

PYE COTTAGE FOLK MUSEUM will be open from 12 noon to 3pm on Saturday, February 4. The cottage is situated at the corner of Nelanglo and Yass Streets opposite the Gunning Council offices.

Illustrating some features of local agricultural life c1860-1940



Photo RC Spiller, painting by Mrs R Pye, per Mr L Pye 2020



Photo RA Spiller 2007

Rev Ray Diver was the foundation President of Gunning & District Historical Society (GDHS) in 1970. He had always admired the “two cottages and the barn” on the Dalton Road and he convinced the History Society that the main cottage should be a “Folk Museum” in Gunning, “where it could be seen and enjoyed by more people.” (*Pye Cottage, Gunning: on the finding of a Museum, 1974*)

The Pye family had lived in the Cottage in the twentieth century and they decided to assist in its preservation. Inside Pye Cottage, a frame of photographs shows volunteers erecting the building on a block owned by Council, opposite the Council Chambers, in Yass Street. It was opened on 29 September, 1974.

Pye Cottage is “of a design which had been used for generations past by the early settlers of the highland country,” wrote Ray Diver. It probably had an iron roof from the beginning, as there was little evidence of shingle attachment. Some architectural features include:

- Slab exterior walls with zinc strips to cover the joins (many renewed in 1974);
- Sapling rafters with material such as hessian, (renewed recently) sometimes whitewashed;
- Earth floors, some later cemented (Council required all floors to be concrete);
- Corner posts 10” x 10” adze hewn; with slabs mounted into squared off logs, the frames for windows and doors mortised in place. (Typical woodworking tools are displayed in the “Workroom.”)

The tiny house was “improved” with the construction of the skillion rooms, wallboard lining (later removed to control the white ants in Gunning!) and wallpaper (note the use of newspaper). On the Dalton site, as shown in the painting, the kitchen, storeroom and washroom were located in a nearby building. The rooms under the skillion roof required some new materials and replacement slabs when rebuilt. They were the “Girls’ bedroom” and “Boys’ bedroom” for the Pye family but GDHS displays them as Kitchen and Workroom.

Inside are local items donated since 1974. Pye family photos include Mrs Ethel Pye visiting the new location of her cottage in Gunning in 1989 and Ethel and Loyel Pye at about the time they moved into the Dalton cottage.