

# AP Motors

*Clarrie Neal*

Wally Wood had closed his business in Railway Terrace. Penfolds used the shop to sell their wines for a short period before it was taken over by H G Palmer Electrical Appliances. When they moved it was used as a Dry Cleaning business.

Charley Persak, now looking for larger premises, leased the building from Wally Wood for \$300-00 per month. Charley bought the building for \$17,000 in the early 1970's and has never looked back. He opened an Auto Spares shop in Cowra in 1982, then opened another in Bathurst in 1985. He further expanded the business by opening a shop in North Richmond in 1989.

Charley worked hard to build up his chain of stores and never had time to take holidays, but one holiday he did do was a trip to China, a prize won from one of his suppliers for being their best customer. Finding the task of operating the four stores too demanding he sold his Cowra and North Richmond shops and now operates the Riverstone and Bathurst shops only. Charley, along with his wife Gwenda and son Adam, can still be found behind the counter in Riverstone, seven days a week, eight to ten hours a day.

His wife Gwenda writes - "His story is a gentle reminder that you can be anything you want to be, you just have to 'make it happen'. Everyone in Riverstone knows Charley and he has a reputation for being a bit of a grump. But he has the stock and everyone knows it, he loves his stock, he loves his business, and he loves Riverstone."

He is proud of the fact that the shop is a part of the early history of Riverstone. It was built in 1892 as a general store for brothers Charles and Thomas Davis, with Charles being granted a Colonial Wine licence in 1905. The store has continually served the community of Riverstone ever since.



AP Motors in 2006.

Photo: Clarrie Neal