

Wagga Floods



We may have been in the middle of a drought for several years, but floods have been very much a part of life in Wagga in the past. Many people may remember some of the big floods about 50 years ago - your grandparents and other older people may have stories to tell.

Here are some details of some of the major floods in Wagga's history:

1925 flood

Began at 8am on May 29 when water began to trickle over the Murrumbidgee River's banks near the Prince of Wales Hotel in Fitzmaurice Street. Sandbagging didn't help as the river continued to rise until it reached its peak of 10.13 metres at 6.30pm. North Wagga was badly damaged, as was "Tent Town" in the bend of the river below Hampden Bridge.

1950 flood

At 3am on March 24 the river rose to its peak of 10.13m while some buildings were flooded with up to 2.44m of water. Despite the use of levees in front of businesses and homes, 1300 buildings were flooded and 1800 people were evacuated (mostly from North Wagga) - in fact half the city was affected. Only 36 hours warning was given, so many residents were unprepared and had to be rescued by army ducks (boats that can also drive on land).

1952 Flood

On June 18, 1200 residents were forced to leave their homes. When the river reached 31 feet, almost all of Fitzmaurice Street below Gurwood Street was under water. A truck parked at the corner of Morgan and Murray Streets was almost completely underwater. Air services and bus runs were disturbed. As usual North Wagga was almost completely covered by floodwaters, and nearly all residents evacuated.

1956 Flood

Wagga was subjected to flooding in May, June, July and again in October. After these floods, Council decided to provide levee bank protection for the city on the south flood plain. North Wagga and the eastern industrial areas were excluded from the protection despite a petition signed by over a thousand residents. The main levee along the Murrumbidgee River was started in 1960 and finished early 1962.

Did you know?

Since the first rural settlement in Wagga Wagga in the early 1840s there have been 77 floods of over 8.23 metres.