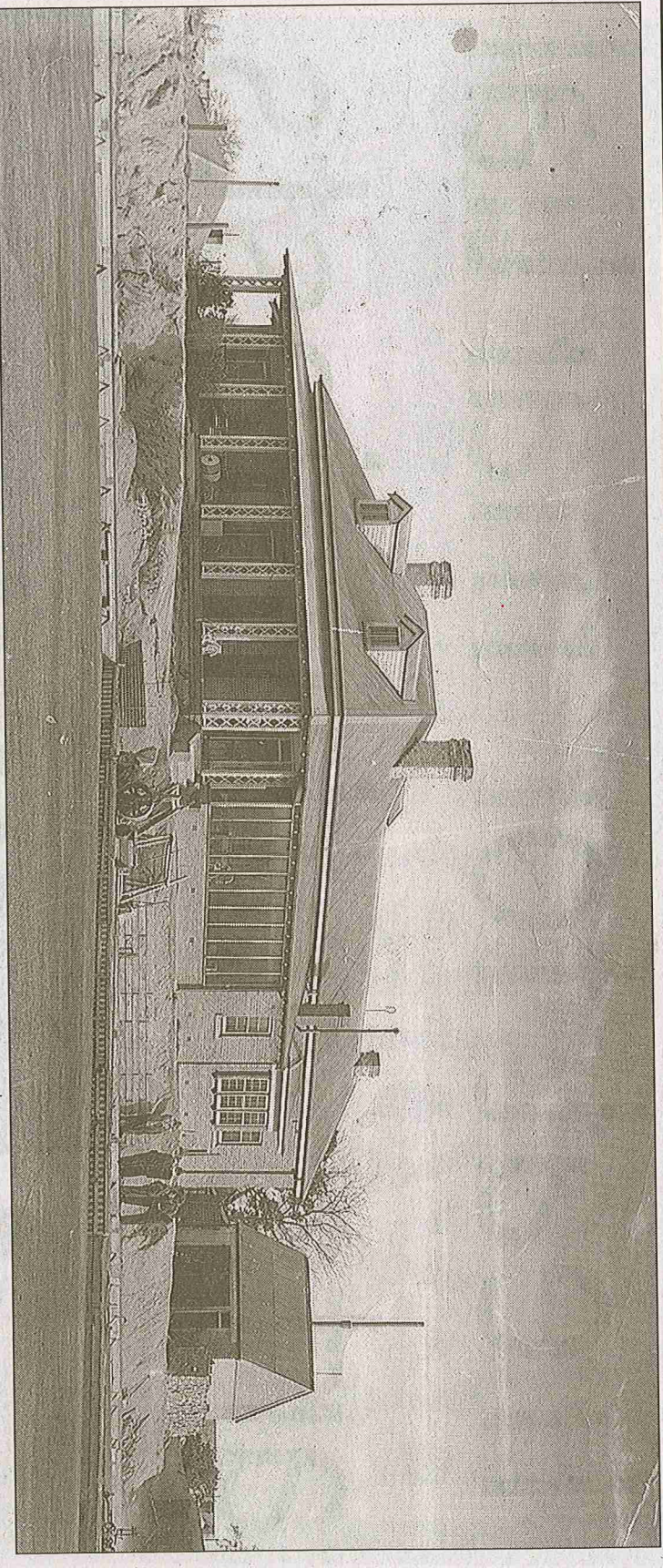


What you should know

■ The CSU Regional Archives is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Located in the Blakemore Building at the South Campus of the university, access can be gained via College Avenue or Hely Avenue.

■ Members of the public are welcome to visit the search room, where professional archival staff can assist with enquiries. For those people unable to visit the archives in person, staff can provide a research service for straightforward enquiries for a fee of \$55 per hour, including copying and postage.

■ For further information, phone 6925 3666, email archive@csu.edu.au or visit the website at www.csu.edu.au/research/archives for a full listing of holdings and more detailed information.



Goonigul circa 1956 during the formation of the bowling greens. The Wagga Returned Servicemen's League acquired the Goonigul homestead to transform the site into a multifunctional clubhouse.

Sheppard's mark can still be seen

at the archives

Wayne Doubleday



George Sheppard, JP, architect and surveyor, was a man of reputable character whose work can be pointed to all around the streets of Wagga. Born in Suffolk, England, around 1853, he arrived in Wagga with his wife, Isabel, in 1875, where they made their home at "Cora Lynn" in Johnston Street.

For many years, Sheppard was the borough surveyor and it was during his association with the Municipality of Wagga that he contributed his most notable work.

Sheppard was given a charge to help "beautify" the streets of Wagga and was thus responsible for the planting of trees that still adorn the streets of Central Wagga today.

It has been said that Sheppard established a small nursery near the council chambers and raised the trees from seedlings. After the initial planting, he would take the time to ensure the plants were properly cared for and safe from the goats and cows that would often be found roaming around the town.

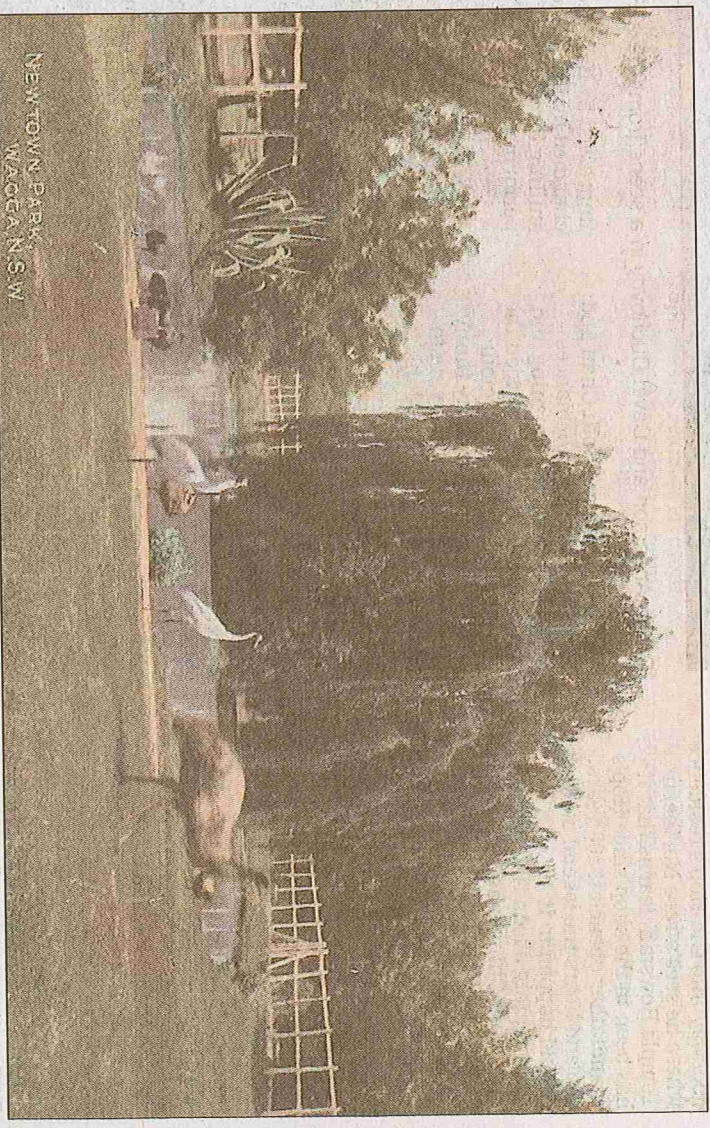
Sheppard also established Newtown Park, later renamed Collins Park after Alderman Edward Easter Collins, who died in 1936.

Newtown Park or "Bird Park" served as a kind of zoo and was inhabited by animals such as kangaroos, ducks, wallabies, swans, peacocks, emus, deer and a wombat.

In 1960, the animals were transferred to the Botanic Gardens site on Williams Hill.

George Sheppard was also an accomplished architect, working out of his private practice as well as being employed by the NSW Council of Education as the architect for around 40 schools in the Riverina.

Some of the more recognisable works conceived by Sheppard include Mt Erin, the Murrumbidgee Co-operative Flour Mill, and the "Big Springs" and "Eunonyhareenya" homesteads.



A postcard of Newtown Park (RWS/103), which was established by architect and surveyor George Sheppard. The park was later renamed Collins Park after Alderman Edward Easter Collins.

George and his wife had four children – twin boys Everard and Harold, Lionel, and daughter Lorraine.

Sheppard retired in 1916 and died two years later on November 19, 1918 at the age of 65.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■
IN 1965, after several attempts at securing a permanent home that could more fully service the needs of its members, the Wagga Returned Servicemen's League acquired the old "Goonigul" homestead, and transformed the site into a multifunctional clubhouse.

The Goonigul homestead (bordered by Dobbs Street, Kincaid Street and Goonigul Avenue) was built in the early 1870s and was originally the home of Henry Baylis, Wagga's first police magistrate.

After Baylis left Wagga in 1896, Goonigul sheltered five different families before being sold to the Wagga RSL in 1955.

They included CH Crocker and family, HW Graeme, James Baylis (Henry's son), Henry

Rogers and family, and lastly the Horsley family.

The site was purchased for £14,500 and would soon fulfil its foreseen potential for great expansion.

By April 1958, the new clubhouse was complete, with two bowling greens, a tennis court, a billiard room, a lounge, bar, a dining room, lockers, offices and other general amenities.

The official opening of the clubhouse was held on May 24, 1958.

The club vacated its premises adjacent to the Plaza Theatre in Baylis Street (currently occupied by Kennedy's Pharmacy and Royal Garden Restaurant), and moved into Goonigul, where it remains today.

■ Compiled by Lauren Carroll
References: *Wagga Wagga, A History – Sherry Morris*, *The Goomly Index*, *The Daily Advertiser*, and *A History of the Wagga RSL Club – Sherry Morris and Harold Fife*