



# Braidwood & District Historical Society

PO Box 145 Braidwood NSW 2622



## Newsletter

Number 31 December 2023

### President's Report

Construction of the Braidwood Heritage Centre will commence very soon. The DA has been approved by Council, Greenwich Constructions has been contracted and a private certifier has been engaged. Some site preparation will likely take place before Christmas. The project is being divided into two stages.

**Stage 1** is fully funded under the \$3.75M bush fire recovery grants. It will consist of accommodation with downstairs kitchen, dining and lounge area, laundry and toilet, a disabled access room with en-suite, with available connection to a second room for extended family use also with en-suite. Upstairs will provide 4 rooms with en-suites and views into the museum grounds. There will be a working blacksmith's shop under the guidance of Paul Bott. The existing museum building will have new rear disabled access, a reception area with museum shop, new entrance to the collection and separate entrance to family history/research area. There will be a lift from the lower exhibition area to the first floor Oddfellows Hall. The building will be air conditioned, good for the collection and all year-round comfort for visitors, staff, and volunteers. Museum toilets for men and women will be added to the current single visitor toilet beside the new museum entrance.

Completion of this first stage will allow the ongoing employment of a site/museum manager. We are in receipt of Foundation for Rural and Regional Grant of \$25,000 to enable a manager to be appointed during the latter part of the construction phase to assist in completing the overall project and to prepare for the grand opening, as the saying goes "hitting the ground running". Once the first stage is operational the cash flow will provide funding for ongoing management salary.

**Stage 2** currently, is only partially funded. It is hopeful that additional funding will become available while construction of stage 1 is in progress. Stage 2 will consist of conversion of the existing sheds for artisan studios, demonstrating lost crafts, making products, and running classes. Products made on-site will be available for sale either directly from artisans or through the museum shop. Additional areas will be available as co-working spaces. There will be a new toilet block separate from the museum for use by visitors to the Heritage Centre. Additional exhibition space and a café will complete the project.

### **2024 will be an historic year for BDHS and Braidwood as a whole.**

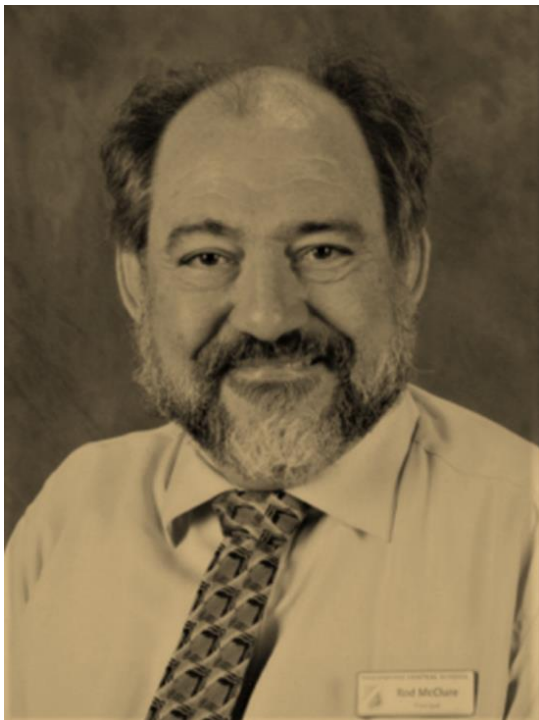
Also, we should congratulate our hard-working secretary, Annette for the success in obtaining the following grants: Veolia for \$1,000 for filing and shelving materials, \$2,000 from Museums and

Galleries for assistance in paying utilities and significantly, \$13,448 from the National Library for conservation work on the museum collection which will be undertaken by professionals. Also, thanks to QPRC for waiving the payment of Council rates.

All this good work and ongoing commitment would not have been possible without the great team of volunteers and our talented dedicated committee. Thanks, John Stahel Vice President, Annette Briggs Secretary, Cathy Cooper Treasurer, Paul Briggs, Jill Clarke and Kerrie Beers and a big welcome to Rod McClure who joined the committee at the recent AGM.

**Peter Smith**

### ***Another of Our Volunteers***



***Rod McClure  
Committee Member***

I was born in Goulburn and spent my early years at Narrandera in the Riverina. My family moved to Sydney in 1965. I lived there until 1976. I attended Macquarie University undertaking a combined Bachelor of Arts Education degree majoring in Australian and American history with a very strong

experience of Middle Eastern, Greek, and Roman ancient history.

I taught for thirteen years at Dapto High, three years at Airds High in Campbelltown as a Head Teacher History, ran an Education Resource Centre for three years as a Training and Development Officer (equivalent of a Deputy Principal), was Deputy Principal at Narooma High for three years and Principal of Braidwood Central School for sixteen years. I taught Ancient and Modern History, Aboriginal Studies, and Legal Studies during my career. I added a sound knowledge of Ancient Egyptian History along the way. Even as a Principal I took every opportunity that I could to “escape” to the classroom and teach history. It was never often enough.

The greatest influence on me was my Grandfather Donald Louis McClure. He was a self-educated man and from when I can remember, he would bounce me on his knee and quote “Prince John rode a horse called Magna Carta to Runnymede and there....” It was a long history of England; he was very much an Edwardian man. Then when I could read, he provided me with something people may remember “Knowledge Magazines”. I still have some.

The other influence was my family coping with the loss of my great uncle Jas Stanger in Singapore in 1942. My great grandmother left me his medals and other memorabilia and my grandfather passed to me all of the items that he had that were of any historical value. In turn this led to a deep interest and knowledge of military history throughout the ages.

I hope to contribute to the Museum and the Society to the best of my ability. I love the town and its history. When my time comes, don't be surprised if I rise from the coffin to give one last lesson on what really happened to Rameses II at the Battle of Kadesh and why Braidwood men were wary of enlisting for World War One!

## Kerrie's Corner of Unique Museum Artefacts

Kerrie wishes to highlight this rare and significant artefact, donated to our museum by our local resident, John Feehan.



***Front of the Seed Cabinet made for P.L.C. Shepherd & Sons, seed merchant.***

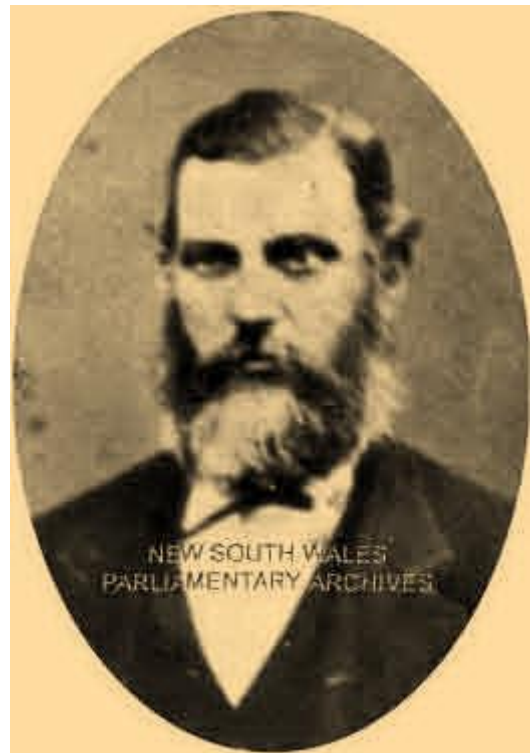
An elderly lady asked John to clean out her garage. He asked what did she know about the little shelving unit. She told him her husband got it from the Chinese people who sold everything at Braidwood (this would be the Nomchong family) and that it was probably over a hundred years old. The Gold miners would have all grown their own vegetables in the 1800s. The seed packets would have been displayed in the glass section and packets kept in the drawers. Note the date on the post card is 1907. This post card will definitely be kept with the unit. The greatest coincidence is that Peter Smith's family at Emu Plains lived beside the Shepherd

family and supplied seeds to the Shepherds Nursery.



***Back of the cabinet, with storage drawers.***

**Patrick Lindsay Crawford  
Shepherd**





Son of Thomas Shepherd, nurseryman, and Jane Henderson.

He was a Member of the Legislative Assembly, and Commissioned as a Justice of the Peace in 1861.

Seed and plant merchant, he gained pastoral experience overlanding stock in his youth, then helped his father at Darling Nursery, Newtown; later establishing PLC Shepherd & Co., seedsman and plant merchants in Sydney with nurseries at Bowral and Colo Vale. He was President of Horticultural Society of New South Wales, Trustee of Berrima Hospital in 1889, and of Victoria Park. Member of Church of England Synod, Royal commissioner on Colonial Defence from 1870 until 1871, Public Charities from 1875 until 1876. He joined the Volunteer Artillery in 1861, commissioned in 1868, retired as a major in 1876.

### ***A personal note from Peter Smith.***

P.L.C. Shepherd & Son Pty Ltd were subscribers along with other leading seed merchants to the establishment of United Seed Growers' Pty Ltd. which was set up for the war effort (WW2) to ensure Australia had a stock of vegetable seed to feed the nation in case we were cut off from the rest of the world and to provide food for the large number of American troops operating out of Australia. The main production area was centred on Moruya and my father Gordon Smith was put in charge of the operation.

After the war my family moved to Emu Plains where my father oversaw plant breeding in trial grounds owned by the Shepherd family.

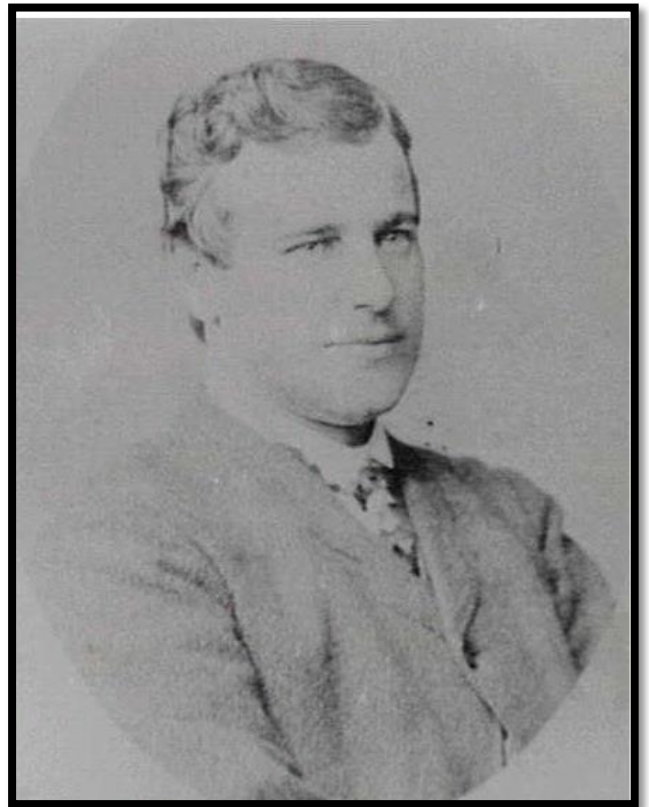
### **‘Coobidgee’, ‘Coobidga’, ‘Coobidja’**

This impressive Georgian style home located under the Jillamatong Hill was once named ‘Coobidgee’ as in Murrumbidgee now known as ‘Coobidja’.

Located just southwest of the centre of Braidwood this lovely home was originally built in the early 1860s for Mr Edward Augusta Scarvell, a local Braidwood solicitor.

Edward Scarvell arrived in Braidwood ready to practice as a solicitor in April 1860. He began to advertise his services along with fellow solicitor, Mr Fell ( he was practicing in Braidwood earlier than Scarvell).

Edward was married in Feb 1862 to Miss Annette Want. Her sister married Rees Llewellyn a local doctor.



***Solicitor Edward Scarvell***

Edward commissioned the building of their home to builder Mr Mason (Tallaganda Times Wed May 15 1985.) Mr Mason also built the stately home ‘Yately’ in Monkittee St.

The Georgian style home is constructed of timber; originally it would have had a shingled roof.

‘Coobidja’ as stated in 1875. ‘Contained drawing and dining rooms, each 22x 16 feet with an 8 feet hall, study 15x16; 2

bedrooms, 20 x 16, three bedrooms 14x13 and another 13 x 10 feet. It had two servant's rooms, storeroom pantry and bathroom. There was a 3-stall stable, coach house, harness-room, garden and well. The land was divided into 3 paddocks and the whole securely fenced.' The Scarvell family would have had servants and house maids. Their accommodation unfortunately was long demolished. The maid's rooms would have been off the original kitchen, which would have been a separate building. Edward Scarvell was a renowned solicitor and the records detail that he was often the defence attorney for various members of the Clarke family during the bushranger period in Braidwood.

**HOUSES AND LAND FOR SALE.**  
**B**RAIDWOOD.—For SALE, COOBIJA, a Fine Residence, pleasantly situated, and overlooking town of Braidwood, with about 56 acres of land. house contains drawing and dining rooms, each 22 feet, with 8 feet hall; study, 15 x 15; 2 bedrooms, 20 x 13; 3 ditto, 14 x 13; 1 ditto, 13 x 10; 2 servants' rooms, room, pantry, and bath room. There are also a 3-stable, coachhouse, harness-room, garden, well, &c. land is divided into 3 paddocks, the whole securely fenced. For particulars apply to E. A. SCARVELL, Solicitor, Young; or G. P. SLADE, Solicitor, Bridge-street, Chambers, Sydney.

**SMH Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October 1875**

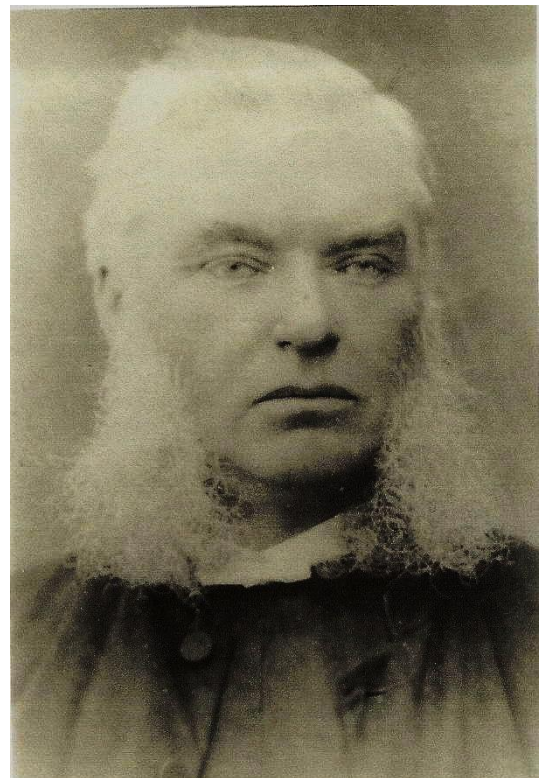


**Mrs Elizabeth MacKenzie**

**LEGAL.**—The announcement of the projected departure of Mr. Scarvell from the Braidwood district will (says the *Dispatch*) no doubt cause considerable surprise not unaccompanied with regret, for he has been upwards of fifteen years resident there; and it has been there that he has made for himself the reputation he has gained in his profession. He intends going over to Young, where he will not be long in gaining a practice, as from all accounts that is a very rising district. Messrs. Curtis and Gannon, of Goulburn, succeed him in his business at Braidwood.

**Burrangong Argus Sat 31 July 1875.**

Mr Scarvell and family left the Braidwood District, between July and October 1875. They sold their lovely home to the Presbyterian Church in c1876 for £1000. It is believed that the Church took up a subscription list to pay for it. During this time the home was referred to as the Presbyterian Manse. Rev MacKenzie had been the minister of the Presbyterian Church for nineteen years and lived there with his wife Elizabeth and his large family. Rev MacKenzie died in May 1894.



**Rev Simon MacKenzie**



Soon after Mr Henry & Mrs Mary Mater and his family lived at 'Coobidgee' and farmed the acreage that surrounds the home. Henry named it 'Homburg'. Henry was Braidwood's animal inspector and held a position with the Local Lands Board for 42 years. He was also the first captain of the Braidwood Fire Brigade (1900-1906).



*Mater family outside the home they called 'Homburg'*

Henry Mater

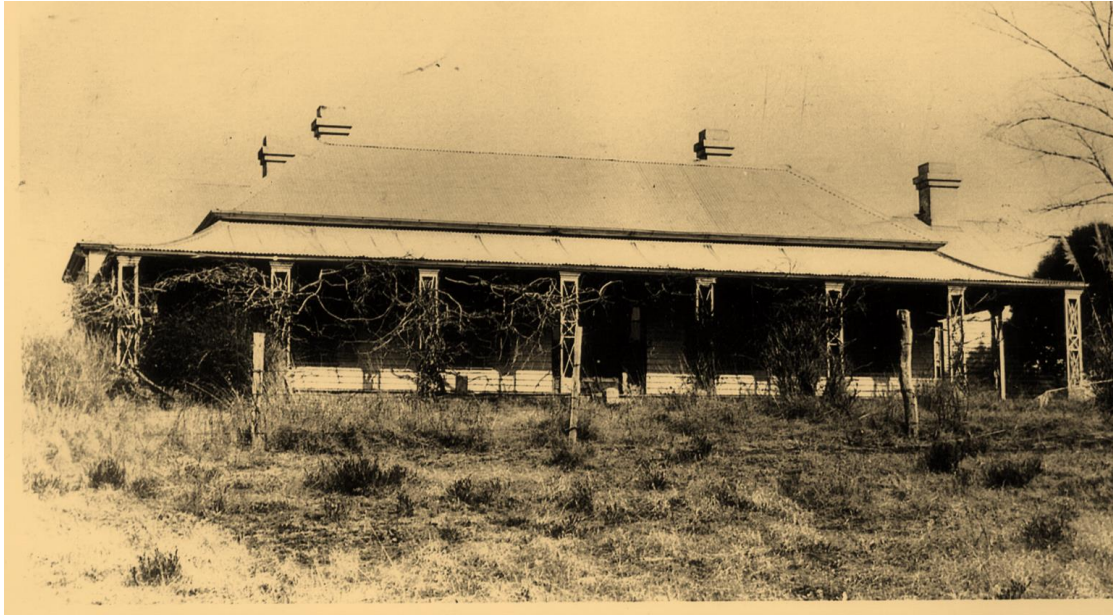


Mary Mater





Mr Michael Richard and & Mrs Bessie O'Brien (nee Hogg) purchased the home in c1918. The O'Brien business papers referred to 'Coobidgee' but another variant was 'Coobidga'. This particular name is an indigenous word meaning 'A little hill under a large hill'.



***Photos of 'Coobidgee' and Mrs O'Brien's garden from the O'Brien collection, Braidwood & District Historical Society.***



In 1919 during the influenza epidemic, the house was used as a Temporary Isolation Hospital. The O'Brien family generously loaned the home so patients with influenza symptoms could be isolated and looked after by a dedicated group of nurses and housekeeping staff. The photo below depicts a group of nurses and matron on the steps on the front verandah.



***Staff of the influenza Temporary Isolation Hospital at 'Coobidgee' also known as 'The Manse', 1919. The temporary hospital boasted 12 beds.  
Photo courtesy the Jackson family.***





## **Braidwood Health Committee.**

ON behalf of all the citizens in the Braidwood district; the Committee desires to express its THANKS to Mr. and Mrs. M. R. O'Brien for the use of "Coobidgee" as a Temporary Hospital. The Committee desires to make it clearly understood that, in accordance with medical opinion, this use cannot be of danger to future tenants.

J. J. DONNELLY,  
Mayor,  
President Health Committee  
10th April, 1919.

Miss McCaffrey volunteered for nursing service at the influenza hospital, but owing to the fact that she had not been inoculated her offer could be availed of. She thereupon agreed to take the place of Nurse Kelly at the general hospital, and thus release her for service at the emergency hospital.

### ***Braidwood Dispatch 1919***

Miss E L Ross was a trained nurse, while on holidays in her hometown Mongarlowe, volunteered and took charge of the temporary hospital. Mrs A Page was praised for setting up the temporary hospital. Mrs Mackellar the then president of the Red Cross, took control of the housekeeping. Miss Jane Hogg the Secretary of the Red Cross also worked diligently to secure the aid of the community. The bedding and furniture for the temporary hospital was donated by the community. Nurse Kelly who worked at Braidwood's general hospital also volunteered. Mrs W J Whitfield was a junior at the local hospital and she volunteered for service. She saw the epidemic through. Nurse Jones was also a nurse. They were all under the expert supervision of Dr Trail. The quick and decisive actions of Dr Trail and the health Committee indeed saved many lives in the Braidwood District, Even though there were some tragic deaths, it most certainly would have been a lot worse if the setting up of the temporary hospital at 'Coobidgee' was not undertaken.

Mr E G Morris undertook the command of the construction staff. Mr Dowell undertook to take absolute control of the carrying staff and either carry out the necessary work with his own carts or arrange others. Mr W Scott undertook to carry out the ambulance work with his motor car. He removed patients from their homes to the temporary hospital. An inhalation chamber on the footpath in front of the Ryrie Park was commenced and in use by Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 1919. An enormous amount of work was carried out by the local health committee and the whole Braidwood community gave assistance by providing an abundance of cooked provisions donated by the town's people.

A group of men also were to carry out patrol duties in the town and at the hospital. They were Mr Page, Champion, Addison, R. W. Dawson, Roach, Bensley, C. Styles, Meldrum, Maiden, Mutton, Bean, Goard, R. Clarke, Ernschaw, T Higgs, J. Rogers, McDougall, Mater, Howard, Perce, Sinclair, J. Hanscombe, J. Clarke, Rodway, J.J. Feehan and L. Higgins.

***(Braidwood Review Tuesday April 8 1919 page 4)***

It seems from records that Mr & Mrs Henry C Maddrell were also in residence at 'Coobidgee' c 1928. Henry passed away in March 1930 and it is unknown how long Mrs Maddrell lived there afterwards.

When Mick O'Brien retired, he and Bessie and their daughter Connie moved from 'Mt Elrington' to 'Coobidgee'. Bessie O'Brien and her daughter Connie were keen gardeners, and the house boasted a well-kept and planned garden. Michael died on the 28<sup>th</sup> May 1951. Bessie and Connie continued to live in 'Coobidgee'. To gain extra income Bessie and Connie took on boarders. Some of the Braidwood Central School teachers, Mr Neal Conaghan, Miss Moira Bottrell (who married John Maddrell) and Mr Walsh were all boarders there at one time. Bessie and Connie moved into Malone St Braidwood during the 1960s.



***Group photo of O'Brien family at 'Coobidja' 1950***

***Top [L to R]: Noel Wilson, Mick (Michael Richard) O'Brien, Frank O'Brien.  
Middle [L to R]: Bessie O'Brien, Gwen Wilson (née O'Brien) with Kerry on her lap,  
Aunt Alice Hogg, Peg Roberts (née O'Brien), Connie O'Brien, Nellie Wilson [mother  
of Noel] with Brien Wilson in front.  
Front [L to R]: Evan Roberts holding Brian Roberts, John Roberts, Nell Reynolds  
(and child)***

Mr Roger & Mrs Cheryl Jackson purchased this lovely home in 1967. They always referred to it as 'Coobidja'. Their family of three daughters and one son were all brought up there. They lovingly restored and kept many of the special features of the home. In 1985 it was described as, 'the interior comprises of 14 rooms including six bedrooms. Each bedroom has a lovely marble fireplace and mantles. It has large rooms and 12-foot-high ceilings. It boasted beautiful Australian red cedar skirting boards and doors'.

***Tallaganda Time May 15<sup>th</sup> 1985***



Many of the local young people and families remember being hosted by Cheryl as she often held dinners, fundraisers and celebrations at this home. One of the treasured features the family own still is a wonderful dining table that Miss Connie O'Brien gifted to Roger and Cheryl as an engagement present as it was too large for her home in Malone Street Braidwood. Rachel Graham nee Jackson still has this delightful piece of history.



**Back Row, left to right: Roger, Tanya, Fiona, Cheryl,  
Front Row: Cameron and Rachel Jackson.**

Roger and Cheryl were keen thoroughbred breeders and stood several well-known stallions including 'Cast Iron'. Cheryl & Roger were also hard-working members of the Braidwood Jockey Club and as Secretary Cheryl, was instrumental in the resurgence of the Jockey Club during the 1980s. They also ran their family farm at Harold's Cross. Cheryl was an early member of the Braidwood Historical Society.

**CAST IRON**

Half-brother to VRC Derby winner Galena  
Boy from a sister to the champion Tobin  
Bronze

Won 9 races from 7 furlongs to 1 ¼ mls  
and now a success at stud.  
For bookings and inquiries

**COOBIDJA STUD**  
**BRAIDWOOD**

Owners  
**ROGER & CHERYL JACKSON**  
048 422114

**BRAIDWOOD** **CIRCA 1860**

## "COOBIDJA"

*A Classic with Character & Charm!*



"Coobidja" sits in beautifully established gardens boasting mature trees and exemplifies the best of early Australian architecture. This gracious home is sited on 14 acres overlooking picturesque, historic Braidwood.

In 1990 the home underwent extensive renovation in sympathy with the history of the property.

Five spacious bedrooms and two bathrooms render this an ideal home for the growing family.

A separate sitting room, study with built-ins and dining room offer living and entertaining alternatives.

The character is enhanced with high ceilings, marble and cedar fireplaces and well proportioned rooms.

There is a private water supply to supplement the town water and fertile granite soil.

**WORDS ALONE DON'T DO THE HOME JUSTICE!**

**OPEN FOR INSPECTION: SUNDAY 2-3PM OR BY APPOINTMENT**

**AUCTION: ON SITE SUNDAY 14TH MARCH, 1993 AT 12 NOON**

**DETAILS: BILL BRIDGES 02-327 1512 or**  
**GARY DONOGHUE 048-422 620**

**W.J. BRIDGES R.E.**  
18/20-26 Cross Street, Double Bay  
☎ **(02) 327 1512**



Roger and Cheryl sold 'Coobidja' in 1993 to the Campbell family from Araluen who restored it and sold it again soon after. Over the last 30 years the ownership has changed several times.



On 16<sup>th</sup> September 2023 a fire was spotted and 'Coobidja' suffered extensive damage. It is a great shame that one of the wonderful stately homes in the Braidwood District is no more.

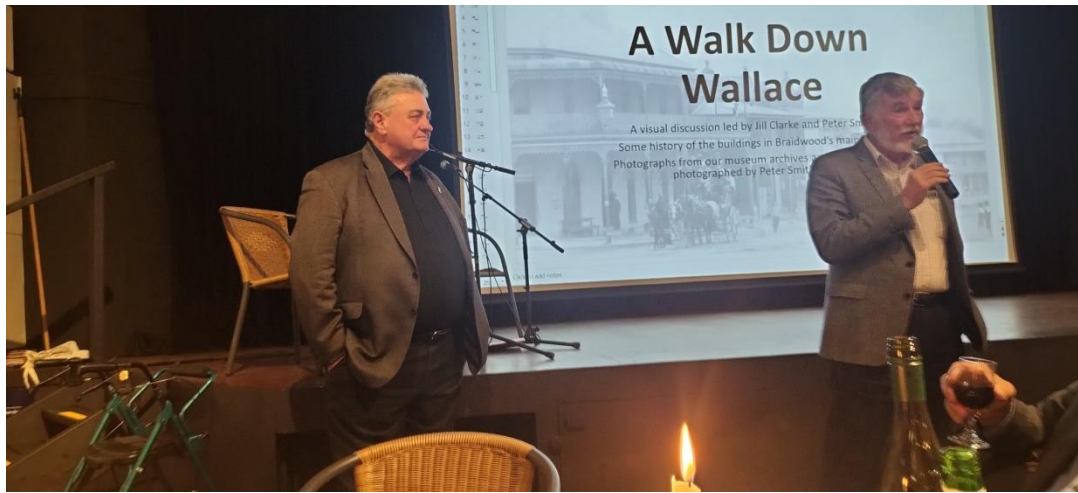
## Our Annual Dinner

On 4<sup>th</sup> November, Braidwood Historical Society held a very successful Annual Dinner in the National Theatre. The theme was "**Walk Down Wallace**", and Jill Clarke and Peter Smith presented old and new photos of particular shops down the main street. There was some wonderful interaction with the audience, and some great stories were told of almost forgotten shops and their owners. The dinner was magnificent and catered for by Golden Roast.



*John Feehan relating his bushman's tale.*





***Our MC was Paul Briggs. Peter Smith, President, introduced the night's entertainment***



***Jill Clarke and Peter Smith presenting the entertainment.***



***Stunning table of "nibbles".***



***Peter Smith and Jill Clarke, our wonderfully knowledgeable Committee member doing a magnificent job.***





***The winner of a Trivia contest, Judy Scaife.***



***The winning  
table on the  
night.  
John Maddrell,  
Steve, Judy and  
Cass Scaife.***



# The Restoration of the Museum's 1930 Dodge

## **'Gellibrand' Takes Shape in Dodge City**

Written by John Stahel, Vice President

As I have said before, the restoration has truly become a community project. Many residents and visitors regularly drop in for an update. There are about 20 volunteers who are involved in some large or small way and a core of regulars



Glug Glug Glug



Vince at work on a gasket

Vince, a man of few words, has been in the thick of it. He is a regular contributor and noted for his catch phrase 'I think I've got one of those in my shed.' He has been on hand for many of the key moments. He scores high marks for knowledge and experience of course, but he also builds confidence, as the entire team looks to him.



Vince and Paul B working on the drive shaft.



Vince and Dave

I call Paul Robinson 'Mr Micro Millimetre'. He is a hard working perfectionist and has been churning out spare parts from his secret workshop. He can fashion a new bolt or bolt a new fashion. On top of the many hours hard grind on the Dodge, he has also been doing his freelance job restoring the museum's J.J. Seeking portable steam engine. It is a stationary steam engine that can be moved, rather than a moving steam engine that is stationary. High marks for precision. Special award for attendance too



Mr MM's latest fashion



The J.J. Seeking portable

Joel the Sculptor brings to the project an attitude. A 'can do' attitude. Chasing a part, adapting a connection, identifying a missing link. No procrastination. The part is found. The connection is repaired. The fault is identified and solutions explored. Involved throughout the engine assembly, it was 'the Sculptor' who made sure the brakes worked by the time the engine worked. When the Dodge stops at the bottom of Wallace Street, Joel can take most of the credit. Unable to find the accelerator, he made one. High marks on his end of term report for ingenuity.





Dave the Cowboy has also been in the thick of it. He has an energy that pushes the project forward. Perhaps its the hair. He recently did an amazing repair to the fuel tank and you will have seen him tweaking the spark advance when the motor started a fortnight ago. He has also been instrumental in the evolution of what will become the final configuration of the body. Not afraid to give an opinion, Dave gets high marks for enthusiasm and drive. If you want a stubborn problem solved, call for Dave and his hammer. There's nothing quite as entertaining as watching Mr Micro Millimetre grimace when he's watching Dave with an angle grinder. But everyone agrees the proof is in the pudding. The Cowboy has some runs on the board and can claim a real stake in the success of this project



Dave and Ted fit the head gasket

I think I might have described this before but there seems to be three or four levels of engagement with this project. The core group I've described above. Then a group of regulars who contribute when they can and who work on special individual tasks. Fanno, Jin, Beers, Jarvis, Murray, Clarence the Clocker who sneaks away from the home workshop where he fiddles with small parts to fiddle with small parts in another workshop. The Smithy, Leon, Bruce and nothing could happen without the enthusiastic support of Matt Thane There's another wider circle who I know will be there to provide specialist help and advice when they are called upon. And beyond that, our community who are all showing an interest. Drop in and see us soon. To help or cheer



Progress.

***Heads on ! Crikey ! This might work !***

**To see this video, paste it into your browser. Very exciting!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

[https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=9d878293de&attid=0.2&permmsgid=msg-f:1780708009329570632&th=18b6587ff8c83348&view=att&disp=safe&realattid=f\\_lo5dgb2u1](https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=9d878293de&attid=0.2&permmsgid=msg-f:1780708009329570632&th=18b6587ff8c83348&view=att&disp=safe&realattid=f_lo5dgb2u1)

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



Our  
Society values the support of

**Queanbeyan Palerang Council**



and

Community Bank  
Braidwood



and



and



And



