

**What you should know**

■ The CSU Regional Archives is 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 enquiries. For those people unable to visit the archives in person, staff can provide a research service for straightforward enquiries for a fee of \$55 per hour, including copying and postage.

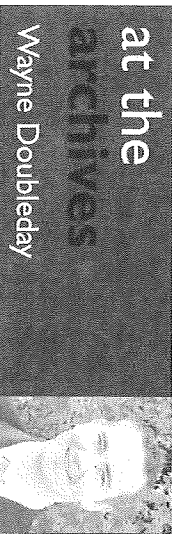
■ For further information, phone 6925 3666, email [archive@csu.edu.au](mailto:archive@csu.edu.au) or visit the website at [www.csu.edu.au/research/archives](http://www.csu.edu.au/research/archives) for a full listing of holdings and more information.



The opening of Wagga's first baths proved a boon for the city.

# Swimming idea

## The opening of the Wagga City Baths



at the archives  
Wayne Doubleday

It was a long-awaited achievement for Wagga to have its own public swimming pool. To celebrate, an official opening of the Wagga City Baths was held on Saturday, November 28, 1953.

To coincide with the occasion, the Wagga Amateur Swimming and Life Saving Club hosted a grand opening swimming carnival, which featured Australia's champion swimmers and divers, an exhibition water polo match, and an old-fashioned swimsuit burlesque parade.

A large crowd of 3500 people gathered to the baths for the official opening; the gate-takings for the day amounted to £248. Among the star swimmers and special guests were Jon Henricks, Noel Ryan and Sir Frank Beaurepaire.

The day was the culmination of a great amount of hard work, planning and above all, patience.

Initial council planning of the project began in 1946, with the decision made on Bolton Park as the site for the pool over other council grounds such as Collins Park and the Memorial Gardens. Mr Stephen J O'Halloran was appointed the consulting architect for the venture and a Swimming Baths Committee was formed.

As time went on, the plan emerged into an elaborate swimming complex fitted with modern amenities, then considered of international standard.

The baths within an area of 4.5 acres, contained an Olympic standard pool, diving pool (10m, 5m, 2x3m, and 2x1m boards), children's wading pool, kiosk, administration block, dressing rooms, lockers, playground, showers and toilets, a first-aid room and electric turnstiles.

The cost of establishing the Wagga City Baths was £140,000.



### Appeal for Assistance

WE ARE currently encouraging the public to come into the archives and help identify the people and places captured by Tom Lennon and his camera. Think of the photographs you and your family have taken over

the years and how many of those are currently sitting in albums or in boxes still unlabelled. We have the same situation here at the archives except there are 80,000 unidentified images in our collection. If you have some spare time and were around Wagga in the 1950s and '60s, please come in and lend a hand.

During the process of developing the baths, council was faced with a number of frustrating circumstances, none more trying than the difficulty in acquiring materials for the project.

It seems that building materials were in such short supply after the war that priority was given to other areas of industry such as housing.

Completing the baths and having it ready for public use was a triumph that brought great satisfaction to all involved. After seven years in the making, many people would have wondered if the project would ever come to fruition. After a month of operating, there were over

50,000 visitors to the baths. General admission was two shilling for adults and six pence for children.

The baths were first managed by Mr H Clarke and were open seven days a week from October through to March.

■ Sources: Wagga Wagga City Council Minute Books, 1946-1953; *The Daily Advertiser*, October

Opening of the Wagga Wagga City Baths (RW446); Photographs (RW1574/104, RW1574/287/119, RW1574/287/1121, RW1574/288/1125, RW1574/288/1126).  
■ Compiled by Lauren Carroll