
12 Arnold Street, 1936 - 1937

Berthold and Sigmund Alexander Schubert were the sons of Christian August Schubert (1883 – 1957) and his wife Hermine Auguste (Minnie) nee Adler (1883 – 1960). August Schubert had been born at Langmeil, Tanunda, South Australia, and moved to the Victorian Wimmera early last century; his wife was born at Coromby, north of Murtoa. After marrying in 1908, August share-farmed in several locations in the Wimmera. Bert, the third of six sons, was born at Rupanyup North on June 3, 1912; and Sig, the fifth son, was born at Rupanyup North on September 30, 1918. The brothers initially attended Rupanyup North State School, later attending Rosevale State School, after their father purchased a farming property at Galaquil East, in the southern Mallee, in 1922.

Bert worked as a farm labourer when he left school c1926, on his parents' property, and other district farms. From the late 1920's he also worked with his uncle, Fred Schache, repairing farm machinery and other vehicles on district farms, and other vehicles in Fred Schache's backyard at 12 Arnold Street, Warracknabeal. At the beginning of 1934 he started working as a mechanic with Beris Bates in Scott Street, Warracknabeal, firstly behind Younghusbands opposite the town hall, and later beside Schache's blacksmith forge, near Lyle Street. Bert worked with Beris Bates until leaving to start his own repair business in 1936.

Sig also worked on district farms after leaving school c1932. The following year, at the height of the Depression, August Schubert was forced to relinquish his farm at Galaquil East, and the family moved to Stawell West, leaving several of their sons working in the Wimmera. From 1933 Sig worked on Chivel's farm in the Wilkur district, boarding with them until leaving in 1936 to work with Bert.

Bert and Sig Schubert were sons of the Wimmera farming community, and their links with the district can be traced back to the earliest years of European settlement. Their ancestors pioneered land – and the Lutheran Church – at a number of centres throughout the Wimmera. It was this district, and the agricultural industry, which the brothers were to serve all their working lives.

The motor repair business which became B. & S. Schubert had its genesis in 1936, when Bert Schubert began repairing vehicles in his own right at 12 Arnold Street, Warracknabeal, the home of his uncle and aunt, Fred and Bertha Schache.

Much of Bert's early work came from personal and family contacts, neighbours and members of his own family. Apart from repairing cars in the back yard, it is remembered that Bert would borrow his uncle's truck, and drive out to farms at Galaquil and Wilkur to repair trucks on site. Among his earliest customers were Jack Rossiter, and the Williams, Bentley and Perry families.

Bert worked by himself for most of 1936, before being joined by his 18 year old brother Sig, later that year, when they started trading as Schubert Brothers. It was a humble beginning – and a venture in faith. Bert later recounted that they had a capital of 40 pounds (\$80.00), made from the sale of an old utility. They were also faced with well-established competition as a number of successful and well-established garages and motor repair businesses had been operating in Warracknabeal for many years. The business that was to develop over the next 50 years, however, would serve as a tribute to the enterprise and dedication of its founders.