at 94 Baylis Street.

The principal was Mr Neville Nesbitt, the latest in a long line of Nesbitts.

Mr David Nesbitt was a general dealer in Wagga in the 1870s who was followed into business by his son George.

Robert George Nesbitt, the grandson of David Nesbitt, opened his furniture store in 1910.

In 1941, the showrooms had the latest in modern furniture and furnishings and Mr



Baylis Street, looking south from Morrow Street; Great Southern Motors on left, c.1960 (Tom Lennon Collection RW1574).

Neville Nesbitt specialised in modern trends. Well known all over the Riverina their trading slogan was "When you think of furniture, think Nesbitts, Wagga".

M Rava and Company, refrigeration engineers, machinery agents, produce merchants, electrical and radio sales and service, was under the management of Mr Mick Rava.

The firm supplied refrigeration to both commercial enterprises and households. Radios and electrical equipment featured strongly in their business; their policy being to give complete satisfaction.

Their machinery section was to supply and give service to the man on the land. Although a relatively new enterprise in 1941, it rightly deserved inclusion in the list.

The CSU Regional Archives holds very few images of central Wagga in the 1940s and it would be appreciated if anyone who has images of streets and businesses could contact us and allow us to scan the photographs with the original being returned immediately.

References: *Sydney Morning Herald*, September 8, 1939;

The Daily Advertiser, March 24, 1941

Compiled by June Dietrich