

A scenic photograph of a park. In the foreground, a pond is filled with water, where several white swans and smaller ducks are swimming. A large, leafy weeping willow tree dominates the left side of the frame, its branches hanging over the water. To the right of the pond, a paved path runs along the edge. A young boy in a red shirt and a girl in a purple shirt are sitting on the path, looking towards the water. In the background, two more people are walking on the path. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

Wodonga City

A Jubilee History

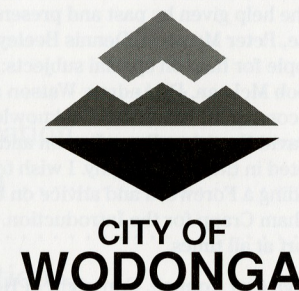
by Howard Jones



Wodonga people old and new: Miss Catherine Ronan, born 1901, revisits St Augustine's Parish School in 1989. She was a pupil there early in the century. Miss Ronan taught at Albury Public School 1925-65.

Wodonga City : A Jubilee History

by Howard C. Jones



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to mark the 25th anniversary of gaining city status.

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Setting the scene

Wodonga is an Aboriginal name signifying bulrushes. Aboriginal people lived in this area for thousands of years. The Murray River had a spiritual significance for them as well as being the source of an abundance of fish and other wildlife. One of their names for the river, Killara, is preserved in a place name in Wodonga today. The area around the river was alive with kangaroo, possum, emu and other birds.

Before white settlement, the Dhudhuroa people inhabited the Wodonga area, while to the west were the Kwat Kwat people, part of the Pangerang. Moving with the seasons, the Aborigines lived under gunyahs, using boughs and bark sheets. They had a rich cultural life with gatherings, corroborees and initiation ceremonies and some of their rock art work survives to this day. Across the Murray there were two important meeting places, Bungambrawatha and Mungabareena, in what in the 1820s was Wiradjuri country. Several

canoe trees may be seen on the river banks to this day. The most enduring features left by the Aborigines are, however, the placenames: Wodonga, Baranduda, Kiewa, Barnawartha, Bandiana, Bonegilla.

Aboriginal people were decimated in the area within 20 years of white settlement. Some lived at the Tangambalanga reserve in 1862 to 1873 until forcibly removed. Hume and Hovell, travelling south, had crossed the Murray in November 1824 at a spot now under Lake Hume, below the Hume Weir village. They crossed the Mitta Mitta and proceeded across the Bonegilla district. In 1835, Charles Ebdon's stockman, William Wyse, opened up the first station on the Murray at Mungabareena, and soon crossed the river and established an outstation at Bonegilla. In 1836, Paul and Charles Huon, sons of a French couple, arrived to establish the Wodonga station. The Huons' Irish brother-in-law, Robert Brown, opened Albury's first store near the Hovell Tree in 1836. A police camp was established at Bungambrawatha in 1838 to protect travellers and settlers such as the Huons from Aborigines, escaped convicts and other criminals.

The Huons' original Wodonga homestead was near the site of Cambourne, on a knoll overlooking Wodonga Creek, though later the Huons built a new home, De Kerilleau. (Mungabareena had been gazetted in the name of another brother-in-law of the Huons, William Mitchell, in 1837 but he died before he could take it up. His widow, Elizabeth Mitchell, nee Huon, took sent her teenage son, Thomas, to take charge of Mungabareena until she and the other children came up from Bungonia).

Wodonga township started near the Huons' homestead because this was where the road between Albury and Beechworth ran, following the high ground between Jack-in-the-Box Creek and a lagoon where Belvoir Lake and Sumsion Gardens now lie. Wodonga was first surveyed in 1852, the year of the first Beechworth gold rush. A police station opened in 1854 and a timber bridge built across the Wodonga Creek about 1855. A telegraph line from Melbourne reached Wodonga in 1858 and was extended to Albury. The first Union Bridge and a new causeway across the flats were

opened in 1861. By 1857, Wodonga had 200 people, inns, a school, a court house, a steam saw mill, stores, butcher, a customs officer and a stock inspector. Until 1869, Wodonga was known as Belvoir township.

The completion of the North Eastern Railway to Wodonga in 1873 influenced the town's shape. It shifted the commercial focus from the Albury end of Sydney Rd (High St) to near the railway. Banks and the post office were built at the South St intersection, and the Terminus Hotel and Carriers Arms were built nearby. A Customs house and shops followed and the Lutheran Church was built in Havelock St in 1875. This trend was confirmed in the 1890s when the Shire Hall was built at the Elgin St corner, and a police station built just north of the railway in 1902. Schlink's store was built where Coles now stands. It was not envisaged that the town would extend further south than Lawrence St.

The railway was extended to Albury in 1883 and Wodonga became an important stock-selling centre, superseding Beechworth. A new railway to Tallangatta in 1891 strengthened Wodonga's role as a regional centre.

Wodonga Shire was created in 1876 when the Colonial Government agreed to ratepayers' petitions to sever their part of the Yackandandah Shire and form a new municipality. Ratepayers complained grievances were not being addressed. In particular, they resented Yackandandah Shire taking half the tolls collected on the Union Bridge, while not looking after the causeway and bridges to Albury, which eventually were washed away by floods. The original shire boundary was set along the Middle Creek, but in 1911 the Baranduda area as far as the Yackandandah Creek, Kiewa River and Boundary Rd was transferred to Wodonga. The first councillors in 1876 were John Woodland, Rowan Lockhead, George Street, James Bambrick, Thomas Reidy and Owen Maher.

Wodonga lost 44 soldiers and sailors in World War I, and many others returned affected in one way or another. War veterans were among the men who arrived in their hundreds about 1920 to help build the Hume Reservoir. Veterans cleared what became Woodland Grove, where the War Memorial and the Water Tower were built in



Multi-cultural Wodonga in the 1920s: A Sikh hawker in High St, Wodonga.

1924. In 1921, Wodonga shire's population was only 2553. Soon the population grew, with hundreds of dam workers and their families living in Wodonga or at Mitta Junction village, which was in the shire. In 1933, with the project coming to an end, the population was 3250. Dairying provided many district farmers with a half-monthly cheque throughout the depression, a factor that helped traders. Prof Bruce Pennay quotes a Wodonga bank manager in 1932 as saying that dairying had softened the effects of the depression in the town.

In 1935, the council completed municipal saleyards, strengthening the town's economic base and incidentally bringing Dunstan's timberyard to the town. The railways were big employers, but a shift to road transport also made Wodonga a trucking centre. In 1938, about 70 Wodonga families depended on truck facilities associated with stock movements. The number of houses had risen to 872. An electoral roll listed 15 butchers, 13 grocers or grocery assistants, 10 baking or carrying bread, 10 storekeepers and five shop assistants.

World War II had a bigger impact on Wodonga than most country towns because in 1940 one of Australia's largest inland military camp was established at Bonegilla, followed by Hume Camp at Wirlinga and the Bandiana workshops and storage areas. The Commonwealth resumed 1215ha for military purposes. The money the Army brought into the two towns through purchasing supplies and in soldiers' spending money was a bonanza at a time of widespread austerity. Large coal sidings were created to service the military and other rail traffic passing through Wodonga as a result of shipping becoming unsafe in wartime.

After the war, Wodonga's character took yet another new turn, and the Hume Highway became more important. About 600 men remained in the Army camps, and Wodonga's male population rose from 1655 in 1933 to 2380 in 1947. Only 18 per cent of Wodonga breadwinners were now engaged in primary production, compared to a third pre-war, though dairying had increased.

In 1947, the railways in Wodonga employed 157 men and road transport 68. Before the war, 80 per cent of all Australian freight was carried by rail, most of the rest by coastal shipping and very little by

road. By 1952, 76.6 per cent travelled by road, and with the Hume Highway passing through, Wodonga certainly saw a difference. A High Court ruling of 1955 invalidating State transport laws that had empowered the States to tax road hauliers led at once to a substantial increase in the volume of interstate goods by road, and a consequent reduction in rail traffic. The railways, of course still handled vast amounts of coal and stock. Only 116 Wodonga men were employed in manufacturing in 1947, with Holdenson and Neilson's butter and cheese factories on the causeway being a significant employer. The Kiewa hydro-electric scheme directly benefited Wodonga. Rocla opened in Wodonga in 1947 to construct concrete pipes for the scheme.

There was a post-war building boom. The number of homes rose to 800 between 1945 and 1949, according to Pennay, though only 38 were housing commission homes, compared to Wangaratta's 185. Some 55 per cent of Wodonga homes were owner-occupied in 1947, slightly higher than Albury's 51 per cent. (In 1991, about 59 per cent of Wodonga's 9239 homes were owner-occupied). Average Wodonga rents in 1947 were 19 shillings and sixpence.

Wodonga's character changed dramatically when the Bonegilla migrant camp opened in December 1947. The first 840 migrants were from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, soon be joined by Poles, Ukrainians, Yugoslavs and displaced persons from other former occupied countries of central Europe. At first, the migrants occupied Army huts or tents in spartan conditions, but later new accommodation blocks were built. In 1950, more than 8000 people lived there, some staying only a few days and others several months. Eventually, the camp took migrants from western and southern Europe and in all is believed to have handled some 320,000 migrants. Although migrants dispersed all over Australia, hundreds settled in Wodonga. Today they and their families form a significant part of the city's population. Bonegilla camp closed in 1971. Thousands of its former occupants attended a reunion there in December 1987, and the 50th anniversary was celebrated in 1997.

Population growth was steady in the 1950s and early 1960s. The RAEME Training Centre relocation to Bandiana in 1953 reversed the



Lawrence St from the water tower in the 1930s when it was the edge of the town.



The Shire Chambers built in 1957 became the Rural City Council Chambers in 1973.

decline of the Army presence. Three milestones occurred in 1954: the opening of Wodonga District Hospital, the Wodonga High School and the Bradford Kendall foundry. The RAAOC School relocated to Bandiana in 1960. Between 1947 and 1966, the township took on another 5000 people, increasing its size to 9200, of whom 2755 were children under 15 years old. By 1966, almost 40 per cent of Wodonga's population were post-war migrants and their families.

Until well into the 1960s, Albury City Council regarded Wodonga as virtually a suburb that happened to be across the State boundary. Albury took Lavington from Hume Shire in January 1962, a move regarded as essential for the city's future growth. A group of Albury businessmen formed the Albury Regional Promotion Council in 1963 but it did not include Wodonga.

Decentralisation policies began in earnest in Victoria and NSW in 1965 and about that time a group of local people formed an Albury-Wodonga Complex Committee. For Wodonga, an important step was the appointment of Bill Page as shire engineer in 1965, together with the appointment of a development committee.

In 1967, three more milestones occurred: Uncle Ben's of Australia established itself in Wodonga, the Donga Meats abattoir was opened and a Victorian decentralisation report identified "Wodonga-Albury" as one of five centres that should receive federal and State help, the others being Ballarat, Bendigo, Portland and part of the Latrobe Valley. The Premier, Dick Hamer, said Wodonga-Albury has been chosen because of its strategic position on the main transport links between Australia's two greatest concentrated markets, Melbourne and Sydney, and also because of its situation in the Murray Valley, with ample water supply, important primary production in the surrounding districts, and the excellent recreational opportunities of the Murray, Lake Hume and the snowfields.

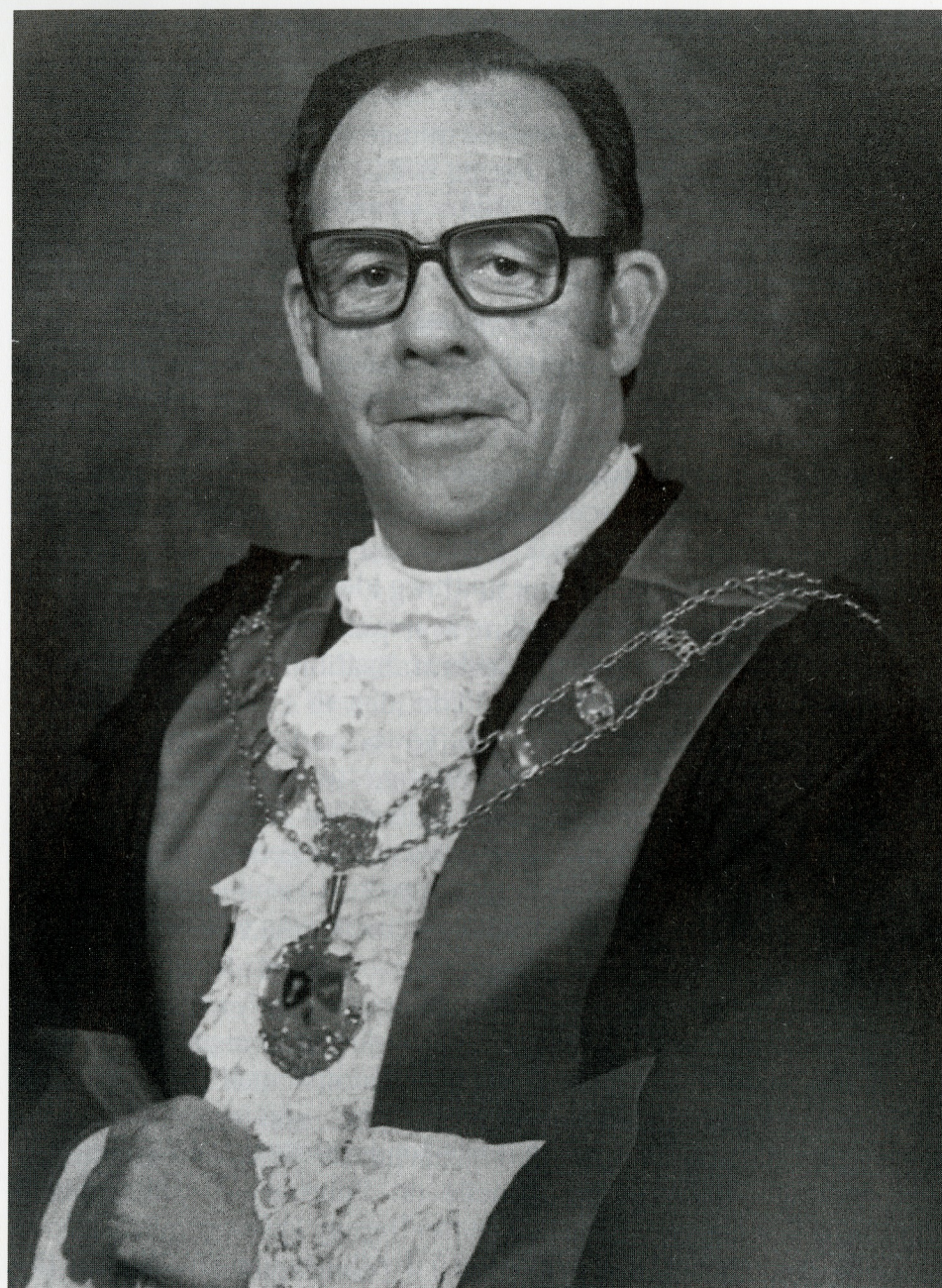
Although Victoria asked NSW for interstate co-operation, joint planning did not start until 1971. On November 3, 1967, a Melbourne University lecturer in town and regional planning, John Bayly, urged federal-State "benevolent intervention" for the Albury-Wodonga

area. His audience, the Victorian League for Balanced Development, called for urgent steps to be taken to develop a large urban area with the help of federal and State grants, and concessions to industry. Addressing Wodonga Shire's annual dinner in 1968, Bayly said: "The most exciting thing about Wodonga is that it is part of Wodonga-Albury, which straddles the State boundaries. It would be a wonderful opportunity for the Federal Government to make an experiment without falling into the usual trap of having to do something for Victoria without helping NSW and vice versa."

In 1968, Albury's city engineer, Jack Sarvaas, produced a plan for the NSW Government showing how Albury alone might accommodate 125,000 people by 2000 (he did not include Wodonga!) Other people saw the wider picture. The head of Uncle Ben's, Dr Henry Nowik, wrote a decentralisation paper calling for an Albury-Wodonga Commission. Nowik influenced the Federal Opposition Leader, Gough Whitlam, to pick up these ideas.

On August 29, 1969, Whitlam first publicly identified Albury-Wodonga as a suitable site for decentralisation by a Federal Labor Government and the two States. The idea of a twin complex had taken root. In August 1971, the Town and Country Planning Association called for Albury-Wodonga to be developed as a metropolis. On December 16, 1971, Premier Hamer pledged his Government would work to develop the two centres as one. Two weeks later, the NSW Government made a similar promise and agreed with Victoria that federal involvement was essential.

On January 5, 1972, Wodonga Shire Council decided, on the motion of Cr Bernard Cox, to support any move to obtain Commonwealth aid to develop the Albury-Wodonga complex. It urged the State Governments and Commonwealth to establish a regional development commission to plan and develop Albury-Wodonga. Cox was instrumental in having the first joint meeting of the Wodonga and Albury councils on February 1, 1972, which adopted a similar resolution. While the Deputy Prime Minister, Doug Anthony, recognised the potential of Albury and Wodonga, the McMahon Government was not keen to involve the Commonwealth and nothing was done until the Whitlam Government was elected in December 1972.



Leslie Stone, last shire president and first mayor.

Rural City status

Wodonga was the first Australian community to be officially termed a rural city. In the late 1960s, the Victorian Government had refused the shire council's request to be granted city status. Early in 1972, the shire president, Cr Les Stone, decided to try again. He first revealed the "rural city" concept in February after the council met the Local Government Minister, Alan Hunt. Stone said the council wanted to subdivide rural blocks into blocks of one to five acres, but the law restricted rural subdivision to 10 acres. Hunt liked the idea of a rural city and promised help with legal difficulties. At the same time, he urged Albury and Wodonga to establish a co-ordinating project to guide them towards a major decentralisation centre. The push for a growth centre and the quest for city status were, of course, closely linked.

Andrew Rutkowski, newly appointed shire secretary, reported in May that a 1965 Act required a Victorian city must have a minimum

10,000 population and a rate revenue of \$160,000, and must be substantially urban in character. Wodonga by then had more than 13,000 residents and a rate revenue of \$274,000 but was certainly not chiefly urban. Rutkowski argued that most of the population lived in urban surroundings. Rutkowski said city status would strengthen Wodonga's position in the Twin Cities concept, making it an equal partner to Albury. It would, he anticipated, lead to a general upgrading in services and would help attract new industry and gain prestige and recognition for existing firms. "The formation of the largest city in Victoria (in geographical area) would have excellent publicity value and will put Wodonga on the map," Rutkowski said. "In fact, the city of Wodonga already exists and the change of status would be only recognition of a fact which is already accomplished." The councillors were less enthusiastic and cautiously asked Les Stone and chief officers to see whether Wodonga could gain more Government subsidies and grants if it changed status.

Months passed, but significantly, the council in July adopted Bill Page's town plan for an urban area of 42,000, plus 8000 in the rural area, with development beyond that to be by satellite city. In November 1972, the council called a public meeting on the city issue, chaired by the Albury Mayor, Alderman Cleaver Bunton. On the motion of Jim Tuit, the meeting of 200 ratepayers asked the council to take steps to get the whole shire proclaimed a city. An amendment by Peter Street to sever the rural sections of the shire from the city was defeated. John Bayly, local government lecturer James Waters and the Wangaratta city engineer, R. J. Macklin all spoke in favour of city status. On December 20, the council appointed a committee to petition the Governor-in-Council.

Les Stone's son, Shane, recalls that Cr John Schubert conceived the notion of proposing not just a city, but a rural city. "I clearly recall by late father giving John the credit for the idea," Mr Stone wrote in 1997. "As one of the elder statesmen of the shire, he recognised that my father, as articulate and educated as he was, would be able to carry the day with Alan Hunt, with whom he had built up a very close and personal friendship" On January 24, 1973, the council met Premier Hamer, Alan Hunt, and the Minister for

Decentralisation and Development, Murray Byrne. That meeting was called the day before Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, Hamer and the NSW Premier, Robert Askin, announced the Albury-Wodonga growth centre. The council decided to ask the Government to create a rural city as an indication to Australia that it would work to preserve the rural charm of the Wodonga area. The other issues raised that day with the Ministers are interesting: formation of the development corporation; the size of area involved; land price stabilisation; duplication of the Lincoln Causeway; freight concessions; tertiary education and elimination of the railway crossing.

Hunt granted rural city status quickly, though local government legislation did not provide specifically for such status - only city status. On March 29, the eve of the city's inauguration, the Rotary Club held a special function to celebrate the "Death of Struggle Town" and Hunt was a special guest.

About 3000 people saw the Governor of Victoria, Sir Rohan Delacombe, officially proclaim the Rural City of Wodonga at an open-air ceremony in Hovell St after the Victoria Police Band had led a procession down High St.

Sir Rohan said: "Wodonga has transformed from a small provincial town into a modern community. But the change has not affected the rural character of the area, nor has progress brought with it any of the bad things that often come with urbanisation." Hunt presented Stone with a modified mayoral chain mayoral chain (the insignia or badge had been used previously on the shire president's chain). Sir Ronan gave a town clerk's gown to Rutowski. According to Hunt, Wodonga was the first rural city in the world. "Here you will be able to preserve the rural charm and character of your area and also reap the advantage of city status to help you develop," Hunt said. "It will widen the range of employment in your area and will bring you the opportunity for a better life."

The first meeting of the new council was held in the open air immediately after the proclamation. Stone formally moved a motion of loyalty to the Queen. The all-male council consisted of Stone, Ken Riley, Albert Terrill, John Schubert, Ken Coghill, Harold Draper, Rex

Chamberlain, John Macaulay, Cyril Collins, John Drummond, Roy Yensch and Jack Street. Rutkowski was restyled town clerk and Bill Page city engineer.

From this point, Albury-Wodonga was known as the Twin Cities. Other Victorian cities adopted the term rural, but Wodonga can still claim it was the first. Despite the urban growth, Wodonga still had more than 340 farm properties among its 10,099 rate assessments by the early 1990s, contributing only 5.2 per cent of rate income.

In 1994, the outgoing council sought to retain the name in a new authority and so the Wodonga Rural City Council was born. However, the commissioners decided in 1995 that, to give the city a fresh image, the term "rural" be dropped from usage except where there was a legal requirement.

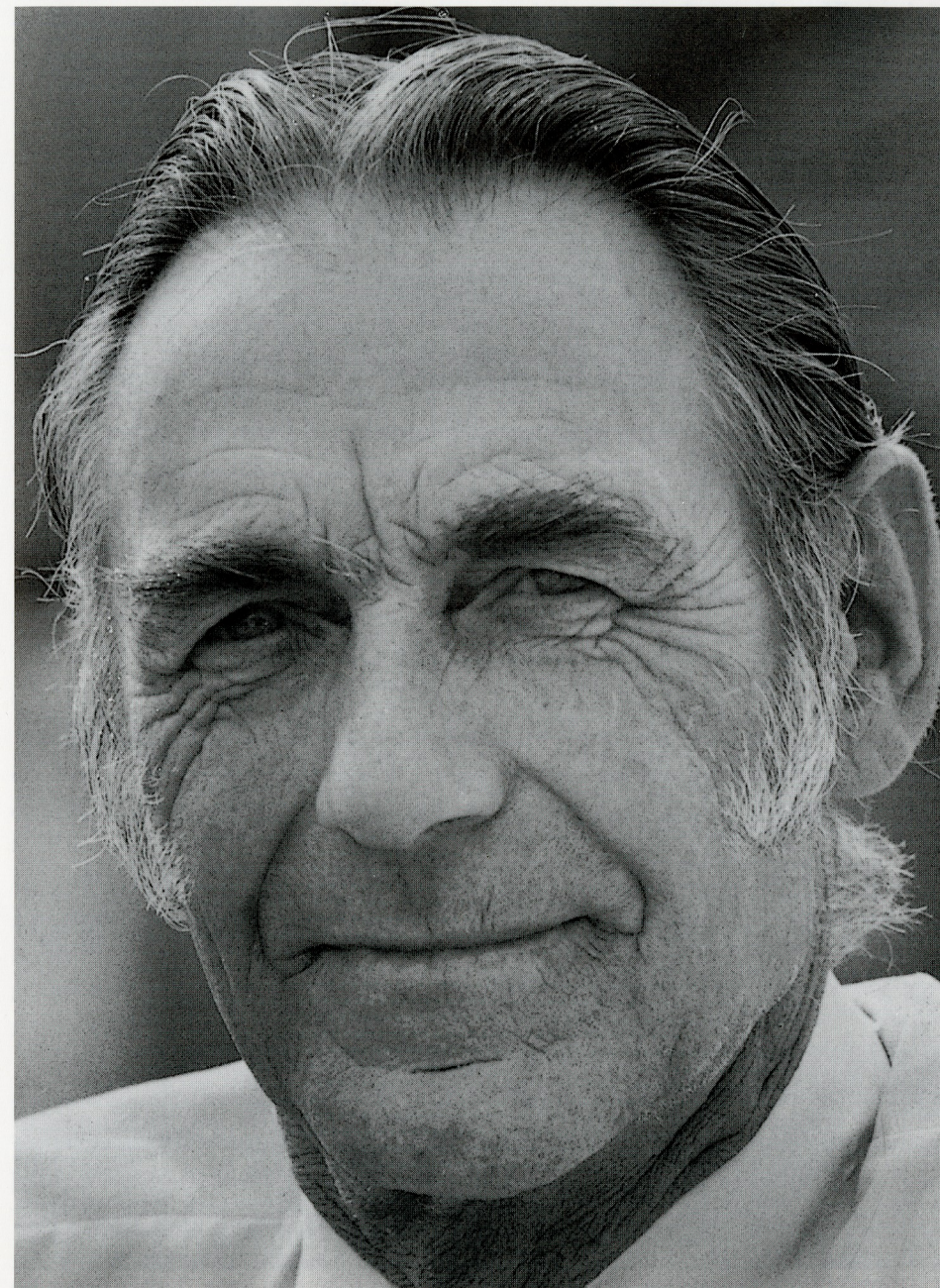
a year. In May 1973, for instance, Page reported 117 houses and 93 flats under construction by private developers, and 124 houses and 10 flats by the Housing Commission. The same month, the council decided to build a bridge on Brockley St in 1973-74, to relieve congestion on Lawrence St.

However, there was a shortage of housing and industrial land and some councillors thought the council had missed the opportunity to buy development land in the late 1960s. One of those who shared Les Stone's grand vision of a large rural city was Cr Cyril Collins, who Stone's closest friend and confidante but was unpopular with other councillors. Shane Stone recalls Collins as a driving force in helping to shape a new-found approach on the council. "He was instrumental in arguing the case for the establishment of the Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation and put his money where his mouth was by making considerable financial commitments to city and rural development."

The development corporation established by the three governments in 1973 had much more ambitious long-term aims for population growth. The full story of the corporation is yet to be told and here we examine only some direct effects on Wodonga. Eventually it bought 15,237ha in Victoria and 8841ha in NSW. After overcoming initial hostility, the corporation was responsible for much of the city's growth, both as a land developer in its own right and in a more general sense.

The new planners were first given the charter of achieving a 300,000 regional population by 2000. The Federal Budget in July 1973 included \$9 million for the growth centre. The Cities Commission opened an office in Albury in August under Nick Bayley, and the same month a taskforce under Brian Dwyer was established at Bandiana. In September, Victoria appointed Mel Read as executive officer for the Albury-Wodonga complex.

The growth centre plans were not universally welcomed. The Ovens and Murray interim development order of 1973 was a blanket order covering Victoria within a 55km radius of the Union Bridge, as a method of freezing land. Wodonga landholders were naturally worried about compulsory acquisitions. About 1000 people attended



John Schubert, who proposed that Wodonga Shire become a rural city.



Prime Minister Gough Whitlam and Premiers Robert Askin and Rupert Hamer pose before signing the National Growth Centre agreement in 1973.

a stormy meeting in Wodonga and protested to the Victorian Minister for Development, Murray Byrne. Bob Wiltshire said Wodonga had developed over the past 27 years without any Government intervention. Such protests were to no avail. The shire council first supported the Wodonga Area Land Acquisition Bill in principle in July, then in October demanded the Government withdraw it, and finally reverted to its original support.

Whitlam, Askin and Hamer signed the Albury-Wodonga Area Agreement on October 23, after the Federal Government dropped its insistence on exclusive leasehold tenure. In December, the Ministerial Council announced acquisition of the first 1900 acres in Wodonga and \$900,000 for development of the municipality. A new draft town plan for Wodonga was announced in December 1973, envisaging a High St shopping mall, a 7ha park on the saleyards site and the racecourse being relocated to West Wodonga. The plan recommended a 12ha site for a new hospital and expanded welfare services, including more senior citizens' rooms and infant welfare facilities. It suggested five additional State primary schools, a private primary school and additional three secondary schools.

Gordon Craig arrived in January 1974 to lead the corporation, and an interim board was established, meeting for the first time on January 22. Mel Read was appointed the Victorian deputy chairman and Les Stone the part-time Victorian member. (After Stone's death in 1974, Bernard Cox was appointed and after his death in 1977, Bob McLean). A consultative council of 15 appointed in April 1974 included Wodonga councillors Ken Coghill and John Drummond, and Wodonga identities David Mann, Jenny Leeman, Lou Lieberman and Archdeacon Philip Burgess.

The corporation began land acquisitions by first buying land bordering the Hume Highway for what became the Wodonga Business Park on Moorefield Park Drive and McKoy St. This was bought from Bill Richardson and Leo Mulqueeney. Many old Wodonga farming families were bought out in 1974, such as Mrs S.T. Parker's Park Hall near Parkers Rd, which the family had farmed for 80 years. The Klinge property, The Laurels, was bought in 1975 and the family moved to Queensland after farming there since 1866 when

a letter to the *Border Mail* on November 23) suggested Albury should forget about Wodonga and warned Albury it was not in the region's long-term interests to form a cross-border institute of tertiary education, because Albury would not then gain a university presence.

Metherell virtually tore up the Cathie-Cavalier agreement and was criticised in Albury-Wodonga, with Cr Pam Stone claiming he has wasted 12 years of local effort to get a cross-border college. Metherell resented Dawkins' decision to provide \$3.7 million to create 285 places in Wodonga in 1989-91, while approving little growth in Albury. The Nagle board, the Wodonga Mayor, Cr Ian Deegan, and Albury Mayor, Alderman John Roach, all told Dawkins that local people backed the cross-border idea.

Events moved faster in NSW than Victoria, with the Riverina-Murray Institute and Mitchell College, Bathurst, agreeing in December to link in a network with the University of NSW, thereby gaining university status. Naturally, Wodonga College of TAFE Council, headed by Jim Sawyer, began to think more of Wodonga's future should NSW go its own way. In February 1989, the college council urged the Victorian Government to merge the TAFE college and institute without waiting to see what Metherell did in Albury. By now, Wodonga was already assured of \$20 million in capital works funding, and the institute enrolled its first nursing school students in February. At the same time, the Murray Campus achieved 1000 enrolments for the first time.

NSW began to develop its proposal for a country university. Victoria showed no desire to be involved, though the Education Minister, Evan Walker, told Metherell they should best co-operate in Albury-Wodonga on a joint campus linked to ANU. By May, NSW had decided to form Charles Sturt University based on Wagga Wagga, Bathurst and Albury. In May, Walker endorsed a plan for a new Victorian State University combining based Deakin University and the Victoria College of Agriculture and Horticulture, and with campuses at Ballarat, Bendigo, Warrnambool and Wodonga. Deakin rejected the concept.

Charles Sturt University was established by the NSW Parliament on July 19, 1989 as Australia's 26th university, combining the Riverina-Murray Institute at Wagga Wagga and Albury with Mitchell College. In September, Walker announced the Wodonga Institute would be converted to an Albury-Wodonga University College that would seek to merge with La Trobe University. He thus abandoned the idea of merging TAFE and higher education in Wodonga, saying the two sectors would use a common site.

Wodonga College of TAFE welcomed this announcement. In November, the college and institute were well into a \$28 million capital works program in McKoy St. In December La Trobe University's governors and academic board agreed to take over the Wodonga Institute as a campus integrated into La Trobe. On August 9, La Trobe's acting vice-chancellor, Prof Elwyn Davies, signed the amalgamation agreement for the university and Noel Anthony, interim director, signed for the institute. The Mayor, Cr John Macaulay, signed for the city. The incorporation took effect on January 1, 1991.

The Governor-General, Bill Hayden, opened the TAFE and university campus on March 15, 1991. TAFE's expansion was rapid, in the range of courses offered, in student numbers and in physical resources on site and at campuses at Corryong and Mt Beauty. In 1994, TAFE student contact hours topped 1.13 million in 1994, double the figure for 1991 and more than four times that of the college's first year. In 1994, new initiatives included the advanced certificate in nursing for enrolled nurses and a full diploma in hospitality management. In 1995, TAFE leased part of Clyde Cameron College. The National Industrial Skills Centre was opened in 1997.

La Trobe's growth in Wodonga was also rapid. It always intended to have its own campus and bought 26ha west of Parkers Rd. Prof Susan Bambrick was appointed pro vice-chancellor in charge of the Albury-Wodonga campus in 1994. A master plan was developed, and Parkers Rd closed to facilitate this. The vice-chancellor, Prof Michael Osborne, laid the foundation stone of the campus on December 16, 1994, the first two major buildings being opened in

late 1995. La Trobe campus enrolled 1065 students in 1995, 555 of them first-year students, and in the graduation ceremony in March, more than 250 former students received degrees or diplomas. Prof Bambrick left the campus in late 1995 and a Wodonga resident, Tom Keating, regional director of human services, was appointed pro vice-chancellor in June 1996.

The Clyde Cameron College was built for the Trade Union Training Authority by the Federal Government in 1977 as Australia's first residential trade union college, and the first of its kind in the world. Its name honored the Minister for Labor and Immigration in the Whitlam Government. If some Wodonga councillors had had their way, it would not have been built. In July 1975, the city council decided 6-5 to ask the Federal Government to halt the plans and divert the funds to housing. Cr Rex Chamberlain said it was disgraceful that land bought by taxpayers should be used for a trade union training college, but Cr Ken Coghill said there would be less industrial unrest if shop stewards were trained properly. The council's call was received incredulously in Canberra and later that month the motion was rescinded.

The Fraser Government backed the idea and the college was opened in September 1977 at a cost of \$6.5 million and with a full-time staff of 25. ACTU president Bob Hawke watched Clyde Cameron unveil the foundation stone in 1976, but the formal opening was by the Housing Minister, Ray Groom, with Cameron and Hawke in attendance. The college was designed by a Melbourne architect, Kevin Borlan and constructed by Costain and A.B. and M.A. Chick. The unusual architecture and internal arrangements display the tradesmen's skills. The college was provided with 50 single and eight twin rooms, a cafeteria, gymnasium and indoor swimming pool.

In its first 10 years, the college hosted 100,000 unionists over 5000 courses and at its peak employed about 38. Thousands of overseas trade unionists, mostly from Asia Pacific countries, visited the college for international courses. Originally the TUTA national office and its national director, Peter Matthews, were located at the college but the office was transferred to ACTU House, Melbourne in the

1980s. The unique library was transferred in 1994 to ACTU House where TUTA and the unions had agreed to set up a specialist industrial relations library. A new era began in 1995 when Wodonga College of TAFE signed a lease on the former union library space, a large tutorial room and staff room and used the space to teach architectural drafting students. The Howard Government elected in 1996 decided to wind up TUTA. Trade union training ceased at the college on June 30, 1996 and the building offered for sale.

The Albury-Wodonga Continuing Education Centre was established in the former primary school and high school buildings in High St in 1974 by a committee chaired by Ian Smith, inspector of schools. Work started with a couple of classes held in two Wodonga schools, but in 1975 it was agreed the centre could use the former High School buildings. Steady growth followed and classes were also held in Albury. By the time the centre celebrated its 21st anniversary in 1995, there were 10,000 enrolments a year, in 250 courses. Jim Saleeba directed the centre from its inception until he retired in 1997.



Valentina Gillard, first Bonegilla migrant to be mayor.

Mayors & officers

Les Stone moved from a one-teacher school at Cornishtown, near Chiltern, to Wodonga in 1953 to take up an appointment at the Aerial St Primary School. He transferred to Pakenham in 1962 and returned in 1965 to teach at Wodonga and Bandiana schools. He was elected to the shire council in 1967, elected deputy shire president in 1970 and president in 1972, becoming mayor on attainment of city status. For many years Stone was on the Good Neighbour Council and taught English to many migrants. His elder son, Shane, believes the migrant community underpinned his entire electoral base. In 1974, he was appointed an inaugural member of the Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation board. He died of cancer in December, 1974. (Shane Stone, now Chief Minister in Darwin once stood unsuccessfully for Wodonga council. Mrs Pam Stone is noted below).

Ken Riley was elected Mayor in August 1974, after living in Wodonga 25 years and serving four years on the council. Riley, originally from Omeo, was Bandiana manager for the Australian Services Canteen Organisation and his wife, Jean, taught at Bandiana Primary School. He served two consecutive mayoral terms, and was Mayor when the Prince of Wales visited Wodonga on November 3, 1974. He left for Sale after his job retirement in 1980.

Harold Draper, who farmed Hillcrest, Castle Creek, was 49 when he was first elected Mayor in September 1976 in a secret ballot, beating Cr John Schubert.. He had been a councillor 16 years and shire president in 1967-68. He served one mayoral term in 1976-77 but in 1980 was again elected mayor, in a 6-3 vote over Cr Pam Stone. Draper retired from the council in 1988 after 28 years and later moved to Narooma. He died in a boating accident in 1997.

Rex Chamberlain, mayor for three terms from 1977, was born in Wales but was sent to Australia under the Fairbridge farm boy scheme in 1938, when he was 12. He worked on farms from 14, then joined the Army and served in the Pacific area. He served also at Bandiana and married a Wodonga woman. Chamberlain had various business interests, including real estate, and was deeply involved in the RSL and football. He was a councillor from 1971 until defeated in 1985.

John Macaulay, mayor a record four terms between 1982 and 1991, was born in Melbourne but spent farm holidays with friends on the shores of Lake Hume. At 17 he left school to take a farm at Huon, but during World War II joined the infantry and served in New Guinea. After the war, John and Monica Macaulay took a farm at Gundowring but because of Macaulay's war-related health problems, the couple semi-retired to Wodonga in 1967. Macaulay was elected to the shire council at a by-election early in 1973 with the help of Shane Stone, his campaign manager. He was defeated at the close of his final mayoral term at the 1991 elections, when his deputy, Ray Pollard, also lost his seat after nine years..

Les Boyes was brought up on a dairy farm at Willow Park. When his property was sold to the Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation for housing and parkland, Boyes went into business

and with Bill Richardson built Astra House. He also was part of a party-hire company. Boyes was elected a councillor in 1974, serving 21 years, and was the only former councillor elected to the new council in 1997. He was Mayor in 1984 and 1991. Outside the council he was a director of Kiewa Murray Water, served on the Country Fire Authority board for several years and is a director of Hume Building Society.

Pam Stone was Wodonga first mayoress, first female councillor and first female mayor. Her involvement with the council began when her husband was shire president and ended only when she retired as a councillor in 1994. She was elected in 1977 and the same year was joined by Cr Betty McLean, the second female councillor. As well as pressing with Betty McLean for more community services, Pam Stone campaigned for years for university education to be provided in Albury-Wodonga. Both women hold the OAM.

Malcolm McEachern, a businessman, was elected mayor in 1986-87 after 12 years on the council. In his year, Wodonga joined in Victoria's 150th anniversary celebrations, which also marked 150 years of white settlement in Wodonga. He also led the council when it bought the Gateway site from Murray Goulburn and was keen to develop it as a tourism site. He retired from the council in 1989.

Ian Deegan was elected Mayor for 1988-89, after the council doubled the mayoral salary to \$20,000, and made the job a virtually full-time position. Deegan had served in RAEME from the age of 17 and was posted to Bandiana in 1964. After several other moves he settled permanently in Wodonga in 1977 and was the first serving soldier to be elected a councillor, though he left the Army soon afterwards and held various business positions. He resigned from the council in June 1994.

Valentina Gillard was elected mayor in 1989, the only Bonegilla migrant to become mayor to date. A teacher at Wodonga South Primary School and mother of two sons, Gillard had been born in Germany of Ukrainian parents and first arrived at Bonegilla in 1951, though soon moved to South Australia. She was elected a councillor in 1985, in Bonegilla ward. Gillard was herself defeated in 1993 but was inaugural chairwoman of the Albury-Wodonga Regional Arts Board that year. She moved to Queensland in 1995.

Terry Corcoran was 33 when first elected mayor in 1993, the city's youngest mayor. He served 27 months until the old council was abolished. A real estate manager, he achieved 2656 votes in Baranduda ward in 1993, the highest for any candidate for the old council. In his two terms, the mayoral allowance was \$21,600 a year, and all councillors were paid the maximum permitted under State law, \$3000. Corcoran was the last mayor to represent Wodonga on the Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation.

John Schubert and Albert Terrill did not serve as mayors on the new council but had been shire presidents before 1973. Schubert retired in 1983 after 33 years service as a councillor, claiming to have gone 25 years without missing a meeting. He left school at 13 and worked the land and sawed timber. He eventually set up a sawmill business at Baranduda in 1947 and later a box company. Terrill was a farmer in West Wodonga who served the council from 1958 to 1978, and was president when the Civic Centre opened in 1971.

Two councillors who served long periods but chose not to be mayor were Les Cheesley (13 years) and Betty McLean (16 years). The former, often called the council's watchdog, was a furniture dealer and is commemorated in the Les Cheesley Oval at Martin Park. Betty McLean, married to an Army officer, chaired the health and welfare and community services committees for many years. She helped start the Albury-Wodonga Women's Electoral Lobby, the first Wodonga women's refuge, Vermont Court hostel and the Albury Community Services Centre and was a pillar of the CWA and Citizens Advice Bureau, Upper Murray Family Care, Red Cross and other groups, working tirelessly to help the afflicted, oppressed and alcoholics. Although she left the council in 1995, she also took on a watchdog role and attended almost every meeting of the council held by commissioners in 1994-97.

For one year, 1991-92, there were two sisters on the council, Roslyn Murtagh and Rachelle Valente. They were among five female councillors that year. Several councillors have had forebears on the council, including John Street, Ray Pollard, Les Boyes and Bruce Morrison and on the 1997 council, John Watson.

Andrew Rutkowski, Bill Page and Ray O'Toole made special contributions to the city's progress. Rutkowski was deputy shire

clerk from 1969, and shire clerk from 1972 until redesignated town clerk in 1973. He retired in 1980 on medical advice. Rutkowski was born in Warsaw, where he studied commerce at university, but was called up by the Polish Army in 1939. The Gestapo arrested him and he spent years in concentration camps, being released from Dachau after Gestapo officers were bribed. He took part in the Warsaw Uprising in 1944, but was again imprisoned. After the war, he worked in West Germany and migrated with his wife, Hanna, in 1950. From Bonegilla, he worked in Melbourne as a factory worker. He studied accountancy after work, and eventually entered hospital administration and local government. Outside council business, he helped start the Wodonga Catholic College, the Murray River Performing Group and the Flying Fruit Fly Circus, and was hospital treasurer. Rutkowski died in August 1989, aged 70.

Ray O'Toole joined the former shire council as chief clerk and accountant in 1972 and was promoted deputy to Rutkowski in 1973. His earlier career had been spent at Prahan, Springvale, Keilor and Yarrowonga. When he began in Wodonga, there were only about 25 council office staff and 80 outdoor staff, and when he left in 1994 there were more than 400. O'Toole succeeded Rutkowski in 1980 and remained town clerk until redesignated chief executive officer in 1989. He left upon reorganisation in 1994 but was elected a councillor in 1997. Outside the council, he served Wodonga West Rotary Club as president and treasurer. He and his wife, Dawn, raised three children in Wodonga.

Bill Page retired on health grounds in July 1989 after 24 years as shire and city engineer, and 43 years in local government. In an unusual gesture, the council honoured him with a farewell dinner attended by several hundred citizens, and decided to rename the saleyards in his honour. Page died in September, aged 58. The Mayor, Cr Valentina Gillard, said: "Every development in Wodonga in the past 24 years has a bit of Bill Page in it". Page joined the council in January 1965, when Wodonga's population was a mere 7100. His achievements included the 1972 town plan, the Civic Centre, the leisure centre, and water and sewerage expansion, the Beechworth Rd avenue and the High St median strip that ended angle parking. Ray O'Toole called him a far-sighted man of vision.

Page was boss and mentor to his deputy and successor, Bruce Pooley. From 1975, Page concentrated on planning and on water and sewerage, while Pooley concentrated on buildings, roads, parks and sports facilities. In 1988, Page persuaded the council to require housing developers to provide for home units and smaller blocks.

It would be impossible to record the contribution of all council staff, but one other must be mentioned. Sumsion Gardens honours a council gardener and former bootmaker, Eric Sumsion, who died in July 1988, aged 85. He took a job with the shire as gardener-curator in 1956 and built a house on the edge of what are now Sumsion Gardens. He asked council permission to tidy the area in his own time and it was named in his honour after he retired in 1961.

Commissioners Mel Read, Mike Hansen and Des Kelly formed the council in 1994-97, with Lindsay Mitchell as temporary chief executive until Peter Marshall was appointed. Marshall, then 40, came to Wodonga from the City of Maryborough, where he had been city manager. He entered local government as assistant engineer at Wangaratta in 1975, moving to Ararat in 1979 and to Maryborough in 1985. He was initially city engineer but was promoted city manager in 1991. He studied in North America in 1989 on a local government engineering foundation award.

Graham Crapp, elected Mayor in 1997, is a partner in the Wodonga Pharmacy. He was born at Cowra in 1940 but spent part of his youth in Wodonga when his father, Everard, managed the Wodonga branch of the Bank of NSW. He graduated from Sydney University and he worked in Melbourne and Ararat before spending three years in Europe with his wife, Elizabeth, managing and he managed a chain of pharmacies and a family business at Fulham, London. They returned to Victoria in 1970 and lived in Bendigo before moving to Wodonga in 1975. Crapp chaired the Albury-Wodonga Post-School Education Committee and played an important role in the processes that led to the creation of the TAFE and university facilities.

A civic record

Thirty men and six women served as councillors of the Rural City of Wodonga during the period 1973 to 1994 and 11 of them were Mayors. The shire president's allowance in 1972 was a mere \$1200 but in 1993-94 it was \$21,600, plus \$3000 paid to each councillor. In some years, there were no elections with all councillors being unopposed, while in other years all four wards were contested. The last elections of the former council were held in 1993, when about 20,000 people were on the voters rolls. The new council was elected on March 15, 1997. when five councillors were elected from 25 candidates. The council allocated \$20,000 for a mayoral allowance and \$12,000 for each councillor.

MAYORS OF WODONGA

- 1973-74 Les Stone.
- 1974-76 Ken Riley
- 1976-77 Harold Draper
- 1977-80 Rex Chamberlain
- 1980-82 Harold Draper
- 1982-84 John Macaulay
- 1984-85 Les Boyes
- 1985-86 Pam Stone
- 1986-87 Malcolm McEachern
- 1987-88 John Macaulay
- 1988-89 Ian Deegan
- 1989-90 Valentina Gillard
- 1990-91 John Macaulay
- 1991-92 Les Boyes
- 1992-94 Terry Corcoran
- 1997- Graham Crapp

RURAL CITY OF WODONGA COUNCILLORS 1973-1994

John Schubert	1948-1982	Roslyn Murtagh	1989-1992
Albert Terrill	1958-1978	Bob Crosby	1991-1994
Harold Draper	1960-1988	Glen Nicholls	1991-1994
John Street	1967-1973	Rachelle Valente	1991-1994
Les Stone	1967-1974	Graham Barnes	1992-1994
	(died in office)	Meg Makedonez	1993-1994
Cyril Collins	1968-1974	Neville Clow	1993-1994

John Drummond	1968-1977
Roy Yensch	1968-1974
Ken Riley	1970-1980
Rex Chamberlain	1971-1985
Ken Coghill	1972-1976
John Macaulay	1973-1991
Les Boyes	1974-1994
Ian Watson	1974-1981

(died in office)

Malcolm McEachern	1974-1989
Ted Chester	1975-1981
Pam Stone	1977-1992
Betty McLean	1977-1993
David Iverson	1978-1987
Barry Rogers	1980-1986
Robin Clark	1981-1984
Les Cheesley	1981-1994

(died in office)

Ray Pollard	1982-1991
Ian Deegan	1984-1994
Valentina Gillard	1985-1993
Karl Draber	1986-1989
Terry Corcoran	1987-1994
Peter White	1988-1991, 92-1994.
Bruce Morrison	1989-1994

WODONGA RURAL CITY COUNCIL COMMISSIONERS 1994-97

Mel Read (chairman)
Des Kelly
Mike Hanson

COUNCILLORS 1997-

Les Boyes
Bill Buckpitt
Graham Crapp
Ray O'Toole
John Watson

RURAL CITY OF WODONGA

Town Clerk
Andrew Rutkowski 1972-1980
Ray O'Toole 1980-1994
City Engineer
William Page 1965-89
Chief Executive Officer
Ray O'Toole, 1989-94

WODONGA RURAL CITY COUNCIL

Chief Executive Officer
Lindsay Mitchell (acting) 1994-95.
Peter Marshall 1995-

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

(Awards presented on Australia Day for previous year)

1982	Bill Buckpitt	1992	Mark Dowlan
1983	No award	1993	Robert Spurr
1984	No award	1994	No award
1985	Bill Orr	1995	Marie Rauter
1986	Margaret Andrews	1996	Natasha Dean
1987	Jack Dunstan	1997	Kirsty Leach

Leo Mulqueeney

1989	Jim Costelloe
1990	Bet McGrath
1991	Dawn Richardson
1992	Bill Proud
1993	Walter Taylor
1994	Dr Bill Grant
1995	David Mann
1996	Jim Saleeba
1997	Robert Hall

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

1978	Alma Rogers and Max Gray
1979	Charles Whitla
1979-80	Don McEachern
1980	Merle Mason
1981	Elizabeth Molony and John Schubert

1982	Colonel Bob McLean
1983	Les Cole.

1985	Clarrie Sutton
1986	Marie Cardwell

1987	Brenda Keenan
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1988	Judith Trewarn
1989	Sylvia Quinlivan

1990	Vera Egan, and Cliff and Wilma Drummond
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1991	Arch McEachern
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1992	Bill Richardson
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1993	Alan Cracknell
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1994	Pauline Clover-Hore
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1995	Carol Jones
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1996	Rex Chamberlain
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1997	Judy Grant
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YOUNG CITIZEN

1980	Belina Bruning
1981	Andrew Freeman and Diane Simpson
1982	Alison Evans
1983	Tracey Foard
1984	Jacqueline Harris
1985	Dallas Hemphill
1986	David Boyle
1987	Bruce Morrison
1988	Tamie Tait
1989	Jonathan Van Ree
1990	Tammy Miller
1991	Nichole Chambers

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