

# Taralga Historical Society News

No 2, 25th August 2025.

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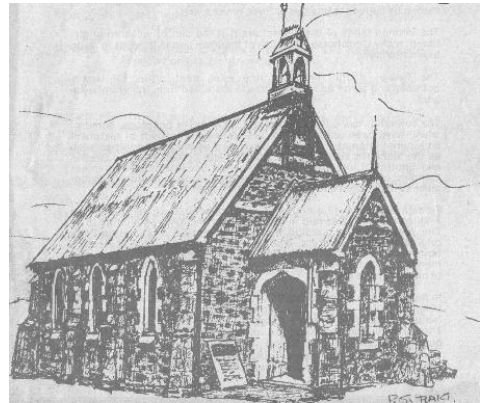
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**NEXT MEETING: 30<sup>TH</sup> of August, 2 P.M.**

**Memberships for 2025 Due: \$20 per person.**

Account name: Taralga Historical Society Inc. BSB: 062545 Account: 10040942

Hello and welcome to the second newsletter for 2025. Maintenance and planning for future events has continued over the quieter winter months at the museum. Read on to find out what we've been up to.

## ***Vale Russell Chalker***

In June we were all saddened by the death of Russell Chalker. Russell was the husband of Mary Chalker for 67 years, Mary being one of our life members and past presidents. Our thoughts are with Mary and her extended family during this time.

Russell lived a hardworking and interesting 90 years farming and raising a family in the Taralga district. In the next newsletter you will be able to read more about Russell's life. I look forward to having a talk to Mary and writing more about Russell once I'm back home in October.

## **Windmill Repairs**

If you've driven past the museum lately you may have seen the Mast, Foos & Co windmill is restored and back on its tower.

This windmill is one of nine that are documented in Australia and an important part of our collection. Built in 1890 in Springfield, Ohio, USA the windmill was brought to the Taralga district to pump water from the well at Drury's Dairy at the corner of Taralga Road and Strathaird lane. Now called Strathalbyn some of you may remember my visit to see the Thorpe family there and some photos of the dairy buildings that I put in the newsletter.

The windmill was acquired by the museum after the deaths of Aub and Frances Johns when it made its way along with a lot of artefacts from Strathalbyn to the museum such as the timber hay press and the Bedford truck.

During strong wind in June 2020 the windmill incurred damage to its sails and was no longer able to function. Soon after we engaged Thomas Glastonbury, a heritage windmill specialist from Molong who was able to restore the windmill. The head and sails were removed by members of the museum and driven up to Molong. Over many months Thomas reconditioned the head and fully constructed the tail vane and new sails, these were particularly challenging to built due to their bucket shape. The windmill was also repainted in the original colours.

In June the windmill head was put back in place. We will officially unveil the restored windmill on the October long weekend this year, so come along.

This restoration project was made possible with a grant from the Taralga Wind Farm Community Fund.



### **Line Dancing at the Masonic Hall**

Line dancing is held each Wednesday evening at 5.00pm in the Masonic Hall. Sessions run for one hour and are led by a qualified instructor.

The program has been well supported and provides a lively and enjoyable way for members and the community to come together. Judy Chalker acts as the contact person for this activity.

### **Gardens and Museum work**

During the past month, Annette and Mick Chalker have carried out significant work in the gardens of the museum grounds. All roses, including those in the Memorial Rose Garden, have been pruned and prepared for the coming season. In addition, a row of shrubs has been planted along the embankment near the Village Life Shed/Machinery Shed. Over time, these will develop into a hedge that will further enhance the appearance of the site.

Anita has also continued her efforts in weeding the gardens, ensuring they remain well maintained. In addition, she has spent a large part of the winter working on the archiving of articles in the Village Life Shed/Machinery Shed, contributing further to the Society's collection management.

Jeff has undertaken maintenance work on the Village Life Shed/Machinery Shed, including cleaning out the gutters and preparing to trim back overhanging trees.

Thank you to everyone who helps out in keeping the grounds of the museum looking so good and putting in effort through the cold winter months.

### **Relocation of the Telephone Exchange**

Work has been undertaken to relocate the old Telephone Exchange from the Church Museum to the Village Life Shed/Machinery Shed, where it will be more appropriately housed. We intend to create a telephone exchange display area.

This project is being led by Graham, with assistance from Laurie, Jeff, and Pat. We plan to interview some local residents with knowledge of the workings of the Telephone Exchange in Taralga to provide historical information and insights about its operation.

As part of the project, Graham has produced a video presentation to accompany the exhibit, with the aim of having the display ready for the October Long Weekend Open Day. The exchange itself is now in the Machinery Shed and Graham has been working to restore the system so its basic functions will work.

### **October Long Weekend Open Day**

Planning is underway for the October Long Weekend event, which will take place on Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> October, from 10:00am to 3:00pm. with the Taralga Historical Society Museum also open on Saturday, 4<sup>th</sup> October, from 10:00am to 2:00pm.

The Sunday program will feature the unveiling of the restored windmill, with a talk on its historical significance as well as a demonstration of the working of the Telephone Exchange led by Graham.

Hospitality arrangements are as follows:

- Morning Tea – coordinated by Judy
- BBQ – coordinated by Tim
- Over 70's Photograph – organised by Graham

Planned activities include:

- Weavers' Group – Judy
- Shearing Demonstration – Mick
- Research Centre Presentation – Jenny
- Machinery Displays – Chris

Volunteers will be needed to assist with each of these areas to ensure the smooth running of the event.

**Museum Roster.**

If you have any problems with this please contact Chris.

<b>September 2025</b>	6 <sup>th</sup>	Jenny Peter Haigh, Helena Keough, Margaret McIntosh.
	13 <sup>th</sup>	Tim Dowsley, Francis Flood, Brian Moloney.
	20 <sup>th</sup>	Graham Lambert, Jimmy Dean, Lida Veenstra.
	27 <sup>th</sup>	Jeff and Judy Chalker, Peter Davies.
<b>October 2025</b>	4 <sup>th</sup>	Mick & Annette Chalker, Michelle Green, Noelene Cosgrove, Elaine Connor
	11 <sup>th</sup>	Tim Dowsley, Pat Murray, Alan Robertson.
	18 <sup>th</sup>	Judith Matthews, Penny Gordon, Joan Scott.
	25 <sup>th</sup>	Chris Ainsworth Peter and Margaret McAlister.
<b>November 2025</b>	1 <sup>st</sup>	Jenny and Peter Haigh, Helena Keough, Margaret McIntosh.
	8 <sup>th</sup>	Chris Ainsworth, Brian Moloney, Jimmy Dean.
	15 <sup>th</sup>	Jeff and Judy Chalker, Lida Veenstra.
	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Mick and Annette Chalker, Pat Murray.
	29 <sup>th</sup>	Graham Lambert, Peter Davies, Alan Robertson.
<b>December 2025</b>	6 <sup>th</sup>	Jenny and Peter Haigh, Penny Gordon, Joan Scott
	13 <sup>th</sup>	Tim Dowsley, Helena Keough, Margaret McIntosh.
	20 <sup>th</sup>	Jeff and Judy Chalker, Peter and Margaret McAlister
	27 <sup>th</sup>	Chris Ainsworth, Mick and Annette Chalker.
<b>January 2026</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Alan Robertson, Peter Davies, Pat Murray.
	10 <sup>th</sup>	Tim Dowsley, Peter and Margaret McAlister.
	17 <sup>th</sup>	Jenny and Peter Haigh, Brian Moloney.
	24 <sup>th</sup>	Chris Ainsworth, Michelle Green, Noelene Cosgrove, Elaine Connor.
	31 <sup>st</sup>	Judith Matthews, Pat Murray, Lida Veenstra.

## **Minutes of THS General Meeting Held in the Hall, 24<sup>th</sup> May 2025 following the AGM**

Minutes of the THS General Meeting Held in the Hall, 24th May 2025, 2:00pm

**Present:** Jenny and Peter Haigh, Judith Matthews, Jeff and Judy Chalker, Mick and Annette Chalker, Margaret McIntosh, Tim Dowsley, Pat Murray, Anita Smedberg, Margaret McGreggor, Elaine Connor, Michelle Green, Laurie Halpin, Helena Hopkins, Graham Lambert, Deb Murphy, Ian Smith, Greg Harris.

**Apologies:** Chris Ainsworth, Peter Davies, Penny Gordon, Brian Moloney, Joan Scott, Frances Flood, Suzanne Collins, Sally Mansfield, Peter McInnes, Nolene Cosgrove, Peter and Margaret McAlister

### **Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

- The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 5th April 2025, were moved for adoption by Mick Chalker, seconded by Pat Murray.

### **Business Arising from Previous Meeting**

#### **Grants Program Reports**

- Family Research Centre
  - 2024 Veolia Mulwaree Trust Grant Program: \$2,373 - Laminator and stationery were purchased
  - 2024 Swallow Tail Battery Community Grant: \$5,900 - laptop computer, laptop carry case, computer security tags and 6 month subscription to ancestry.com.au were purchased.

Costings and Estimates - Establishing and Consolidating the Genealogy Hub/Family Research Centre - end May 2025

- Windmill Repair
  - Thomas Glastonbury reported that the windmill repair should be ready for assembly at THS on June long weekend of Sat 7th-Tues 10th June. Members welcome to come along to witness the event.
- Refurbishment of the Machinery Shed
  - Progress Report on Refurbishment of Machinery Shed - end May 2025 was tabled.
  - Establishing a water supply to the shed still to be done. If successful in the Essential Energy grant the power and water can be supplied to the Machinery Shed at the same time. A team of willing workers will be needed at that time.
  - Repair to some glass tops of the display cabinets, part of the Wind Farm Grant funding, was partially carried out. Second cabinet could not be repaired on site. Jeff will investigate how best to repair top.
  - Proposal to buy an upright cabinet, for display of Mary Chalker's wedding dress, was agreed to. Jenny to follow up on this.
- Signage
  - Chris still liaising with Bob Withers regarding the signage for THS complex.

- Proposal to have black aprons and polo shirts with THS logo and name tags, ready for October Long weekend, was put to the meeting. Meeting supported the idea. Logo colours should be same as signage colours.

- THS to buy 10 aprons and ask members for individual orders. Jenny to follow up.

- Working Bees

- Machinery Shed, garden, and maintenance Working Bee carried out in April with great work being completed.

- Mount Rae sign and mile markers in front yard need painting. A working bee in September, before the October long weekend, will be held to accomplish this.

- Membership Renewal Reminder

- **Membership for 2025 runs from 1st January - 31st December and is now overdue, \$20 per person.**

#### Progress on Agreed Actions and Motions from General Business

- Lawler Monument – Golspie Road

- Peter McInnes followed up on the potential removal of the Lawler monument by speaking with the nearby property owner. He also attempted to contact descendants of Patrick Lawler via the Crookwell Through Time Facebook page, but has not yet received a response. A letter was sent to Council seeking guidance on the matter.

- The meeting expressed strong views that the monument serves as a historical marker at the original location of an important event. Relocating it would remove the context and diminish its historical significance.

- Margaret McIntosh advised that Patrick Lawler was her grandmother's uncle and that her family wishes the monument to remain where it is.

- The group noted that the monument's presence in its original location allows for accidental discovery, adding to its historical interest. Moving it would eliminate this aspect.

- The consensus of the meeting was that the monument should not be moved. Jenny will contact Peter McInnes to convey these views and confirm that THS does not support relocation of the monument.

- A draft plan for THS members to visit ANME in Canberra in November was tabled. Members were interested in attending. Jenny to follow up on planning a trip.

- Stonequarry Cemetery update. Minutes of Stonequarry Cemetery Committee Meeting (15 April 2025) were tabled.

#### Reports

- Secretary

- Visits to THS: no new visits at this stage.

- Upper Lachlan Art, Culture and Heritage Trail:

- Southern Tablelands Arts is organising an event for local artists, historians, and community groups to participate on Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd November, 10am-4pm

- THS will participate on Saturday 1st November, 10am-1pm (we have our AGM at 2pm), with a morning tea on offer (10.30-11.00am) and on Sunday, 10am-3pm, with a morning tea on offer (10.30-11.00am). We will need people who would volunteer for the two days.

- Jenny will complete an EOI to ULC.

- Treasurer

- Treasurer's report tabled with balance of \$54,606.17 as of 23rd May, 2025. Moved by Judith Matthews, seconded by Annette Chalker.

- An order for the printing of 50 Fernbank books with black and white photos was approved.

- Jenny to organise for the Origin Energy bill to be paid by direct debit.

- Archives

- Robyn Cummins and group have made number of visits to our Research Centre to research Tennis in Taralga. The group plan to launch their book on our long weekend Open Day, 2026.

- Archiving team meets on 1st Thursday of the month—new volunteers welcome.

- Garden

- Work in garden for June, July and August will not be organised but feel free to get involved if and when you like. Chris plans to prune the roses towards late August.

## General Business

- October Long Weekend Planning

- The October Long Weekend event will be held on Sunday, 5th October, with THS also open on Saturday, 4th October, from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

- Highlights for the Sunday include the unveiling of the windmill, with Chris delivering a talk on its historical significance.

- Hospitality: Morning Tea – coordinated by Judy, BBQ – coordinated by Tim, Over 70's photo - Graham

- Planned Activities (as per last year):

- Weavers' Group – Judy Chalker

- Shearing Demonstration – Mick Chalker

- Garden Club Display – Annette Chalker

- Research Centre Presentation – Jenny

- Machinery Displays – Chris

- Volunteers are needed to assist with each of these areas on the day.

- Council renaming of roads:

- Laurie Halpin requested that Chris follow up with ULC regarding the letter previously written on behalf of THS regarding the renaming of roads in the area.

- Greg Harris, a representative of ULC, introduced himself to the meeting and assured he would represent

THS with Council.

- Corroboree Creek and its significance to Taralga:

- Stephen Horn will send a research email request to THS seeking information.

- Relocation of the Telephone Exchange:

- Peter Haigh proposed, and the meeting supported, relocating the Telephone Exchange from the Church Museum to the Machinery Shed, where it would be more appropriately housed

- A designated Telephone Exchange Corner/Booth will be established in the Machinery Shed. The project team comprises Peter Haigh, Laurie Halpin, Jeff Chalker, and Pat Murray

- It was suggested that Helen Wilson, Rhonda Williamson, Leah Corby, and Jeff Corby be approached for historical information and insights about the exchange.

- Video and display setup: Chris and Graham will produce a video to accompany the exhibit, with the goal of having the presentation ready for the October Long Weekend. Laurie has offered a small screen to be used for displaying the video, subject to suitability.

Meeting Closed

- Time: 3:30 PM

- Next General Meeting: 30th August 2025 at 2:00 PM