

## MUSEUM OF THE RIVERINA

The newsletter of the Wagga Wagga and District Historical Society for October/November 1999 outlines the great changes that have taken place in that city's museum arrangements since the beginning of the year, the main event being the opening last February of the Regional Museum of the Riverina.

The historical society opened its museum on Willans Hill in the 1960s and since then has greatly extended its scope and size.

In recent times the city council has built a new Civic Centre incorporating the existing Art Gallery and Library. Now the handsome old 1882 council chambers has been completely refurbished as a free-standing home for the Regional Museum, adjoining and part of the Civic Centre.

This change has involved a great deal of co-operation between the Council and the Historical Society. The council has leased the existing museum on Willans Hill from the Historical Society, so it has become part of the Regional Museum and the Historical Society has in effect gained a down-town complementary campus. Both museum centres are under control of a qualified museum manager employed by the Council. The rent from the Council gives the Society a steady income and admission to the museums is now free of entry charges. The Historical Society still has some measure of control through representation on the board of trustees.

Liaison with the Regional Library should present no difficulties as the Local History Librarian is a member of the Society and also a member of the board.

To quote from the president's report, the change has been very successful: "The city centre presence has been truly marvellous - since the opening, for every hundred visitors at the Willans Hill museum there have been close to a thousand at the Baylis Street exhibitions."

Somewhere in this there must be a moral for Wollongong.

Frank Osborne.