NEWSPAPERS
the record keepers of history

What you should know

- The CSU Regional Archives are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Located in the Blakemore Building at the 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 straightforward inquiries for a fee of $55 per hour, including copying and postage.
- For further information, phone 6925 3666, email *archive@csu.edu.au* or visit the website at *www.csu.edu.au/research/archives* for a full listing of holdings and more detailed information.

at the **archives**

Wayne Doubleday

Newspapers are one of the most useful resources for conducting research and are used heavily within archives and libraries.

Much like current news editions, which keeps the populace informed of the latest trends, events and weather conditions, historical newspapers can reveal how things were in the past.

Newspapers provide a daily and detailed record of local and international happenings, which makes for an amazing source of historical information.

Often the only existing record of an event or place is the account of it reported in the local newspaper.

The type of information that is able to be gleaned from newspapers is endless.

Typically found in newspapers are such things as advertisements for goods and services, birth, death and marriage notices, inquest reports, sporting results, community and world events, disasters and social standings.

The value of some of these is more obvious than others, particularly for family historians.

For instance obituaries can be very detailed, listing descendants and providing a summary of the person's life including where they may have grown up, their profession and any social interests.

What seems to strike the most interest is the evidence of "change" over the years.

For instance the language and writing styles have changed dramatically, as have the products that were being advertised such as "miracle elixirs" and early kitchen appliances.

Probably the most staggering changes are the prices for everyday items still in use today.

It is also interesting to look at what news items were given prime coverage and how much content was local, national or international.

When the *Wagga Advertiser* started in the late 1800s there was a significant proportion of the paper dedicated to international and metropolitan news, just like today.

You could say that newspapers have long been a major influence on the public's world view, which might explain mainstream attitudes during particular periods of history.

Of course like anything, a certain amount of evaluation is needed when using newspapers for research.

There will be political or social bias, inaccuracies with spelling and details, and also the timing of events may be out of sync, particularly in relation to the wars and overseas news.

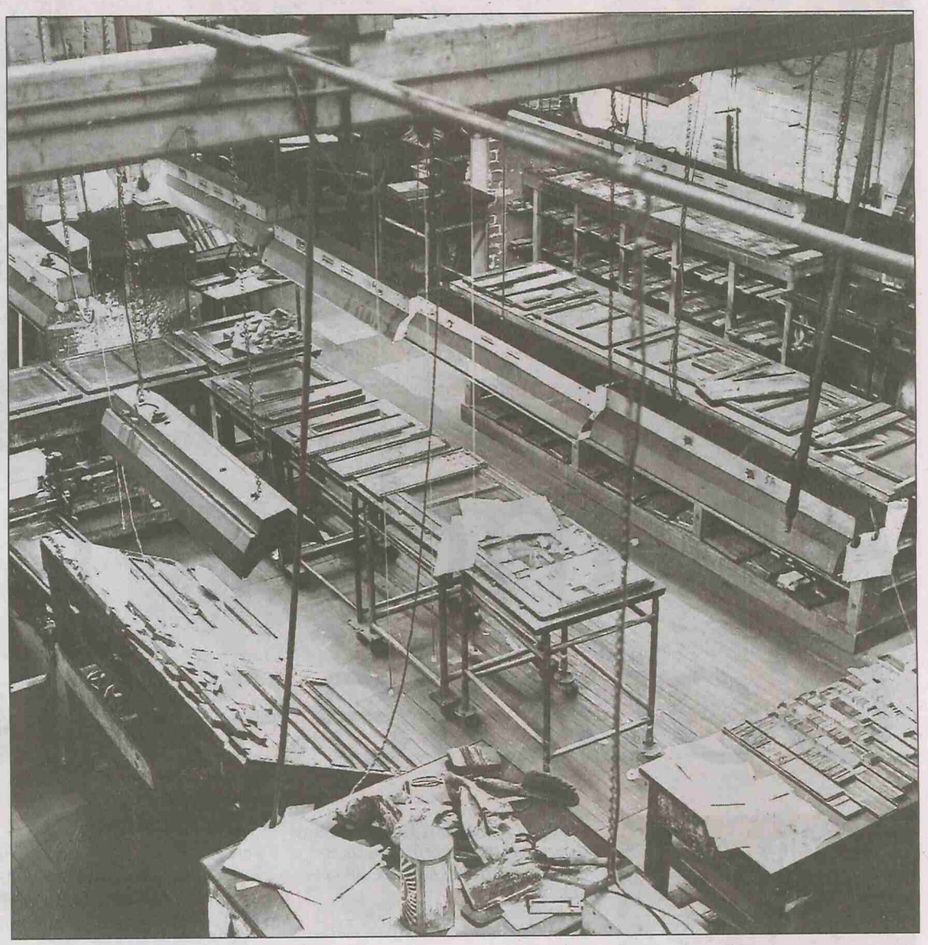
If you have ever wondered about what was happening in the community while your ancestors were alive, or have an interest in a particular date, place or event, you might consider using historic newspapers as a terrific source to a wealth of information.

Newspapers on microfilm

THE archives department has recently acquired a substantial collection of newspapers on microfilm.

The CSU Wagga Campus Library has generously transferred many of its newspaper holdings to the archives, with the hope that they will now be more accessible to the public.

The majority of the publications are of regional significance, such as the *Tumut and Adelong Times*, *The Pastoral Review* and *The Border Post*.



The Daily Advertiser's **compositors room from the 1960s as photographed by newspaper staff member Tom Lennon. A compositor is a person who arranges the text and pictures of newspapers before it is printed, a task which is now done on computers.**

A newsagency entrance showing the prices of some newspapers.

It was also able to secure a number of very early Sydney and Melbourne papers including, *The Sydney Gazette* (1803-1842), *The Town and Country Journal*, *Port Phillip Gazette* and *Port Phillip Patriot*.

The CSU Wagga Campus Library has retained their major holdings of *The Daily Advertiser*, and the metropolitan dailies such as *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *Telegraph* and *The Age*.

A full listing of the archives newspaper holdings is available online or within the archives search room.

Compiled by Lauren Carroll