



Braidwood & District Historical Society

PO Box 145 Braidwood NSW 2622

Newsletter

Number 28 March 2023

President's Report

Next week will see the first sod turned for the construction of the Braidwood Heritage Centre. This will be part of the final archaeological assessment of the state heritage site prior to construction. The soil will be sifted and any remnants of earlier construction will be recorded and preserved. Some non-heritage vegetation will be removed and the site levelled in preparation for building to commence.

The DA has been approved by QPRC. The tender for construction has been sent to four well qualified building companies. The decision on the successful tenderer will be made next week by a committee consisting of Peter and John BDHS, Liz Public Works Advisory and a representative from QPRC.

The pathway to this point has been long and hard. The originally funding of \$2.5M will not enable us to complete the project. We have worked hard to gain additional funding with some disappointments. Most recently we were unsuccessful in our application for a \$800k grant from Regional Tourism. However, we are optimistic about our chances of a top up of the original Bush Fire Recovery Grant, soon to be announced. Most of the original projects under the scheme have run into budget problems with increased building costs and unforeseen regulatory and compliance costs.

Owing to the funding uncertainty, the project has been divided into 3 stages.

Each stage will depend on the funding that is available

Stage 1. This can be achieved with the current funding. The plan has been modified to enable the key elements to be completed, namely the accommodation, 4 artisan workshops, a large teaching space, blacksmith shop, museum entrance with shop, museum toilets and toilets in the heritage centre.

Stage 2. At this point, it is dependent on an additional \$1.25M from the Bushfire Recovery Grant. It will include café and fit out, co-working spaces, additional display areas, landscaping, more artisan studio fit outs and air conditioning in the museum.

Stage 3. When funds become available will include improved access to the museum including a lift to the first floor, solar panels and improvements to the family history and archive areas.

We continue to be optimistic about our chances of additional funding as everyone agrees it is a project that will deliver great benefits. If persistence and effort count, we as unpaid community volunteers, have worked hard to achieve our vision. The Braidwood community is behind us. This helps and encourages us.

We have been successful in receiving a grant of \$25k from FRRR Strengthening Rural Communities for the initial employment of a facility manager prior to opening of the Heritage Centre. This means the manager to be appointed will commence employment 3 or 4 months

before opening to manage the set-up, including the leasing and marketing arrangements.

Building construction is expected to commence in April and completed by year end.

Watch this space.

Peter Smith

New Databases Soon Available

One of our very valuable volunteers, Bente, has been working very hard at turning two of our precious books into digitised files. These books in our archive, are those containing the Braidwood Slaughter House branding marks, and from Braidwood Hospital, we have the Infectious Diseases book where the medical staff were required to keep careful details of all patients presenting with anything contagious or suspected of being as such. In the near future, these records will be made available for searching within the museum.

Kerrie's Corner of Unique Museum Artefacts

Kerrie wishes to highlight these rare and significant artefacts located in our museum. They are going to find a prominent place in our museum space now that we have a story to go with them.

Our accession records state that these four items were donated many years ago by George William Stoyles. The artefact is a group of 4 pieces of Tea Service made of electroplated silver. They are a silver Coffee & Tea service manufactured by W. W Harrison, Sheffield England. Presented to George Stoyles in January 1898.



The large coffee pot is engraved: "Presented by the members of the Loyal Friendly Brothers Lodge to Bro. P. C. M. Geo. Stoyles treasurer as a mark of esteem Braidwood Jan 1898."

The Tea Pot, Sugar Bowl and Milk Jug are all engraved with clasped hands of Lodge & G. S.

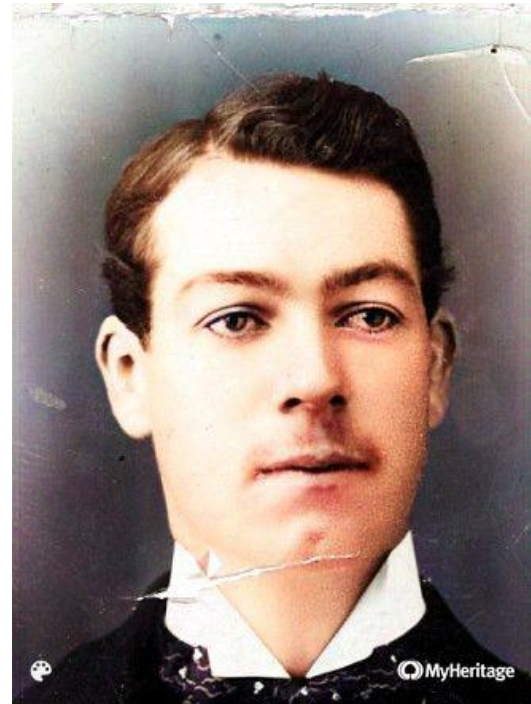
George Stoyles pictured below was born to John & Martha Stoyles of Braidwood on 29th March 1845. George attended the local Public School and he and his brother and sisters were some of the very first students to attend the Braidwood Public School. His father and mother were the managers and licensees for the Royal Hotel (now the Braidwood Museum). Mr James Larmer who built this building was great friends to the couple.

Tragedy struck when George's father passed away on 30th March 1861 when George was sixteen years old, and his little brother Charles was just eighteen months old. Left with a family of 11 children Martha remarried to James Larmer on 30th September 1861. This would have been a very sensible turn of events for Martha.



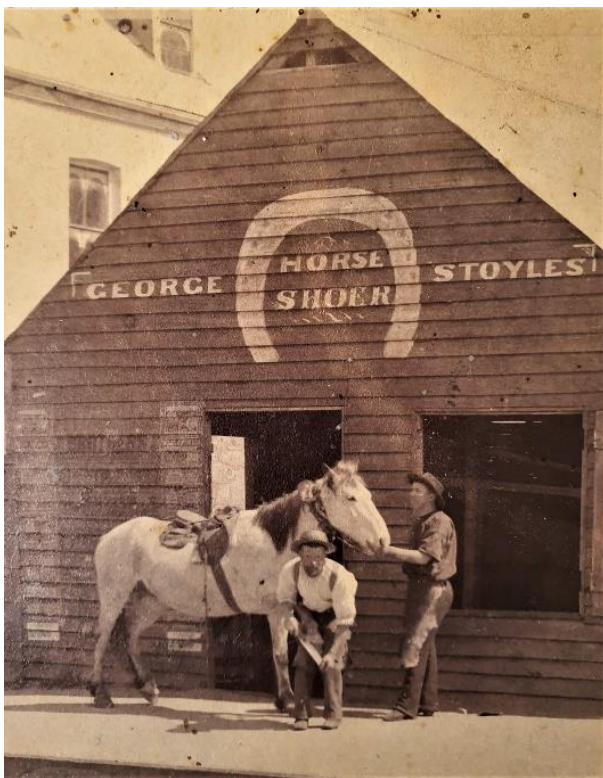
George Clarke Stoyles

George became a blacksmith and opened a ran a very profitable business located where the D & S Motor's garage was located in the 20th century. The photo below shows the blacksmith business when run by his son Joseph Stoyles later in the 19th century.



Joseph Stoyles 1879-1952

Why would George Stoyles be presented with a very valuable and precious gift? When George grew to a man he married on 17th April 1873 to Miss Clara Fisher, another Braidwood pioneer family (her father was Ben Fisher one of the early bakers of this town).



George Clarke Stoyes, kneeling, at his blacksmith shop Wallace St Braidwood

George spent the next thirty odd years rearing his children and working for the local community in various capacities. He was a founding member of the Friendly Bros Lodge of Braidwood. He became a member in 1863 at only 18 years old. He was Vice Grand Master in 1868 and held many other positions amongst this Lodge over the years including the Treasurer for some 16 years. As he approached retiring age, he relinquished several community positions in Braidwood. He was the supervisor and teacher at the Anglican Church Sunday School for over 16 years and he retired from this position in 1887. George was presented with a wonderful luminated address for his services to the Anglican Community. He planned to retire as a blacksmith and took up farming as he had purchased the property called "The Ranch "on the Nerriga Road just south of St Omer. He saw his son Charles go off to the Great War. George

lost his life to the Spanish Flu on 7th July 1919.

Even though his ending was tragic he did leave behind a wonderful legacy and many, many descendants in the Braidwood district and throughout NSW and beyond. The Braidwood Museum is very fortunate to be a custodian of this fine and rare artefact.

Another of Our Volunteers



***Paul Briggs
Committee Member***

I grew up in North Epping, Sydney and I am one of 4 ex- Epping Boys High alumni that I know of around Braidwood. My interest in history was fostered when I was about a 9 year old, and a Japanned box containing many family documents came into my grandmother's ownership from my Gt Grandfather, who inherited them from his father, Lionel Pottinger, who with Alexander Meares, led the 2nd party of special police to try and apprehend John and Thomas Clarke, bushrangers. The paperwork which I now own, contained a warrant card signed by Supt J.W.Orridge, 1867; letters from the Colonial Secretary provisioning their party as well as photos of the original 1862 police, which were previously unknown.

The ownership of the warrant card was of particular interest at my wedding, when MC Peter Smith mentioned it, saying that it had taken 4 generations for the warrant to be finally executed, and I had caught one of the family descendants, my wife Annette, who was also Peter Smith's researcher for his book on the Clarke Gang. My other connection to Braidwood is through my mother's Gt. Grandfather, Robert Sindel, who nominated the unsuccessful Braidwood parliamentary candidate, Henry Parkes. My wife Annette is the society's Secretary, and my 3rd connection to Braidwood through her extensive Braidwood family connections. We have both been enjoying volunteering with the museum and the Historical Society since 2016. It is a pleasure to impart any knowledge that we have of Braidwood's history.

Old Braidwood Books Wanted

Our bookcases are often cluttered with books we no longer need. We sell many books on Braidwood and our surrounding areas, but we often run out of some titles. Do you have Braidwood books you no longer need? We would love to add them to our stocks.

New Members

We are very pleased to welcome:

Joel Bliss
Adrian Cox
Wayne Fanning
Debby Ferguson
Roger Hovey
Elizabeth Trigg
Robert Kohler
Mary Lou Nugent
William Verdon
Paul Robinson

We hope you enjoy our Newsletters

Part 3 of our story of The Mill Pond at Jembaicumbene



The Jembaicumbene Mill in 2008

Change of ownership & investigation of history & potential for restoration/conservation 2008

Following the death of David and Sue Royds the property was inherited by their children William, Stephen, Linda and Susan who sold it to Antony Davies and Andrew Gow in 2008. A comprehensive study of the history of the Mill was begun using 19th century newspapers from Braidwood, Queanbeyan and Sydney, historical records and photographs. Identification was made of the various stages of surviving elements. The 1950s covered sheep yards were examined in detail by Mr Peter Freeman and Antony Davies and having ascertained their date and the fact that they stood over the footprint of the earlier mill ancillary buildings, these were recorded with a Heritage Impact Assessment in December 2008 (see Appendix 9.5) and then removed in 2009. The exposed area was then recorded and preparation made for study, cleaning and clearing of the forecourt and interior. All areas were photographed comprehensively as found. A large quantity of post 1950 debris including machinery and disused building material was removed. All pre-1950 material was retained for assessment. The mill pond, which had been used as a tip since the 1940s and which was filled above ground level, was cleared of debris to the original sides and base, and all items removed were sifted through a sorting table and significant items recorded. The surrounding area was

assessed and the fallen willow trees removed. The forecourt of the Mill, which had accumulated sheep yards and late 20th century disused fencing was cleared. The stone well was cleaned and the top resealed with a wooden and iron cover and a cast iron hand pump fitted. The north side was cleared of 1950s footings and covered with soil to protect any underlying archaeology. The interior ground floor was emptied of debris and cleaned. General late 20th century debris was removed from the first floor.



***Upper floor window fenestration
as found in 2008***



***Ground floor window with
reproduction sash window fitted
2012***

In 2010, following advice from the NSW Heritage Office and assessment of the window and door fenestrations, new window sashes were made in Pennsylvania using a surviving example as a sample, and the original window framing was repaired or replaced as required using identical sections.

The new window sashes were fitted into these in 2011 with the assistance of a grant from the NSW Heritage Office. The ground floor sheep slats were removed and the sub frame cleared of accumulated sheep waste. The floor frame was straightened and reinforced and a new wooden floor with random width boards similar to the original was laid. The main latitudinal frame was raised approximately 200mm where it had dropped due to deterioration of the lower timbers caused by decades of undrained sheep urine. One ground floor vertical post was replaced with a new post of the same timber as it had deteriorated beyond repair. The interior was cleaned and sealed and preparation made for suitable interpretive re-use.

Main Building

The main Flour Mill building of four stories survives intact.

The building is of a Georgian symmetrical design first seen in Britain in the late 18th century and made popular by inclusion in “The Young Millwright & Millers Guide” by Oliver Evans, published in Philadelphia in 1795. This work became the standard reference for millers throughout America, Europe and Australia during the early and mid 19th century and most 19th century flour mills follow designs featured in it. The basic design popularized in this work requires a building four floors high and four or five bays wide, and uses gravity to feed the grain from the attic floor through various hoppers into three sets of grinding stones set in the ceiling of the ground floor. Early mills used water power to operate the machinery but steam engines were gradually introduced from the 1820s. The first steam engine employed in Australia was that at Harris Steam Flour Mill in Darling Harbour, Sydney, in 1835. Other mills were powered by wind or water. By the 1850s steam engines were the more usual power source for flour mills. Dransfield’s mill used a 20hp horizontal Beam engine similar to one currently housed in the Goulburn Pump Station.



The Mill on the Jembaicumbene Plains 1862 , early dairy on the left, surviving barns in centre (National Library of Australia)

The Mill represented one of the largest investments in a commercial industrial building outside of Sydney and Goulburn when it was conceived in 1859. It stood adjacent to a thriving Goldfields village on a 14,000 acre plain in the Jembaicumbene valley, which by the 1850s had been denuded of trees and was used for wheat, grazing or mining. The four storey Mill, being by far the largest building in the area, would therefore have been visible from most vantage points around the valley and a significant local landmark. As the gold rush diminished and the population declined, Jembaicumbene itself was dismantled and most of the town allotment returned to agricultural use. The Mill however, being on the prosperous and privately owned Exeter Farm, was retained for

future possible farm use. Although the engine house and outbuildings were removed and the materials recycled around the property, the main structure has survived exactly as when built allowing a clear interpretation of the original use and of its earlier great significance as a central industry and source of employment in the Jembaicumbene Goldfields.

Technical improvements to the milling equipment were made throughout the 19th century but the main design remained standard internationally until the 20th century. The most significant internal changes to the machinery were the introduction of roller mills, which began to replace burr-stone grinding wheels from the 1880s and were standard equipment by the 1890s. The Jembaicumbene Mill used three sets of French burr-stones and the position of these can be seen in the building where the granite support footings remain. Other functions of machinery originally installed can be interpreted by comparing the published designs with physical marks and holes surviving within the building. As such the Jembaicumbene mill is capable of demonstrating its original functions.

Of six flour mills operating in the Braidwood District in the 1850s, four have been lost; one was washed away in a flood (Manar watermill), one was blown up to demonstrate dynamite in 1895 (Braidwood Wilson's wind mill), two were demolished to enable recycling of the building materials (Mona Mill and Duncan Street Mill). The Mackellar Street Mill, converted by Charles Dransfield and William Bennison from offices into a mill in 1867, survives but was altered by removal of its fourth level and gables and then converted to accommodation. Consequently the Jembaicumbene Mill is the only intact mid 19th century Flour Mill in the Braidwood District.



The Mill Pond used as a tip in 2008.

Outbuildings

Demolition in 1890 – 1897 of the engine house and outbuildings was restricted to the recyclable fabric above the surface. The footings remain and so the footprint of the original structures is easily understood. The removal in 2008-2009 of the 1950s galvanized iron covered sheep yards enabled study of the earlier footings and measurements and photographs were taken of these, which, together with

contemporary newspaper articles describing construction of the mill, have allowed interpretation of the function of the missing components.

These studies have revealed:

- The stone wheel pit over which the 14' diameter steam engine flywheel was mounted.
- The stone footings for the outside wall of the engine house
- The brick footings for the 6,000 gallon boiler
- The brick footings for the office and bakery
- The stone footings of a pumphouse and a stone well with water reticulation pipes
- The stone footings of the 1869 Quartz Crushing Battery



The Mill Pond 2013

- The remnant stove brick walls of the 66' by 44' water reservoir, and remnants of the supporting wooden posts and iron frame of the wooden cover to this
- The 20' deep mill pond, itself reused from an 1851 mining pit, with staked sides and flat decomposed granite floor

- An 1851 mining shaft, boarded with split hardwood slabs and framed with saplings, extending from the mill pond underneath the mill
- A brick hatch accessing the flooded mining shaft from the area of the bakery, presumably for access to water for baking
- A stone well on the south-west corner of the forecourt with wooden covers.

The Mill Pond

The Mill Pond was photographed intact as late as 1905. Originally dug as a mining pit by a Mr Williams in 1851 to avoid the obligation to replace top soil after gold prospecting in the early 1850s, the original pit was kidney shaped and had sides supported by sapling stakes driven into the base of the pond. From the pit various shafts were dug under the topsoil in an attempt to reach the bedrock and so possible gold seams. However the site is shared with several freshwater springs and a high water table, so a Californian pump had to be kept operating to remove water. At least one intact shaft has survived and was photographed during the removal of 45 tonnes of 20th century debris in 2009. The shaft measures 6' by 4' and is lined with split hardwood slabs and supported by sapling frames. When the debris was removed the pond was allowed to flood again thereby preserving the early archaeology.

A quantity of related items were recovered from the mill pond, including:

Two 1860s tinware lanterns, crushed

Various iron carriage and cart components

A large quantity of 1860s-1950s bottles, which were recorded and photographed



Entrance to flooded mine shaft in base of Mill Pond 2009

The flooded mining pit was adopted when the Mill was built in 1859 as a water tank for water flushed from the steam engine and as a flushing source for the quartz crushing plant. The flooded shaft extending under the mill was adopted as a water source for

baking and a brick hatch built over it, from the bakery, with a wooden trapdoor through which a bucket could be let to access water for baking. The brick hatch was measured and photographed and covered with an iron sheet and topsoil for future protection. The survival of the Mill Pond allows a clear understanding of the workings of the mill and its reliance on access to water.

Moveable Relics



Drive wheels from the 1860s threshing machinery

A quantity of remnants of steam engine components including taps and valves remains on the first floor. Two large wooden belt drive wheels, part of the original equipment, have survived stored upstairs. One large 1850s Huon pine flour bin has survived stored in the nearby stables.

Articles collected from the wheel pit during removal of the 1950s sheds include:

- A tin food cover and English Staffordshire ceramic food serving dish of the 1850s found below the footing for the engine, together with numerous salt glazed ink bottles and several 1850s wine bottles
- An 1856 English coin
- Chinese earthenware ginger jars
- Butchered animal bones from sheep and cattle
- Various used iron pads from the quartz crushing battery



Cast iron engineer's warning bell as the steam engine was started or stopped, but damaged in dismantling the engine and discarded into the pit.



The iron emergency brake used by a stage coach or heavy wagon for descending steep hills.



***Brass
decorative
strap from
mill workings***

Articles collected during cleaning of the interior ground floor of the mill include:

- Several pressed brass floral straps used to decorate the end stage of the flour milling equipment which would have been shown to clients
- Several earlier sandstock bricks believed to be from the 1840s dairy buildings previously on the site
- Various leather shoes of the 1860s
- Assorted 1920s wool handling equipment
- An embroidered boys school cap dated 1904

The accumulated moveable relics have been recorded and stored on site in preparation for display at a future date where they will provide important anecdotal information for those interpreting the site.

Comparative local Mill Sites of the 1850s-1860s

Of six flour mills operating in the Braidwood District in the 1850s, four have been lost; one was washed away in a flood (Manar watermill), one was blown up to demonstrate dynamite in 1895 (Braidwood Wilson's wind mill), two were demolished to enable recycling of the building materials (Mona Mill and Duncan Street Mill). The Mackellar Street Mill, converted by Charles Dransfield and William Bennison from offices into a mill in 1864, survives but was altered by removal of its fourth level and gables and then converted to accommodation. Consequently the Jembaicumbene Mill is the only intact mid 19th century Flour Mill in the Braidwood District. The nearest comparable mill of a similar period is in Goulburn. A smaller mill of a related design built to use roller milling equipment in 1888 survives in Queanbeyan and is now used as a function centre and for accommodation.

External construction - Walls

The footings and first level of the mill building are constructed of local granite, *Braidwood Granodiorite* – forming a part of the Lachlan fold belt. The geological description of the stone is *Hornblende-biotite granodiorite*, some with *euohedral hornblende phenocrysts (porphyritic phase)* with some *mafic quartz diorite*. The granite was cut from surface outcrops in fields surrounding the mill site, by drilling and feathering into large slabs which were then transported to the building site using horse drawn sleds. Source outcrops of granite have been identified in the fields ranging to 3kms from the Mill site including several with unclaimed drilled and split granite blocks.

The following two levels and the attic gables are made of sandstock bricks laid in English bond, the lowest walls built to the same thickness as the stonework, and each course diminishing in thickness by one brick to the attic gable where the bricks are laid three thick. The bricks are made of natural clay excavated on the site in a 500 m trench behind the mill, which was then converted to a water race used to bring water from the Jembaicumbene Creek closer to the mill workings. Similar red clay is evident in sections of the mill race. All of the upper window sills are also of dressed rusticated granite blocks.



Frame of massive longitudinal beams

The Mill building comprises a ground floor five bays wide with granite stone walls nearly 2' thick. The dressed stonework extends down to bedrock and clay at 10' to 15' below

the surface. The façade and entranceway, on the south side, uses rusticated dressed granite blocks of fine quality, with protruding detail courses at ground level and at the top of the stonework. The west and south walls are similarly detailed, to a slightly lower quality being less often viewed. The east wall is dressed flat as it formed the inside wall of the engine house.

The upper walls are of sandstock brick made with clay quarried from the water race behind the mill. Receipts for the brickmaking work survive at Exeter Farmhouse, which was constructed of the same method in 1

The upper walls are of sandstock brick made with clay quarried from the water race behind the mill. Receipts for the brickmaking work survive at Exeter Farmhouse, which was constructed of the same method in 1858. Upper window fenestrations have dressed rusticated granite sills. Above the front double doors is a pair of unloading doors, opening outwards, for the discharge of cut chaff and horse feed, a by-product of threshing the grain from the stalks of wheat.

The internal framing consists of a set of four massive longitudinal beams, each in three sections joined by a scarf joint and peg. The first is set at ground floor level on four granite footings and extending into notches in the end walls, the other three support the three upper floors. The longitudinal beams are each supported by four matching vertical posts dividing the five bays of the structure. This arrangement supports floor joists running across the building between the front and rear walls and resting on the longitudinal frame.



***The gable roof is constructed with a
sawn frame and strengthened by collar
ties with notched lap joints and secured
by wooden pegs***

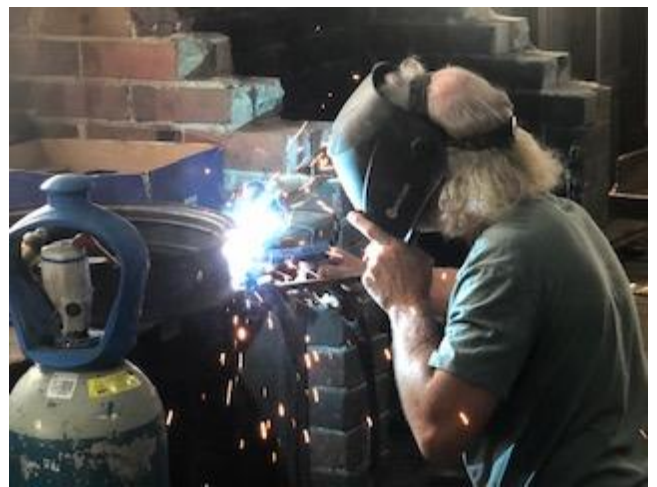


The roof is made with small-profile corrugated iron roofing tiles labelled “Tupper & The gable roof is constructed with a sawn frame and strengthened by collar ties with notched lap joints and secured by wooden pegs.

Company, London & Birmingham”. Each small sheet has three riveted pegs which clip into the sheet below and the whole is irregularly clipped to wooden battens.

The Restoration of Museum’s 1930 Dodge i

It is now in its third month and considerable progress has been made. Our volunteers have been focused on consolidating the heavy items, engine and chassis and getting the wooden spoke wheels reconditioned and assembled so that when have to move the



vehicle from the current workshop we can do so easily. We have a group of amazing volunteers who are working together in a wonderful respectful way. They all recognise

that a project like this throws up the unexpected, so despite their wealth of knowledge and experience they are all learning on the job. Together, they are working through all the problems. The volunteers have also been very generous by providing tools, workshop equipment, manuals etc. We have joined the Dodge Brothers Club of Australia and their members have been helpful and very interested in the communal



nature of the project.

The wooden spoke wheels have been a labour intensive job. Removing rot, oiling and strengthening each spoke, sandblasting rims, removing rust, welding joints ready for painting. They are a very distinctive part of the vehicle so we are very pleased they could be saved.

The D&S motors site has proved to be an ideal location for such a community project. We have a banner and information board explaining what we are doing and every time we open the roller door, visitors and residents flock in to ask about the garage and our progress. We are in the workshop every Friday and Saturday from 10am. Drop in to get involved or to just watch and cheer us on.



We received the vehicle from the National Museum as a gift and we have nearly all the parts, but inevitably, there will be many small items missing and some work will need to be paid for. A few years ago, a past President of the Historical Society, John Gellibrand,

left a generous bequest to the museum. The committee has kept the funds separated from our general revenue while we waited for a special project that could be undertaken in John's name. The Committee has agreed the Dodge restoration is a wonderful use for the bequest. We have named the ute 'Gellibrand' which everyone agrees is a wonderful name for a car such as this and a thoroughly appropriate legacy to remember all of John's hard work for the Society.

Written by John Stahel, Vice President

**All other articles written by Jill Clarke, unless otherwise stated.
Typesetting done by Annette Briggs**

Our

Society values the support of

Queanbeyan Palerang Council



and

Braidwood & Districts Community Bank



and



and



