Christmas closure

THE Charles Sturt University Regional Archives will be closed for a short time over the Christmas and New Year period.

We will be closed from 12.30pm on Thursday, December 24, 2009, and re-open on Monday, January 4, 2010.

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.

Bolton Park's history

at the archives
Wayne Doubleday

Bounded by Edward, Tarcutta, Morgan and Fitzhardinge streets, Bolton Park's situation is a familiar sight that landmarks one of the entrances to Wagga's CBD.

The site was dedicated as a reserve for public recreation on April 12, 1889. The securing of the park from the Crown for the citizens of Wagga can be largely credited to Mr Constantine Francis Bolton.

Constantine Francis Bolton

CF Bolton was born at Abbey Green near Singleton NSW on March 30, 1840. At the age of 17 he joined the staff of PF Adams, the district surveyor for the area from Goulburn to Albury (PF Adams later became the surveyor-general of NSW).

In 1858, Bolton assisted Adams in surveying "Newtown" of Wagga, which is the area south of the Wollundry Lagoon.

The land north of the lagoon was surveyed by Mr Thomas Townsend under the guidance of Sir Thomas Mitchell, surveyor-general, in the late 1840s.

Bolton was heavily involved in the development of Wagga, not only as the surveyor at Wagga (and later district surveyor) but also as a representative on many local committees.

He died on March 21, 1923 at the age of 83, and was buried in the Anglican portion of the Wagga Cemetery.

The Park

BOLTON Park had a reputation of being a "rough" version of the likes of the Town Hall Gardens and Newtown Park (Bird Park). Anecdotally, Bolton Park was referred to as the "Black Swamp".

An article in *The Daily Advertiser*, dated October 10, 1938, titled "Bolton Park Reminiscences of an Old Resident", described the park as "...a veritable swamp – a glue-pot of black soil".

In the July of 1890, the work of laying out Bolton Park began under the direction of Mr George Sheppard, Borough surveyor.

The park was laid out in walks, with avenues of trees. Some 2,500 shrubs and trees were planted, footpaths around the park were placed, and a bordering fence erected to keep out the goats.

The grounds had long been used for cricket matches, whether it be a casual game between schoolboys, or club cricket.

Besides the cricket however, the park had been tagged as a sort of "no-man's-land", and so in 1907 a petition signed by residents of Newtown was presented to the council for improvements.

The petition particularly stated a desire for portions of the park to be allotted for tennis and football grounds.

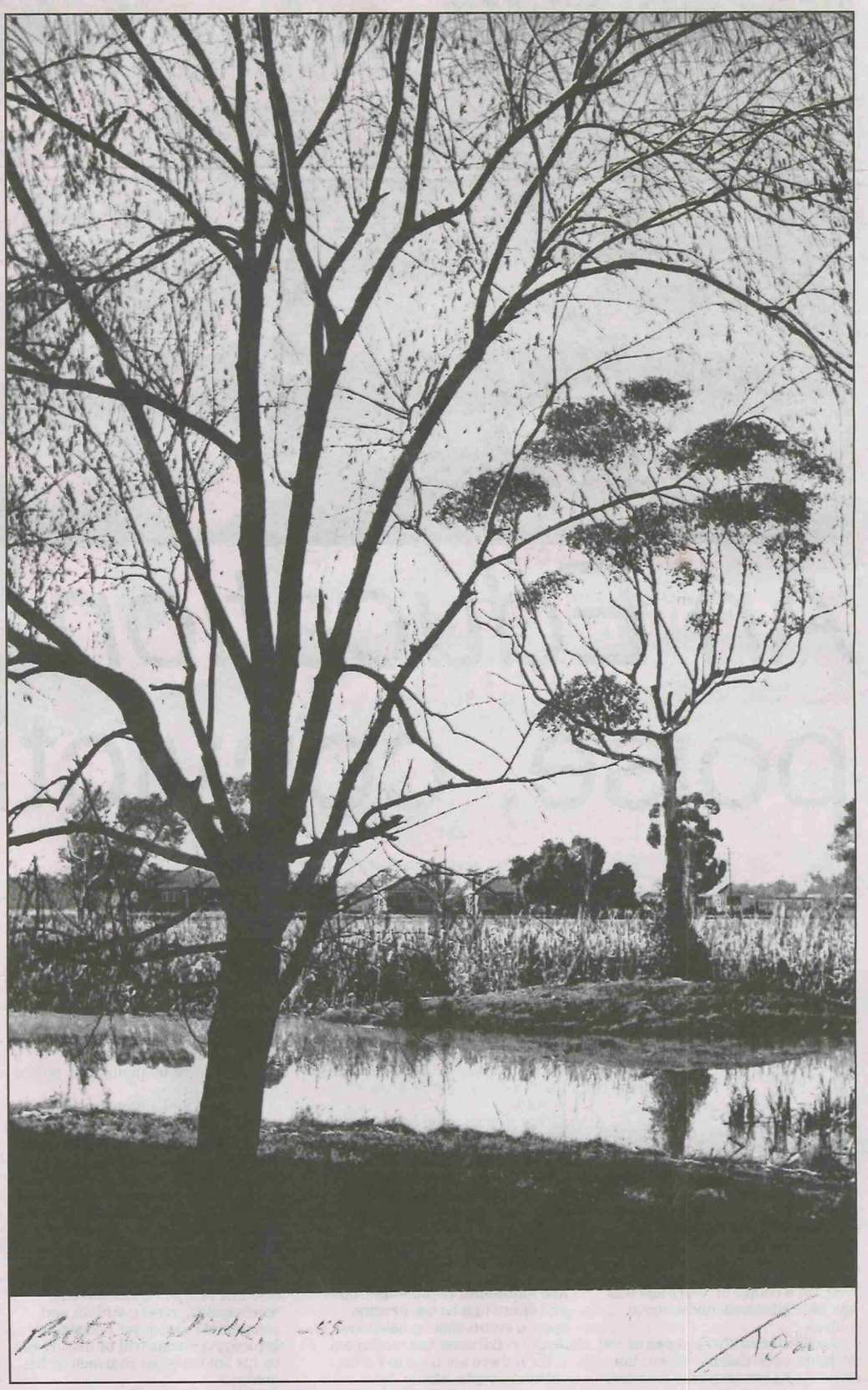

Image: Tom Lennon RW1574/54/509

Sport and Recreation

BY THE 1920s, the vision for Bolton Park to be a centre for sporting pursuit was beginning to gather momentum.

The cricket grounds were transformed with the establishment of four pitches and a turf wicket.

In March 1929, the tennis courts at Bolton Park were officially opened and became the new home for the Wagga Lawn Tennis Club.

A year later, the bowling greens were established on the portion of Bolton Park closest to Fitzhardinge Street.

In November 1953, the Wagga City Baths were officially opened and, in the 1970s Bolton Park was converted into a major sporting and recreation complex including an indoor stadium.

Following the 1970s up to the present day, Bolton Park has seen various improvements and additions to its sporting facilities.

For instance the Oasis Aquatic Centre which replaced the Wagga Baths, the skate park, and the removal of the netball courts adjacent to the indoor stadium.

While it could be said that Bolton Park was sluggish at finding its usefulness within the Wagga community, the park ultimately found a sure purpose in providing Wagga citizens with a versatile sporting venue.

Compiled By Lauren Carroll

References: *Wagga Wagga, A History* Sherry Morris, *The Progress of Wagga Wagga and District, Under the Camera Wagga Wagga*, Trade Centre of Southern NSW, DA 22-23/3/1923, DA 20/7/1907, DA10/10/1938, WWE 26/7/1890, WWE 5/7/1890