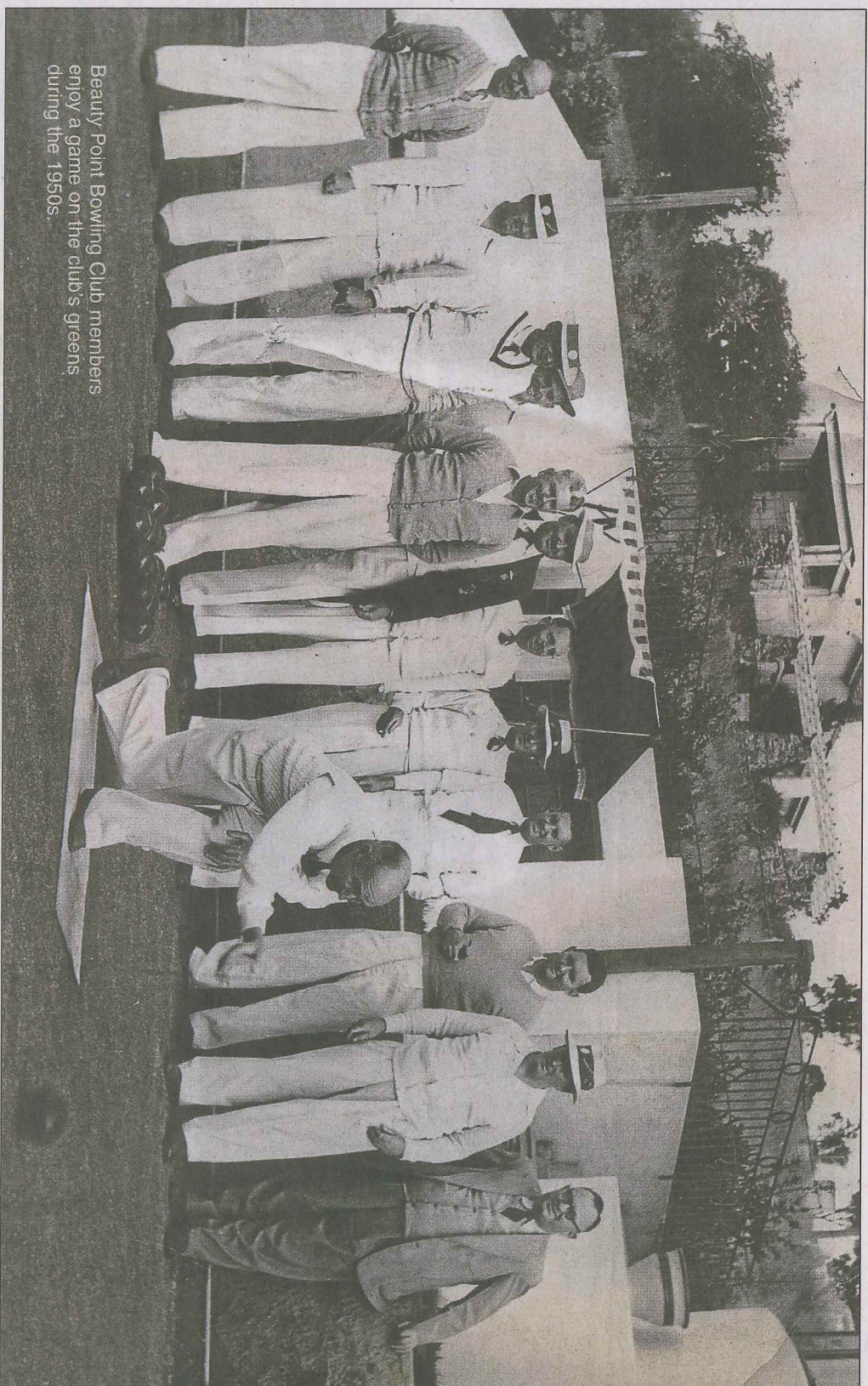


WEEKEND READING

# At the Archives



BY WAYNE DOUBLEDAY

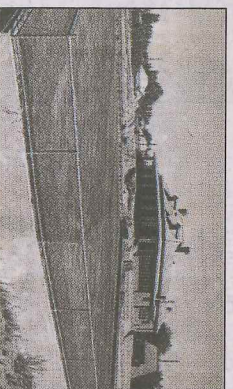


Beauty Point Bowling Club members enjoy a game on the club's greens during the 1950s.

## Bowls booms in '50s

THE popularity of lawn bowls increased dramatically in the 1950s, with several new clubs being established in Wagga during that time. The Wagga Ladies' Bowling Club, which was formed in 1947, was reformed as the Wagga Women's Bowling Club at a meeting held at the council chambers on November 3, 1952. A committee was formed, with Mrs Ethel Gissing elected inaugural president. Other office bearers were vice-presidents Olive Norman and Doreen Erskine, secretary Alice Burns and treasurer Elizabeth Gallasch.

Initially, the ladies were permitted to use the greens at the Wagga and South Wagga Men's clubs while money was raised for the construction of facilities at Duke of Kent Park. The city council agreed to build a fence around the site and to provide fill to raise the height of the land above flood level. Two buildings, purchased from the RAAF Base at Forest Hill for £325, were relocated to the bowling green site in 1954. The official opening of the



The newly established RSL Club greens in 1957. "Goonigul", the impressive building behind the greens, was the residence of Wagga's first magistrate, Henry Baylis and was used as the foundation of the new club.

greens and clubhouse was held on May 7, 1955 although the greens were not ready for play until September of that year.

The Wagga Commercial Bowls Club was established in 1953 on a site adjacent to the Commercial Club in Gurwood Street. The first tournament, held on Saturday, March 7, 1953, was won by Cec Buckman on a count back from Les Barrand, Fred Browne and George Walker. The clubhouse was complet-

ed by March the following year and a second green established in 1960.

The RSL Bowling Club was formed at a meeting held at the then RSL Club in Baylis Street on March 11, 1957. Originally there were no greens available, so members were divided into two groups of about 30 members each to temporarily affiliate with the Wagga City and South Wagga clubs. Bowling greens were eventually established at the corner of Dobbs and Kinraid streets and officially opened on August 30, 1958.

The Riverina Australian Football Club Bowling Club commenced on Wednesday, September 12, 1973 when 20 interested people attended a special meeting at the club. Many hundreds of hours of voluntary labour culminated in the opening of the first green on Sunday, April 4, 1976 with Bert Schmidt having the honour of rolling the first bowl. A second green was added in December 1985.

Interestingly, there were a number of private greens in existence in

Wagga at various times. In 1929 Harry Lampe had a single rink bowling green, complete with lighting, constructed at his Crampton Street residence.

Lampe, reportedly the first Wagga local to play in the VFL, played 135 games for South Melbourne between 1899 and 1907 and was the club's leading goalkicker in 1900 and 1901.

Probably the last place that you would expect to find a bowling green in Wagga would be on the steep slopes of Beauty Point. This was, however, the case during the 1950s when a Mr Fitzgerald built a bowling green at his residence at 11 Beauty Point Avenue. The Beauty Point Bowling Club was opened to the public in 1952 and included a clubhouse located in a large room underneath the house.

Compiled by Paul O'Donnell  
References: *The Daily Advertiser* 1/9/1958, 6/4/1973, 13/12/1984, 4/1/1997, 14/11/1998; CSU Regional Archives RW1574/132, and RW2112/1/1.

### INFO

The CSU Regional Archives is extending its opening hours to include the first Saturday of the month. This initiative has been put in place to cater for those researchers who are unable to visit the archives on weekdays during normal business hours. The next Saturday opening will be on March 1 from 10am to 3pm.

The CSU Regional Archives are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Located in the Blakemore Building on South Campus of the university, access can be gained via College Avenue or Hely Avenue.

Members of the public are welcome to visit the search room, where professional archival staff can assist with inquiries. For those people unable to visit the archives in person, staff can provide a research service for straight-forward inquiries for a fee of \$55 per hour including copying and postage.

For further information, phone 6925 3666, email [archive@csu.edu.au](mailto:archive@csu.edu.au), or visit our website at [www.csu.edu.au/research/archives](http://www.csu.edu.au/research/archives) for a full listing of holdings and more detailed information.

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