



Ancient Iron

Official Magazine of

Marlborough Vintage & Farm Machinery Society Inc.

Issue 6

March 2016

Upcoming Events:

Monthly meetings- first Monday of the month- 7:30pm Club Rooms,
Brayshaw Park

Annual General Meeting 23rd May

Position	Person	Contact information
President	Bernard Mason	bandjmason@clear.net.nz
Vice President	Jim Donald	donalds@ruralinzone.net
Secretary	John Neal	njohnpam@gmail.com
Treasurer	Raymond Welburn	treasurer@marlboroughfarmingmuseum.nz
Editor	Jocelyn/John Burnett	burnett.family@xtra.co.nz

Roles Within The Club

Safety Officer: Ken Barr

Acquisitions & Disposals: Ted Hutchison

Bulletin Editor: Jocelyn Burnett

Publicity Officer: Sandra Welburn

Curator: John Burnett

Restorations: Ross Hamilton

Park Administrators Delegates: John Neal , Jim Campbell

Cottage: Shirley Shefford

Buildings & Maintenance: Jim Donald

Open Days Convener: Ken Barr

Auditor: the incoming executive shall appoint a new Auditor.

Solicitor: David Dew

Editor's welcome

Welcome to the next edition of Ancient Iron. Life has been busy and I apologise for the delay in getting the newsletter to you all.

We have seen some significant changes about the Park in recent months with the demolition of sheds and the construction of new sheds. This has changed the landscape of the area and will enable tractors and

machinery to be displayed in a more orderly manner. We have included some photos to demonstrate the changes.

During Marlborough Anniversary Weekend we celebrated our 50th Anniversary along with the Tua Marina Club. We would like to thank Kathy Johnson for the photos of this weekend and the street parade the week before.

We have started the New Year with the annual Heritage Day. A big thank you to everyone who helped out with this event both on the day and behind the scenes before and afterwards.

JocelynBurnett

Ritchies Shed

To top off a very busy year at MVFM, near the end of November, a few members gathered on a hot Saturday morning to start dismantling another shed that had been donated to the club. What used to be Crafar & Crouch's yard will soon become Ritchies new bus depot and so the shed that we dismantled is where their new workshop will go.



The work was very dusty but a morning tea of freshly made muffins and a hot drink supplied by Jos was much appreciated. By late afternoon it was ready for Richard Wallace of Hydra Lift Cranes to lift the roof section onto Tim Latter's trailer during the following week and transport it to its new home at Brayshaw Park. A final position has yet to be decided for the shed but there will be no shortage of stuff to put in it. In its final position the shed will be lower than it was originally and the lean-to will be on the opposite side to which it is shown in this photo. Many thanks to Bernard, Ken, Warren, Bruce and John for all their help.

Profile: Roger Schroder

Both Roger and Nola Schroder grew up on farms in the Rai Valley area and met each other through New Zealand's most popular game, rugby. It is no surprise then that they share an interest in our farming history and are members of MVFM.

Roger grew up on his parents farm in Rimu Gully, Rai Valley. He is one of three children and life was pretty hard going for his parents. Roger's father was a saddler who served his apprenticeship in Kaikoura and his mother was a school teacher before they were married in 1925. When they first took over the farm in the mid 1920's there was no transport, it was a ten mile walk to the nearest neighbour, no telephone, the school was miles away, no doctor just down the road when the children were sick and it was situated in a very high rainfall area. Roger's father used his skills as a saddler to compliment the farm income, especially during the depression, as horses were still part of everyday life and there were always repairs to be done. After the area had been felled of native trees and the timber was milled, only stumps were left. After a lot of hard work using horses and gelignite, Roger's father cleared the stumps to make the land more productive. Even after the depression it was a constant struggle trying to make a living off the farm.

Back then a wife's duty was to stay at home and bring up the children which is what Roger's mother did but it wasn't long before she got involved with the Women's Division Federated Farmers in 1928. Throughout the years she worked her way to the top of this organisation becoming Dominion President and holding provincial and national positions as well as being a member of the Marlborough Hospital Board. The Queen twice acknowledged her service to the community with the Coronation Medal and a MBE.

Before Roger was 15 years old he left school and started working for the Rai Valley Dairy Company Store which started off through his mother getting him a job during the school holidays. Three months before he turned 15, Roger was offered a full time job and so the only reason to go back to school was to pick up his books.

While working at the Dairy Co. Store new milk vats were added to process the increased volume of milk arriving. The vats were moved into position by hand. On the same day as the vats were installed news came through of a truck that had ended up on its side just before the township near Flat Creek. Off on his bicycle and armed with his camera, Roger went to have a look. Across the road leaning on the fence you can see his push bike. The cause of the accident was believed to be the driver falling asleep.



Three years after starting work Roger's father passed away suddenly. He left the Dairy Co. and went back home to help out on the farm with his older brother. Amongst other things this would include milking about 30 cows. Living close to the hills meant there was no shortage of wild pigs or deer. Several times while the cows were being milked Roger's attention was diverted to a pig he had spotted off in the distance. Armed with a .22 rifle he was off to have a crack at it. When he returned some of the suction cups had fallen off the cows and they were getting a bit impatient to get back out into the paddock. Winters were

cold with the fog often not clearing until 11am in the morning and the sun was gone by 2.30 in the afternoon. The shaded areas would have Hoar frosts for days on end and the ground was frozen solid. There was a bounty on Possum skins which would fetch half a crown each. Roger would go out with his 15 shot .22 rifle and on a good night he would see seven or eight possums in one tree.

While Roger's brother managed the farm until it was sold in 1994 Roger left after seven years and started working for Transport Nelson at the Rai Depot, a company he would stay with for the next 37 years. Rogers first day with TNL, on the 1st March 1961, was behind the wheel of a "S" Bedford with a petrol engine. With 75 horsepower the loaded truck and trailer would weigh in at about 24 tons. One week later he got to drive a 1950's, 90hp Leyland diesel. It was used to carry all sorts of freight from wool, hay, stock and gravel. Often while travelling over the steep nearby hills he would get down into first gear where it was common to screw the driveshaft off. At one stage there were six staff members working at the Rai depot. His work would take him all around the province and as far away as Takaka. With no OSH back then their trucks were loaded with a mixture of freight from gas bottles to gelignite and everything in between, and with a grin Roger commented there were no mishaps!! He would often take mixed loads out to the French Pass. On one occasion he had a quantity of gelignite loaded onto the truck and was handed the detonators and told to put them under his seat!!

Another trip had him leaving Rai Valley at 4am so he could be at the French Pass by 6am to pick up a load of sheep and bring them back to the sale yards in Blenheim by 10am. After they were unloaded Roger might had a bit of free time to refuel or do another job before going back to the sale yards to load up again and head for the Nelson depot, arriving at 6pm. He was greeted with a note that had been left for him to carry on to Takaka, arriving in the early hours of the next morning, unloading and getting to bed at 1.30am. Up again in the morning in time to be back in Rai Valley by about noon. Not hard to see how he clocked up 100,000 miles in three years.



In 1968 he took the first TNL truck over to D'Urville Island picking up and laying out P & T poles on the road to Greville Harbour. After the 1961 Leyland Comet drove off the barge the new wooden poles and railway irons were pushed into the sea on a high tide. Later when the tide had gone out Roger would pick them up with a David Brown 25c tractor fitted with a bucket, and reload them onto his truck and start placing them at correct intervals along the road. Being careful not to shatter the poles he would tie one end of a rope around a tree and the other to the pole and drive forward.

If you have ever driven out to the French Pass on a good day you will know the views are spectacular and if you have ever been out there when a good northwester is blowing it can be very scary. The driver of the school bus was concerned one day about the wind. He got out of the bus and shortly afterwards it got blown off the road, rolled down the hill and finally came to stop at the bottom of a gully. Lucky no school children were on the bus. The Ministry of Education contracted TNL and Bill Bryant to recover the vehicle. Roger got the job and on the way out he picked up Bill Bryant from Canvastown along with his bulldozer, a Cat D4 7U, to retrieve the vehicle. Bill had to put in a track down to the wreck so he could recover it.



They were often long days working in the Rai until he transferred to Blenheim with TNL in June 1969. After a bike ride from Grovetown to the rail yards in Blenheim, Roger was ready to start work. He worked at the rail yards as a labourer and relief driver. While the days weren't as long in Blenheim it was still back breaking work. Most of the loads were 24 tons with everything being loaded onto and off the trucks by hand, forklift trucks were few and far between. Roger commented that although it was back breaking work he has never had any trouble with his back but has had both hips replaced. With young children by this stage and a 5 acre block at Grovetown life was very busy.

After working in the rail yards, Roger started working at Cooper's Store where Smith's City is today. "I worked my way up in the company becoming a foreman but still a labourer", smiles Roger. Freight was unloaded from rail wagons that had been shunted into the store. This would include large quantities of beer and soap amongst other things. With a stable job, good work mates, plenty of banter, a core of good drivers and a bit of competition to see who could get the job done the quickest, meant Roger enjoyed the job and the challenges that went with it. The company was good to Roger especially during times of illness. To make way for further commercial development in Blenheim, the Cooper's Store was closed in 1984 and all freight went out to Spring Creek.

Railway yards looking north from Horton Street

Looking south from Dillons Point Road



This move brought back early starts especially during the apple season when the Apple & Pear Board were busy packing the seasons fruit. Roger's organisational skills were often put to the test as Spring Creek was the hub for freight coming into and going out of the area. By this stage large forklifts were being used to load and unload trucks and rail wagons. The introduction of curtain sidings made loose freight easier to transport. On an average day up to fifteen loads or more had to be organised for dispatch to Nelson. These loads varied from flour silos, acid tanks, steel, shipping containers, new cars, bulk resin and in season fruit from local orchards. Roger still found the time and energy to put a couple of hours work into his garden where he could unwind.

In 1997 Roger retired from TNL Freighting having seen many changes in the industry particularly the size and type of trucks now being used. From 24 ton truck and trailers when he first started to the big rigs of today, some that are weighing in at 50 tons.



We spent an enjoyable and interesting evening talking to Roger and Nola about this article. They have played their part in helping to shape our district just as now they are helping to preserve the districts history. No doubt you will agree, the time and effort they put into MVFM is very much appreciated.

Cottage Update



The Cottage is looking very smart with the colour of the summer / autumn flowers and the addition of a new picket fence at the back. A big Thank You to Brian Parnell again for his hard work on this project.

Heritage Day saw a continued interest in the cottage and its ongoing restoration project. Young children are often shown through the cottage by grandparents who love to explain all about things from days gone by.

Helen, Shirley and Nola enjoyed the day. Shirley's pot-pourri bags made from flowers out of the cottage garden proved to be very popular. Jam and pickles sold well. Proceeds from these sales will help fund further

restorations around the cottage. Thanks to everyone for their support.

Shirley Shefford

Newspaper Ads from Days Gone By

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Restorations Report March 2016

The Restoration Committee consists of the following:

Ross Hamilton Convener

Ted Hutchison, Chris McKay, Peter Hart, Alan Peterson, Bruce Davies Roger Schroder, Ken Barr. Graeme Shefford, John Neal.

Restoration has been little slow over the last 6 months, first there was the Jubilee, members were busy preparing tractors and Machinery for the Jubilee celebrations. Then we were right on Christmas.

A big emphasis has been put on the erection of two gifted second hand sheds in recent months.

Then after Christmas some of our restoration committee members were struck with ill health, some ended up in hospital. However most are back now so let's hope we can make some progress.

Two new members Messer's Jim Hammond and Jason Dell are very interested in assisting with the restoration of plant and machinery.

Both Jason and Jim have been working on the small yellow roller which has carburettor and fuel problems, at present we are waiting on parts to complete this project.

The French Farmal FC which is sitting in bits in the workshop which was taken apart by a member who unfortunately moved to Auckland therefore could not complete the project.

This Tractor is one of the next important projects, Jim Hammond has been given permission to take this dismantled tractor home and complete the project at home, Jim is positive he can spend more time on the tractor at home.

John Neal continues to work on the Hanamag and the Cat 10 both are in the workshop. The Hanamag is a very large project and will take years to complete as a number of parts will need to be made.

Graeme Shefford and Ken Barr have worked on two John Deere D tractors one has steel wheels and other is fitted with rubber tyres, both tractors are now running.

The Austin Truck No 12 has been in the workshop for repairs on the gearbox, Bearings and bushes mainly, this has now been completed and thanks to John Burnett the total cost was around \$300.00.

The Farmal Cub is currently in the workshop with some bad leaks in both front and back Engine seals and oil leaks in the rear hub on one side.

Recently Errol Hadfield took Boy Goulter on a tour of the park trying to identify a W6 he once owned initially as it turns out he chose the incorrect tractor. After a lengthy discussion between members on the Restoration Committee they have now identified the correct tractor. It is planned that Errol Hadfield will restore the tractor at his expense with the assistance of Ted Hutchison.

It is planned to hold a restoration Committee meeting on Saturday 12th March at 10.30 am. Discussion will centre on the restoration of tractors and or Machinery as it is essential that we set a programme for the next 12 months.

One of the major obstacles we will need to address is the lack of money to continue with a restoration programme. The balance in the restoration account currently is \$5,500.00

Ross Hamilton

Godfrey Earle



Godfrey has been busy restoring this Holder tractor.
More about Godfrey's project in the next issue.

Traction Engines

After writing up log sheets for the various tractors around the Club via the internet and books from other Club members, I have been greatly enlightened and amazed at the huge transformation this country has seen, and in particular the agricultural sector since the early 1900's.

The whole landscape of the countryside has changed from the farmer using horses, traction engines and thrashing mills to the modern tractors and other implements that were introduced from overseas.

By the 1920s and 1930s often a combination of the old and the new could be seen working side by side in the paddocks.



In the 1920s and 1930s, a farmer could roughly buy a tractor from the proceeds of selling a team of horses and a stack of oats.

We were fortunate to have 3 traction engines at the Park at the time of the 50th Celebrations in November. There is no doubt that they were the most photographed machines over the weekend. This was a step back in time for so many people including myself who grew up with visits to Tua Marina to my uncle, Jack Drake, to see the traction engine which occupied a prominent spot in a paddock near where he lived. This was a popular meeting place for the locals and interested people who wanted to restore this big machine and thus preserve its heritage. Once a year, the engine and the thrashing mill were a feature at the annual Rodeo where the wheat was thrashed. This is still happening today.

During the weekend of the 50th celebrations I was able to talk to members of both Clubs who told me about the history of the mill and how it had been given to my Dad by Mrs Jackson of Woodbourne.

My great grandfather, grandfather and his brothers ran a thrashing business around Marlborough until 1947. Dad often spoke of the times when as a young lad he spent a lot of time following the mill around the Spring Creek and Tua Marina area. The photo below shows the old galley and the cook who was an integral part of the whole operation. Dad spent many hours with these people who worked long hours away from home.....he heard a lot of "adult talk" and grandma said that was where he learnt to swear!!!!

It all started when Frank Drake and Jack Monson purchased a steam traction engine with a chaff cutter and run a contracting business in the Tua Marina and Spring Creek area. They traded under the name of "Drake and Monson". When Jack Monson joined the army in 1917, Frank purchased his share and was joined by his two son's Francis and Willis (my grandfather). In 1920, younger son Jack joined the team.

Now known as “F. Drake and Sons”, they operated three steam engines, two wooden mills and one chaff cutter.



Allis Chalmers Model A and the Red River Mill
Bought by DRAKE Bros in 1937.



In the early 1930's, the company now known as "Drake Bros.", purchased a "Cross" Case tractor. This was operated by Jack and was used for clover hulling and hay baling. The original solid rubber wheels were replaced by conventional tyres with a top speed of 15 M.P.H. This tractor is housed in one of the sheds at MVFM.

In 1937 a model "A" Allis Chalmers and a "Red River" tin mill was purchased from W.G.G.Cuddon Ltd and driven from Christchurch to Blenheim in September of that year by Willis and Jack.

With the advent of the header and more farmers owning their own machines, operations within the family business ceased.

Dad's grandparents must have been astounded at the modern tractors that were becoming such a huge part of farming life. To have a grandson who would grow up to become a diesel mechanic for all his working life would have been something they would never thought would happen.

Dad worked for W.G.G. Cuddon for over 43 years on Allis Chalmers, GM Diesels/Detroits, Fiat to name a few. This took him to many areas within the Marlborough region and beyond. He saw many changes throughout his working life and made many lifelong friends.

His membership of both the MVFM and Tua Marina Clubs were a natural progression. Restoration of several tractors in his retirement, gave him tremendous pleasure. I'm sure many people have a similar story to tell and we hope to see more displays as we saw over the 50th celebration weekend.



Drake Bros.



**Ferry Bridge, Spring Creek
(Ferry Hotel in the background.)**



**Thrashing Day at Tua Marina in the
1960's.**





The same mill working at the 50th Celebrations. Thanks to the Tua Marina Club members who operated the machine for the weekend for the enjoyment of the viewing public.

A selection of photos from the 50th Celebrations, November 2015.







Weekend of 50th Jubilee







I'm sure you will all agree that we have some wonderful moments recorded of both the 50th Jubilee weekend and the Heritage Day 2016. A big Thank You to Kathy Johnson for these superb photos.

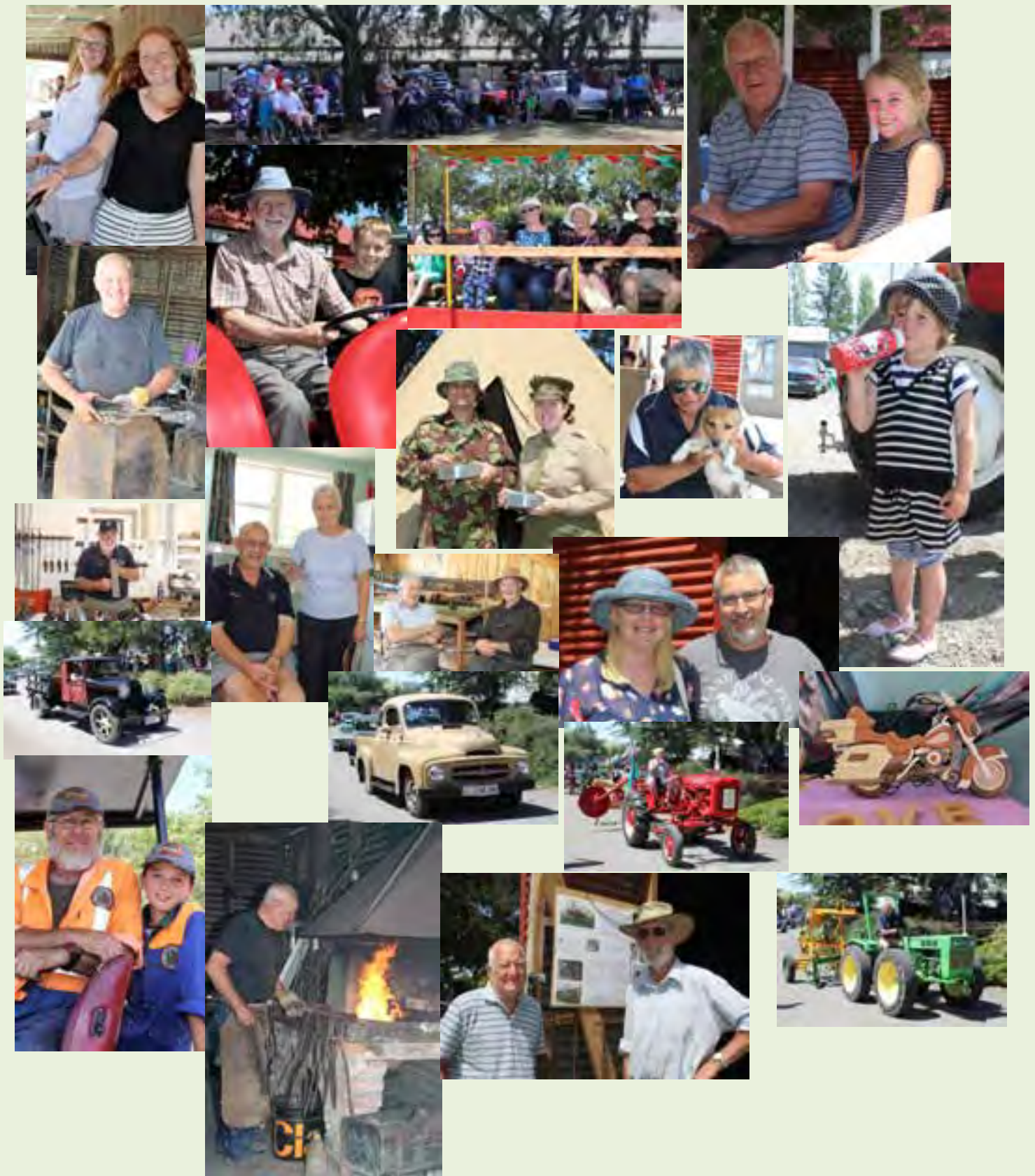
Christmas Get Together : December 2015



Heritage Day 2016.







Wither Hills Sheds



Bernard and his helpers have been putting in many long hours working to get the extensions to these sheds completed. As a result we will have considerably more space to house our ever increasing collection of tractors and machinery. A big Thank You to all those involved.

Teddy Bears Picnic

A very successful morning was held a few weeks ago on the Patchett Green. A large number of families attended the annual Teddy Bears picnic.



Congratulations

Happy Birthday to all who celebrate their birthday in March, April and May.

Illness

We hope that any member who has been sick recently is now on the road to recovery.

Next Issue

The next newsletter will be a winter edition. Remember to forward any articles of interest for the next issue.

Jocelyn Burnet