

~Furphy Murmurs~



Shepparton
Family History Group Inc
A0041654N
P.O.Box 1529 Shepparton 3632
www.vicnet.net.au/~shepfh

*Newsletter No 62
December 2023*



SHEPPARTON FAMILY HISTORY GROUP inc

SFHG report

Annual Meeting

The annual and general meetings of the Shepparton Family History Group were held on Wednesday 18th of October at the Welsford Street rooms..

Business for discussion included :

- Membership fee: To remain the same.
- General meeting dates: Meetings to be held 3rd Wednesday in January, April, July and October, 2.00 pm at the SFHG rooms.
- Office bearers: All positions remain the same (see page 8).
- Research Fees:
 - In person: to remain at \$15 per hour plus photocopying cost.
 - Via email: \$20 for basic research.



If preferred all members or groups can now have a PDF copy of our newsletter sent to their email address. Please email shepfhg@fastmail.fm and ask to have future Newsletters emailed to you.

\$\$\$\$\$ Membership \$\$\$\$\$

Annual membership to SFHG covers the financial year (July to June). Membership is due from July 1, each year. Membership for 2023-24 is now due.

Current membership is: Single \$25.00. Couple \$45.00. New member joining fee \$5.00

Payment can be made in person at the SFHG rooms or via the post to: The Treasurer, P.O. Box 1529 Shepparton, Vic 3632

Renewal subscriptions can now be paid by direct deposit to our bank account. Please include the word 'subs' and your surname in the banking details box to help our treasurer identify each deposit.

National Bank, Wyndham St ,Shepparton, BSB: 083894 Acc No: 15 646 4856

A membership application form is included on page 8 for those wishing to become a member of the SFHG.

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Past Events

Heritage Advisory Hub Open Day

Heritage Centre

The Shepparton Heritage Centre has opened a new 'History Hub'. The *Shepparton News* from 1882 through 2012 are available for research.

An appointment is necessary.

Phone: (03)48318659

The Shepparton family history group have indexes for papers from 1879 through 1933 and random indexes for some later editions.

Prahran Mechanics Institute biannual History Showcase

More than 20 historical societies, including family history and genealogical clubs as well as archive and special interest groups from across Victoria gathered together on Saturday 25th August 2023 to showcase just how they could assist in solving many history related problems.

SFHG members, Kerry, Lorraine and Edna travelled to the P.M.I. center in Edmonds Road, Prahran to participate in the event.

The Shepparton Family History Group displayed some of our records as well as having several of our publications for sale.

Research material from our library was made available to those attending. Our "Early Families of Shepparton and District" together with indexes of local history books were available to purchase. The day was very successful. Many people stopped at our table to search the records, and we enjoyed many interesting conversations throughout the day.

Several books were sold and one person joined our



Interested researchers at the Prahran Mechanics

New Members

Welcome to new members:

Bernadette Brooks

Wendy Goodwin

We wish you many rewarding hours researching and finding additions to your family history.

Coming Events

Christmas Break Up

An afternoon tea will be held at our Welsford st rooms on Wednesday December 20th 2023 from 2.00 pm, to enable members and guests to get together before our rooms close until January 3rd 2024.

Everyone is welcome to attend, please bring a plate to help with the catering.



From early 2024, newsletters from other family history groups will be able to be viewed on computer at the SFHG rooms.

A day of

Irish Family History Research in Ballarat

Saturday 10th February 2024, 9.00 am to 5.00 pm.
Ballarat North Community Centre.

Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) Victorian Archives Centre (VAC) 99 Shiel St North Melbourne

Opening Hours

Monday to Friday: 10am to 4,30 pm
and every second and last Saturday of the month.
Closed public holidays.

PROV Record Releases

More than 78,000 certified plans of subdivisions from Land Use Victoria covering the years 1863 to 1997.

Records from the former Prince Henry's Hospital from 1869 to 1994.

New Ned Kelly records now digitised to the Ned Kelly collection online.

Look for "what's new in 2023" on the PROV Blog for information on these and other recent transfers.

After January 1st 2024 hundreds of records will become available as they pass their assigned closure period.

Research Enquiries

Email queries during the past five months included:

- **MacIsaac** Angus & Ann, Mooroopna
- **Stephens** Kathleen & Ronald children Shepparton
- **Norton / Sellwood** family
- **Harris** family Shepparton East
- **Loffell** family Geelong and Shepparton
- **McLeod** family Toolamba
- **Jamieson / O'Brien** Tamleugh
- **Lee** James & MaryAnn (Maidment Pine Lodge)
- **Stubbs**, John and Barbara

Items for sale

Early Families of Shepparton and District

- Book One **\$25**
 Book Two **\$20**
 Book Three **\$25**

History of Shepparton 1838 – 1938. Commemoration of Shepparton Centenary. One Hundred Years of Progress, by W.S. James [original 1938 publication] **\$50**

Shepparton Past and Present, by V.E. Vibert (1975) **\$5**

They Left Their Footprints. Shepparton Street Names, compiled by Elsie Brady **\$15**

A Century Not Out 1909 – 2009. Shepparton High School, by Helena Kilfoyle and Rae McLean **\$10**

Many, many **indexes** to family and local history books compiled by members of the Shepparton Family History Group Inc. are available for purchase at various prices – list available on the SFHG website.

For Example:

“Index to *History of Shepparton 1838 – 1938. Commemoration of Shepparton Centenary. One Hundred Years of Progress*, by W.S. James”,
 compiled by Lorraine Waldron \$6.00

“Index to *Shepparton Past and Present*, by V.E. Vibert”,
 compiled by Kerry Betts \$3.60

“Index to *Heart of the Valley Toolamba 1840-1983*, by Stewart Morvell”,
 compiled by Lorraine Waldron \$14.40

“Index to *Pine Lodge District Centenary 1877-1977*”,
 compiled by Lorraine Waldron \$4.40

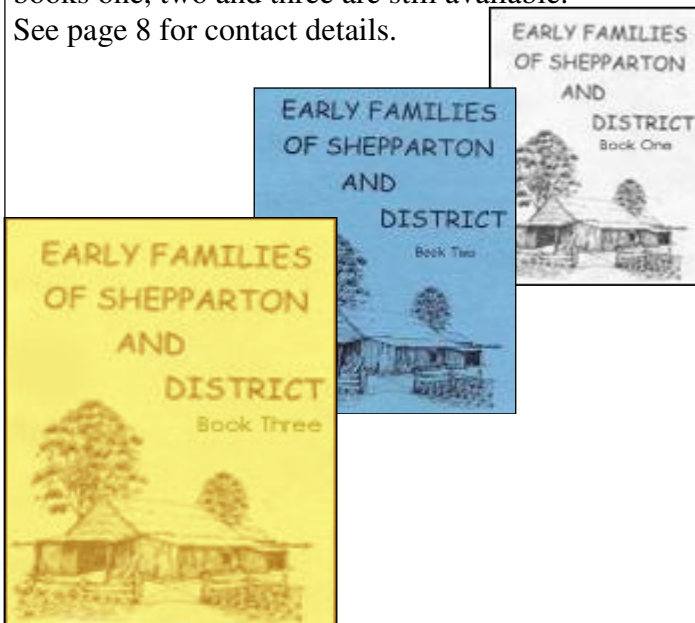
“Index to *Dookie and District 1863-1963*”,
 compiled by Eileen Torney \$4.00

“Index to *A Place. The Story of Kaarimba Hall*, by Adrian Twitt”,
 compiled by Lorraine Waldron \$3.40

Early Families of Shepparton and District

books one, two and three are still available.

See page 8 for contact details.



New Resources

CDs

Kelly's Directory of Devon & Cornwall 1902
 (Genealogy Family Tree, Family History)

Sands & McDougall, Victorian Directory 1917

Books

Gate of the Years, To Celebrate a Century of Care, Mooroopna and District Base Hospital 1876-1976,
 by Isabelle W. Hayward

Katamatite, the First 100 Years 1876-1976,
 by Ada Rudd

Katamatite District Churches Past and Present,
 by Ada Rudd

Koonoomoo State School No.3138. 1892-1992,
 by Lorna J. Biggar

From Adversity to Prosperity, Decades of Change in the Katandra District 1930-1960,
 compiled by Katandra and District History Group Inc.

Through No Fault of their Own, by Wendii Carter

Reflections, Water Colours and Recollections of the Australian Countryside, by Lois McCrabb

Karramomus North State School No.2055. 1878-1973,
 by Gwenda Metzke

John and Barbara Stubbs, by David Stubbs

G.R.O.

(General Register Office. England and Wales)

GRO add 70 years of deaths to online view.

It is now possible to view England & Wales death register entries from 1837 to 1957.

Births are also available for the years 1837 to 1922

PDF copies are available for £2.50. (approximately \$5.00 Aust).

Irish online records are available at geni.nidirect.gov.uk for a similar fee.

Scottish BDM's can be viewed and copies ordered at nrscotland.gov.uk

AFFHO

Australian Federation of Family History Organisations

A free downloadable booklet is available on the AFFHO website. It contains useful information for the starter to the experienced genealogist. Australian and overseas resources are listed.

Website: Our Australian Really Useful Information Leaflet
 Download from the AFFHO website :
www.affho.org > Publications > 'Useful Leaflet'

Death of a Great Townsman

Although he was able to enjoy and take part in the Christmas season, a heart attack last Saturday made it necessary for the removal of Mr. W. N. McMillan to “Ambermere” annexe, where he passed yesterday (Thursday).

The Funeral to Shepparton Cemetery will take place this (Friday) afternoon, following a service in St. Augustine’s Church of England at 4 o’clock. The burial office will be read by Archdeacon R. North and the mortuary arrangements will be in the hands of Messrs Kittle Bros. Masonic brethren will also pay their last respect to departed merit.

Born at Chewton 75 years ago, the late Mr. Walter Nathaniel McMillan was a son of the late Nathaniel and Margaret McMillan.

Marrying Miss Lillian Holloway, the couple came to Shepparton nearly 50 years ago, when the subject of this notice conducted a bakery in Fryers street, opposite the Technical School. In later years he purchased the freehold of the Star Theatre, which included the Star Bakery. In partnership with Mr. Les Thompson (who was an operator) he purchased the Lyric Photoplays business from the local syndicate which established the open air show on the A.N.Z. bank site at the corner of Wyndham and High streets in 1913, its operations being disrupted by the first world war. His acquisition of the old Paramount Theatre from Messrs W. Guthrie and W. Daish removed local competition, though there were periodical rumors of big outside interests contemplating opposition. The Lyric theatre was completed and opened in the early part of 1924. Success led to further expansion in the film world; and at the time of his death Mr. McMillan had substantial interests in theatres at Benalla, Kyabram, Tongala, Rochester, Castlemaine, Kyneton, Werribee (freehold), the Lyric and Astor and, finally, the extensive Drive-in at Shepparton south. In the space of 40 years he had become, in point of numbers, Shepparton’s largest property owner, which also included broad acres.

In his rise to affluence, he never turned a deaf ear or refused a helping hand to the “battler”; and although he observed the policy of not letting his left hand know what the right hand did, instances of his generosity have from time to time leaked out. Helping people to own their own homes on a rent-purchase basis, financing the Scout Hall and giving free use of his theatres for deserving causes have not been the subjects of public acclaim – nor would he have desired it. He offered to equip Mooroopna Base Hospital with a German X-ray equipment, the most modern in the world, but this magnificent gesture was rejected by someone in authority.

He gave his services to Shepparton City Council for a number of years as a councillor; and regularly fulfilled the duties of a Justice of the Peace at Shepparton court. Not the least onerous of these duties were the hours he spent each week at witnessing signatures or signing legal documents. He was president of the bowling club on several occasions and provided trophies for competition. It was in the ranks of Free Masonry where his service to others found its fullest expression. His outstanding work received recognition from the Grand Lodge when he had conferred upon him the signal rank of Past Deputy Grand Master – an honor that few country

brethren achieve. As representative of the M.W. Grand Master he carried out installations in the Goulburn Valley and North Eastern Victoria for a number of years, only relinquishing those responsibilities in the past twelve months. In the local sphere he was a trustee of United Free-masons and visualised a new and larger temple in the not too distant future. It was not till the last six months that friends noticed any appreciable change in his health, the stay in hospital a couple of months ago being the main warning of the frailties of the human flesh.

He is survived by his wife and two sons – Walter and Sydney.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE MR. W. N. McMILLAN

At least one heart had been gladdened this Christmastide by the receipt of a hand lettered and designed card containing an appreciation of services rendered by him to settlers on the No. 1 and No. 2 estates, not only during the 1916 flood period, which inspired the following poem, but throughout those struggling days when many of the irrigators didn’t know where their next meal was coming from.

Such a man was Mr. Walter N. McMillan, who came to Shepparton as a baker in a shop opposite the Technical School in Fryers street.

While this was written and in type Mr. McMillan passed away yesterday, but the originators of the greeting card had the gratification of knowing that it was appreciated.

A family of fruitgrowers, now fortunately enjoying financial security, was discussing Mr. McMillan’s illness when one said, “Do you remember the 1916 flood when he delivered bread to settlers on horse-back?” That created the idea of sending him a Christmas greeting card couched in the following appreciative verses:-

DAILY BREAD

I remember a time in the days gone by
When it rained for weeks and the floods were high;
The old spring cart in the mud bogged down,
And the water deep on the road to town.

Thought Mum. “Now what are we going to do?
For the baker’s cart can never get through,
And I’m going to be in an awkward fix
Without some bread for my hungry six!”

The children, off to school each day,
Need a lunch bag filled ‘ere they go their way,
And home again, with an empty ‘tum’,
It’s “Now can we have a piece please, Mum?”

And Dad works hard, and must be well fed,
But they’ll have to eat something else than bread!
So stoke the fire with plenty of wood,
I’ll have to see that those scones are good.

Cont’d

Cont'd

And don't blame the baker if bread we lack,
For he can't get over the flooded track.
Then the children call, in excited state,
There's a man on a horse coming in the gate.

And he's carrying bags, oh, what can it be"
Now, this is a welcome sight to see!
It's the baker, blessings on his head,
For through the floods he has brought our bread.

Says he, "Oh, yes, it's a flood, no doubt,
But I didn't want you to go without."
Then splashing off in the mud once more,
He carries the loaves to each settler's door.

Some of those settlers long since gone,
Even the younger ones "Getting on,"
Thinking of childhood days again,
Speak of the difference 'twixt now and then,
When Mr. McMillan came down the track,
Bringing the bread on his horse's back.

No more spring carts bog with their loads,
For cars skim over the well-made roads,
But the simple kindness of long ago
Still warms our hearts with a cheerful glow,
And memory's star has a brighter ray
As we westward wend to the close of day.

(An incident in the early days of Orrvale and Shepparton
East)

[Articles from *The Shepparton News* Friday January 3, 1958]



Cr Walter McMillan
Cr W.S. James "History of Shepparton
1838—1938"



Astor Theatre—Shepparton 1938
Photograph from website
www.myshepparton.com.au/astor-theatre.html

The Death of Francesco Paolo Cursio "Frank"

At about 8:30pm on Sunday June 16, 1935, Matteo Modola (a farmer of Arcadia) was driving his horse and cart along Benalla Road, accompanied by Luigi Tamburro (a market gardener living in Grahamvale), and Angelo Palma (a share farmer living in Congupna). They saw a fellow countryman, Paolo Cursio (a farmer), lying on the left-hand side of the road under an electric light, near the show ground about one mile from Shepparton. A bicycle was lying nearby in the centre of the road.

Matteo stopped the cart and they went over to Paolo. He was conscious, but too sick to say much. They spoke to him in Italian, "What is wrong with you?" He replied, "Nothing wrong. I just fell off my bike". "Did anybody hit you?" He replied, "No. I was riding my bike very fast and fell off." They held him by his shoulders and lifted him into the spring cart and drove to Dr. Gorr's surgery in Maude Street, Shepparton. Dr. Gorr examined him and ordered that he to be taken to the Mooroopna Hospital where he was admitted about 9pm.

On admission he was examined by Edmond Clarke, a legally qualified Medical Practitioner, and a resident of Mooroopna. Paolo was suffering from complete loss of sensation of the legs and body up to about the level of the second rib, and a loss of sensation of the left hand and right arm. Whilst in the Hospital the paralysis progressed, and Paolo died on the 19 June at 7.15pm. Dr. Clarke stated that his death was the result of respiratory failure brought about by paralysis of the respiratory muscles.

At about 3.30pm on June 20, 1935, Angello Carrafa (a farmer of Wyndham Street North, Shepparton) visited the morgue at the Mooroopna Hospital. He identified the body of the deceased as that of his cousin. Angello had never seen Paolo drink, but he knew he had a glass of liquor now and then. He had never known deceased to be ill nor had he known him to take to fainting fits. Paolo was good natured and had no enemies; very well-liked by everybody.

On the same day, at 4.30pm a postmortem examination was conducted at Mooroopna Hospital, performed by Annie Lister Bennett, Registered Medical Practitioner (also a resident of Mooroopna). She described him as a well-built middle-aged man. In her opinion the cause of death was fracture-dislocation of the cervical spine associated with pneumonia. The injuries could have been caused by the deceased falling from a bicycle.

An Inquisition (without a jury) into the death was held on 1 July 1935, by Mr Edward McFarlane Little, Deputy Coroner. Plainclothes First Constable Robert Lickley (a resident of Shepparton) gave evidence that he had made all possible inquiries into the death of Paolo Cursio, and all the available evidence had been placed before the Court. Doctor Bennett, Doctor Clarke, Angello Carrafa, Matteo Modola, Angelo Palma, and Luigi Tamburro all came before the coroner whose finding was that Paolo Cursio died from a fracture of the cervical spine associated with pneumonia.

Paolo Cursio, the son of Matteo and Anastasia (nee Villani), was born at San Marco in Lamis (Foggia), Italy, in about 1888. He had come to Australia in 1926, leaving his wife and three children in San Marco. Matteo Modola, Luigi Tamburro and Angelo Palma had known Paolo for

up to 37 years as they came from the same town in Naples in the south of Italy. Paolo was buried in the Roman Catholic section of the Shepparton Cemetery on June 21. The friends of Paolo Cursio, led by Leonardo D'Angelli, collected funds from friends of the deceased and the Italian community – contributions from 46 people raised £9/6/0. A tombstone was placed on Paolo's grave – a permanent sign of their friendship and affection.

Sources:

Shepparton News Mon. 17 June 1935, p.2; and Mon. 1 July 1935, p.6.

The Argus (Melb.) Tues. 18 June 1935, p.3.

Il Giornale Italiano (Sydney) Wed. 26 June 1935, p.5; and Wed. 14 August 1935, p.2

1935/724 Pavillo Cursio. Inquest Deposition Files (VPRS24) prov.vic.gov.au

Victoria Death Index

Shepparton Cemetery Register SFHG

[FOOTNOTE: In January 2013, Maria Gabriella Ma tranga contacted the National Library of Australia and later, the Shepparton Family History Group, seeking information regarding the death of her great grandfather, the father of her grandmother. Her grandmother was 93 and too old to remember much and didn't have any documents. Maria hoped to find information as a special gift for her grandmother. Maria thought he may have died in Melbourne "as Melbourne is full of people from San Marco."]



Paulo Cursio Grave
Shepparton General Cemetery

Florence Bilton, nee Wilson
School teacher, wife and mother

Florence Wilson was born on 4th March 1859, the daughter of Andrew and Eliza (nee Hawkes). In the late 1870s Florence trained to be a school teacher and became registered in November 1877, before taking up a position at Kialla West State School No:1727. Florence and her mother lived in the schoolhouse, a four-roomed residence built in 1877.

During this time, "Louie Lesing, a young Chinese orphan girl, in the service of a neighbour, would often run across the paddocks to the Wilsons", after being whipped and beaten by her employers. Eventually Mrs. Wilson would not let her return and an "Application" was granted for Louie to remain with the Wilsons. She became a devoted friend and maid, staying with the family until her death in 1938, aged 75".

On Thursday 22nd April 1886, Florence married David Richard Bilton, who was a teacher at Arcadia East State School No.2519. The service at Kialla West was conducted by Rev. J.S. Woods. After the wedding they both continued to teach at their respective schools.

In October 1891, David and Florence Bilton planned to leave the district. During the time they lived at Kialla West they had shown a great interest in the district and school as evidenced by the present state of the institution. The couple were very popular and held in high esteem. Florence's successor, Miss M. Little, took over the position in 1893.

The whole family – David and Florence with their three children; Florence's mother, Eliza, and Louie all moved to Leviathan Reef, eight kilometres from the gold mining town of Maryborough. "There, Florence would walk across the paddocks to meet another teacher, with whom she travelled by horse and buggy to school at Timor West, where she was an assistant teacher. After her fourth child was born, she continued teaching until the Education Department introduced the regulation that married women must retire." Florence resigned on 1st March 1894. Her service in the Education Department had lasted 16 years and 72 days.

In 1885 David Bilton was transferred to Adelaide Head School, near Maryborough, and the family went to live at "Hatfield" farm, at Craigie.

With the help of Louie, Florence did the cooking, washing and ironing, gardening, and growing vegetables and fruit to help feed the family of seven children – David, Daisy, Elizabeth, Florence, Sybil, Polly and Minnie. Water was collected in a tank and an underground well, groceries bought in bulk and stored in mouse-proof containers, and meat (both lamb and beef) came from the farm. Florence and Louie made all the jams, sauces, chutneys and pickles. The older children milked the cows before and after school. The milk was placed in large flat dishes in the dairy where the cream was skimmed off the top to make butter.

The butter was washed several times until all the buttermilk was extracted, and then put into pounds. Florence would make scones with the buttermilk, and the calves were then fed the skim milk.

On 10th December 1940, at Hatfield, David Bilton died, aged 82 years. Four months later, on 9th April 1941, Florence died also aged 82. They had been married for 54 years.

Sources

Victorian Birth, Death and Marriage Indexes
Probate and Administration Files, Public Record Office Victoria (prov.vic.gov.au)
Teacher Record files VPRS 13579 Public Record Office Victoria (prov.vic.gov.au)
Shepparton News
Shepparton Advertiser (trove.nla.gov.au)
The Argus; Melbourne (trove.nla.gov.au)
Centenary of the Kialla West Primary School No.1727.1876-1976
Vision and Realisation Vol.3, Education Department Victoria, 1973
Pioneer Women of the Bush and Outback, by Jennifer Isaacs

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- i Isaacs p.60
 - ii Isaacs p.60
 - iii *Teacher Record No.7901-8200*
 - Iv Isaacs, pp.60-61

Photographs – Isaacs p.61



Florence Bilton
in 1918



Louie Lesing
The Chinese maid who came to Florence Bilton as a young state ward and stayed all her life.



Pacific Sun August 1996.

In Tasmania a just widowed lady was fined \$300 for disorderly conduct because she danced on her husbands grave whilst singing "Who's Sorry Now"

Marine Independent Journal August 1996.

A 94 year old spinster whose handwritten funeral instructions read " There will be no male pallbearers . Since they wouldn't take me out when I was alive, I don't want them to take me out when I am dead."



Wednesday research at the SFHG

Don't Forget

For members with some spare time there is a working bee at the clubrooms on the third Monday of each month from 1.00 pm to 4.00 pm.

The members only research days are still in recess until further notice.

Shepparton Family History Group inc

Address: 154 Welsford St. Shepparton (Cnr Welsford and High St)

Post: P.O. Box 1529 Shepparton. Vic. 3632

Internet: www.vicnet.net.au/~shepfh email: shepfhg@fastmail.fm

Meetings: Third Wednesday in January, April, July and October (Annual) ** 2.00 pm **

Research Times: Every Wednesday 12.30 pm to 3.30 pm.

Every Friday 9.00 am to 12.00 pm (except public holidays)

Shepparton Family History Group

- (President) Temporarily unfilled
- Peter Matthews (Secretary)
- Kerry Betts (Treasurer)

2023-2024 Office Bearers

- Garry Wallden (Vice President)
- Lorraine Waldron (Research Officer)
- Kerry Betts (Librarian)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (Financial Year July 2023 to June 2024)

I hereby apply for membership to the SHEPPARTON FAMILY HISTORY GROUP Inc.

First Name _____

Surname _____

Postal Address

Number _____

Street _____

Town _____

State _____

Postcode _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

FEES

New member joining fee	\$ 5.00	\$ 5.00
Annual Subscription (single)	\$ 25.00	\$ _____
Annual Subscription (couple)	\$ 45.00	\$ _____
Total		\$ _____

I enclose a cheque / cash for \$ _____

Alternatively:

Subscriptions can be paid by direct deposit to our bank account. Please ensure that you include your surname and the word "subs" in the banking details box to help our treasurer identify the deposit.

National Bank, Wyndham St ,Shepparton,
BSB: 083894 Acc No: 15 646 4856