

Site of Police Barracks, Lockup and Stables

Towards midnight on Saturday, 8 February 1879, the Kelly Gang converged on the police barracks. Ned Kelly waited on horseback at the fence, approximately 50 metres in front of the barracks, while Joe Byrne, Steve Hart and Dan Kelly crept up to the barracks, with Joe Byrne taking up position on the eastern end; Steve Hart and Dan Kelly on the western end.

When in position, Ned rode up to the barracks calling out for Senior Constable Devine. On hearing his name, Devine called out "I'm in bed, what do you want?"

Whilst still on horseback, Ned replied "For God's sake get up. There is a row on up at Davidson's and they're fighting. If they are not stopped there will be murder before morning. Get up at once and come up, and bring Richards with you."

Devine sprang out of bed, donned his trousers and socks, and stepped out onto the verandah.

Trooper Richards had also heard the exchange, and stepped out onto the verandah from the office door, similarly attired as he also had been in bed in the lean-to attached to the office.

With both Devine and Richards on the verandah in front of him, Ned Kelly drew his revolver and said "Throw up your hands, I'm Ned Kelly" and, as the other three outlaws stepped onto the verandah, "Don't move, for you are also covered by my men from both ends of the verandah, and on the slightest movement on the part of either of you, you will be shot by them."

Ned Kelly dismounted and ordered Devine and Richards into the dining room, to be met by Mrs Devine, also hastily dressed. Ned assured the captives that no harm would come to them provided they obey his instructions. He ordered Mrs Devine to make some supper and, whilst she was doing this, Dan Kelly and Steve Hart retrieved the gang's horses and took them to the police stables, where they released the police horses into the horse paddock, and stabled their own.

Ned and Joe Byrne escorted Devine and Richards to the "logs" where they locked them in, along with a drunk who had earlier been ensconced. The outlaws then took turns at guard duty while the other three slept.

On Sunday morning the outlaws dressed themselves in police uniforms and, after breakfast prepared by Mrs Devine, walked about the barracks and stables so as the locals would think they were new troops on their way south to the Victorian border, where patrols were being carried out in an endeavour to catch the Kelly gang attempting to cross the border into New South Wales.

At 10.00am Dan Kelly escorted Mrs Devine across to the Courthouse for her to prepare it for the church service to be held there later that morning.

Throughout the day, Devine and Richards had been allowed out of the cell, under guard, to be returned to the cell later that evening with each member of the Kelly gang again doing shifts of guard duty.

Early on Monday morning Dan Kelly and Joe Byrne rode their horses to the blacksmith shop of Mr Samuel Rea, and had them re-shod. Acting upon Ned's instructions, they then rode down to the Traveller's Rest Hotel and, crossing the bridge, followed the telegraphic line to see if the wires could be disconnected anywhere. Dan and Joe returned to the police barracks and advised Ned that they were unsuccessful.

At approximately 10.00am the gang released Trooper Richards from the lockup, handed him his empty revolver and ordered him to walk between Ned and Joe Byrne towards the town; the Royal Mail Hotel being their destination. Dan Kelly and Steve Hart followed on horseback, some distance to the rear.

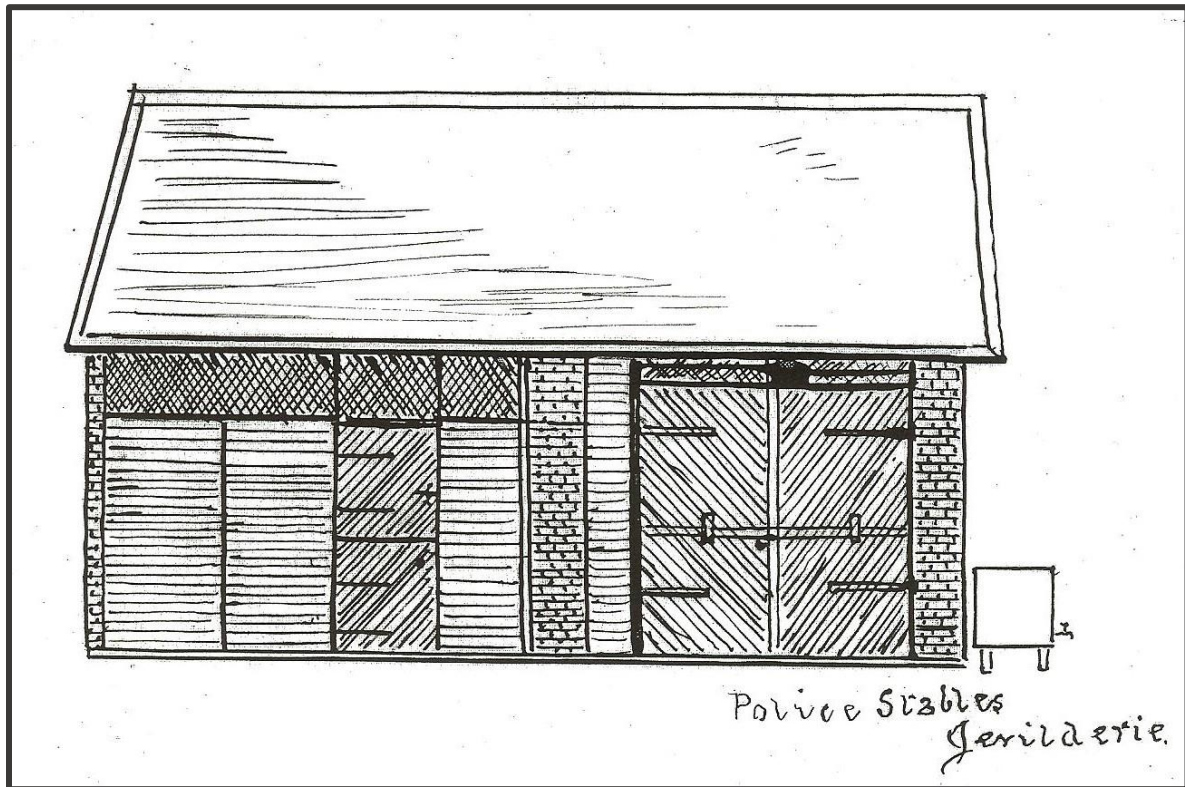
At approximately 3.30pm Dan Kelly and Joe Byrne, riding Steve Hart's horse, and carrying the proceeds from the Bank, returned to the police barracks and began to make preparations for their departure from Jerilderie.

Steve Hart then arrived on the racehorse 'Minnie' using Edwin Living's saddle. Ned Kelly, with Trooper Richards, Postmaster Jefferson and his assistant James Rankin, then arrived having 'hitched' a ride from a passing hawker.

Richards, Jefferson and young Rankin were then locked up with Senior Constable Devine and the 'drunk', with Mrs Devine being given the key with the warning not to release them before 7.30pm that night, otherwise he would return and "burn the place down over her and her children's heads".

The bank teller, Edwin Living, arrived to plead his case for the return of his saddle, which was granted by Ned. Rev. Gribble followed shortly after to plead the case for the return of the racehorse 'Minnie'. Again, Ned Kelly granted the request, much to the disgust of Steve Hart, who let the horse loose into the police barracks paddock. He then rounded up Devine's horse and proceeded towards town bareback, to obtain another saddle.

Dan Kelly and Joe Byrne, leading Steve Hart's horse as a packhorse, departed for Wunnamurra Homestead, riding due south past the Courthouse. Ned Kelly mounted up and rode towards the Traveller's Rest Hotel for a farewell drink.



Extract from the *Daily News*, Perth, WA

Thursday, May 20, 1926.

Dream That Came True - Premonition of Kelly Gang's Visit

Graphic Account of Jerilderie Raid

"I begged them not to shoot." Mrs Devine tells her story

The dramatic entry to the town of Jerilderie, in New South Wales, by the Kelly Gang in February 1879, and the subsequent reign of terror which they established in the home of Sergeant Devine, the police officer in charge of the district, were graphically detailed by the widow of the Sergeant at her home in Mackie Street, Victoria Park, this morning.

Daring and Nonchalance

The episode which, for sheer daring, can have no equal in Australia's history, is recalled by the death on Monday last of Sergeant Devine who was then 79 years of age.

Mrs Devine, who is a hale and hearty and delightfully cheery woman in her 81st year, came to this state with her husband nearly 30 years ago. For many years her husband was in the employ of the Tramway Department, and later was a racecourse detective for the WA Turf Club. He retired about three years ago and, up to a short time before his death, enjoyed good health.

Doings of the Kellys

Relating the experience of herself, her husband, and their three children on the eventful 9 February 1879, Mrs Devine said that for some time prior to that day, in Jerilderie and other districts, the Kelly Gang were the sole topic of conversation, and the people of Jerilderie were in constant dread of a visit from the gang.

"On the Saturday night" she said "I was in bed with the three children (two girls and a boy, the oldest of whom was then seven) and I had a dream that the Kellys were at the door.

I was very frightened, and when my husband, then a sergeant, and Constable Richards, who was stationed with him at Jerilderie, came home about midnight I told them of the dream. My good man just said, "you're always dreaming some rot" but they (the Kellys) were there at the time.

They both went to bed, not knowing of the presence of the gang, but the Kellys had been watching them. There was a knock at the door, and a man said "Come on Devine, there's a row at the hotel. Get your clothes on." He replied "All right; I'll be out in a minute." While he was getting dressed they went round to the back and told the same tale to Richards. When my husband and Richards went out to the verandah they faced four guns.

"The whole gang was there."

"The gang threatened to shoot" said Mrs Devine, "and I rushed out and went down on my knees and begged them not. All they did was to tell me to shut up. Keeping my husband and Richards under cover, they ordered them back into the house, where they watched them all night".

"Next morning they locked Devine in a cell, and locked us in a room. Then they got uniforms belonging to Devine and Richards and paraded the town as policemen. They took Richards with them, because he was a policeman and completed the blind. He was a plucky man, and if he had had a chance he would have given them away."

"Later in the day," said Mrs Devine, "I was allowed to take some candles and other things to the Catholic Church, but Steve Hart who, I think, was about the worst of them, came with me.

He said he would shoot his own mother if she did not do as he told her. All the way to the church he had a revolver near me and would occasionally poke it into my

neck. It was also poked into my neck by Hart when I went to the door of the house to take the meat from the butcher. They ate me out of house and home, but they could have been worse. They did not take a pennyworth of stuff from us.”

“They stayed all Sunday night”, continued Mrs Devine, “and the next morning they locked us up again and paid a visit to the bank, where they caught the bank manager in the bath”.

“They took everything they wanted – about £2,000, I think – came back to the station again, took Devine’s horse, and bolted. Before going they cut the telegraph lines, and warned us not to release Devine until two hours had elapsed. That morning it rained cats and dogs, and all tracks were obliterated, so that any attempt at following the gang was impossible.”

Mrs Devine said that her memory failed her in regard to the locking up of the residents of the town, including the bank manager in a room at the hotel. She had no recollection of such an occurrence, but she had no doubt that it happened.

Discussing the members of the gang, Mrs Devine said she recalled that Ned Kelly and Joe Byrne were quite good looking.

“But”, she said “Dan Kelly and Steve Hart were more like Chinamen than white men”. She added that apart from the fact that she and her family were kept prisoners in their own house, the gang did not treat them badly. She remembered very well Dan Kelly placing her son on his knee and playing with him for some time.

Questioned as to her health, Mrs Devine said that although 80 years of age, she felt as well as she did when she was 60. And for a woman of her years she is certainly extraordinarily robust. The three children who were at Jerilderie are still alive, the oldest being over 50. At the time of the visit of the Kellys, Sergeant Devine was aged 32 and his wife 33.

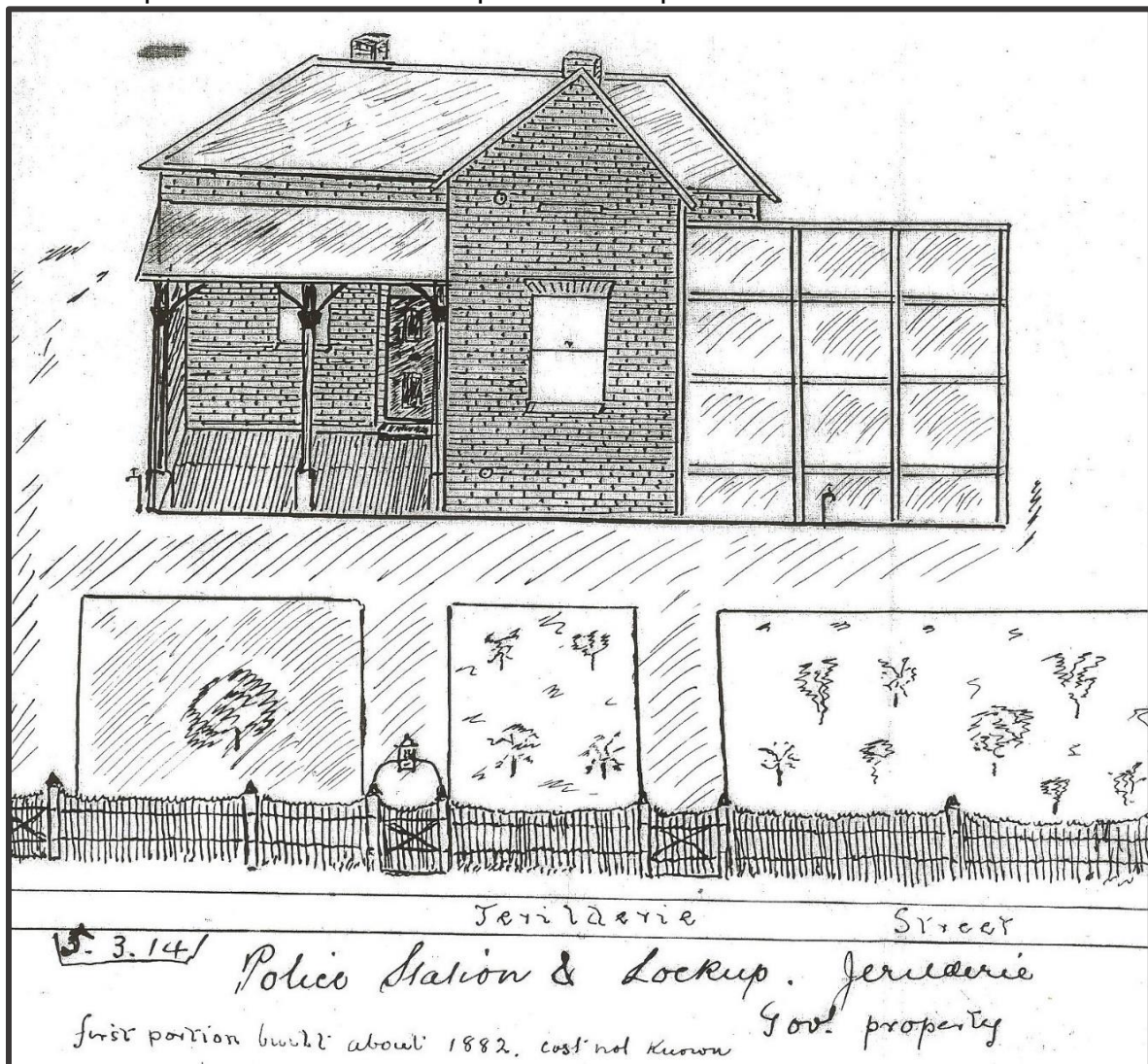
History of Police Barracks

During 1862/63 the Government established a police presence in Jerilderie where they occupied the former store of George Cadell, located immediately behind, or north, of the present (2010) police station. The police occupied these temporary premises until September 1869 when they occupied the barracks “visited’ by Ned Kelly and his Gang, in February 1879.

In 1880 plans and specifications were drawn up for a new police station, to be erected closer to the township. It was finally completed in 1882, with Mr E A Roe of Jerilderie being the builder.

The old police barracks were converted to living quarters for the Police Sergeant, eventually replaced with a transportable home in 1964.

The 1882 police station and lock-up was also replaced in 1989.



Origins of the Cell Door

The door to the cell in which Ned Kelly and his gang incarcerated Senior Constable Devine and Constable Richards when they raided Jerilderie on 8, 9 and 10 February 1879 was purchased from Mr Valentine (Val) Thomas Chapman, in September 1888.

This article explains how and why the cell door came to be in Val Chapman's possession. In doing so it is necessary to refer to Val's parents; when they came to Jerilderie; where they initially lived; what his father's occupation was; and where he was employed.

According to the obituary printed in the ***Jerilderie Herald and Urana Advertiser*** on 28 August 1947, Val's father, Jesse Frederick (Fred) Chapman, was born in the Echuca district in 1858 and, for a time, lived and worked in and around Orange before coming to the Jerilderie district in the 1870's, where he worked on various district properties, including Hartwood Station. The obituary notice states:

"When the town was reticulated about 1894, deceased was the first Engineer appointed in charge of the pumping station, and held that position until he retired about 11 years ago. In those days a small steam plant provided the supplies for the town. Subsequently a suction gas plant was installed and electric light was laid on to the town.

"He (Fred) was little short of a mechanical genius and controlled the pumping plant for years effecting his own repairs. In his workshop at the waterworks he had a lathe built by himself and carried out all kinds of work in a manner that displayed craftsmanship beyond compare. As a gunsmith he had no equal and no problem was too intricate for him to solve. It is not generally known now, [in 1947] but in the early days of the old Municipal Council there was no civil engineer and the services of Mr Chapman were requisitioned for the supervision and designing of road work, culverts, drains, etc., and such was his remarkable engineering knowledge that he was never at a loss in any direction that his services were required. He was even possessed of a theodolite which he had made himself."

The lathe mentioned in the obituary was also acquired by the Jerilderie Museum from Val Chapman. In 1920 a Mr W W McSkimming came to Jerilderie to install in the local hospital *"the most powerful Roentgen apparatus (X-Ray machine) there is outside the State capitals."* During his visit to the town, Mr McSkimming was so enamoured of the modern outlook displayed by the Jerilderie inhabitants that he was moved to write an article on his observations, which subsequently appeared in the March 1, 1921 issue of the ***Sea, Land and Air*** magazine. In that article Mr McSkimming describes Mr Fred Chapman as *"a man with an almost uncanny creative power. He has also built himself a lathe from old scraps of bicycles and iron piping. The gears are made from old bicycle chains and cogs, the fly wheels from blocks of wood, yet it is driven by a home-made steam engine, and on it he does screw cutting and precision work."*

One could form the opinion from the foregoing descriptions of Fred Chapman that he was somewhat of a 'collector', with a flair for making something out of nothing; the theodolite that he made from a gun sight being a perfect example. Such a trait lends credibility to how Mr Chapman, and then his son Val, came into possession

of the cell door from the original police lock-up – or “logs” as it was known at the time – particularly when it is revealed that Val Chapman inherited all or most of his father’s “traits”, and also when it is known where Mr Chapman Snr worked and lived, as the following map shows.



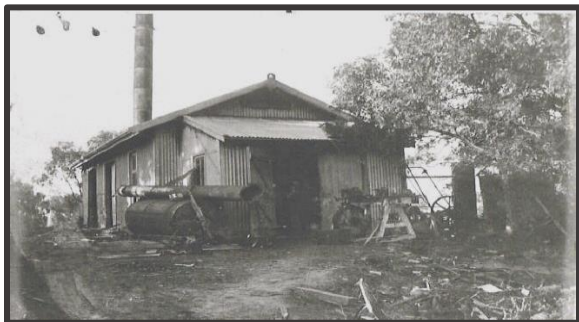
When conditions suited, Mr Chapman Snr was known to row his boat to work, otherwise he followed the creek, walking behind the old police barracks which, by this time in 1894, had been converted to the police sergeant’s residence.

In fact, following the raid on Jerilderie by Ned Kelly and his Gang in February 1879, plans were put in place to strengthen the police presence in Jerilderie, which involved the construction of new police barracks and lock-up at a new location closer to the town centre, a task completed in 1882. The 1882 police station and lock-up was replaced in 1989. This police station, with subsequent renovations and additions was replaced by the current (2010) police station, on the same site.

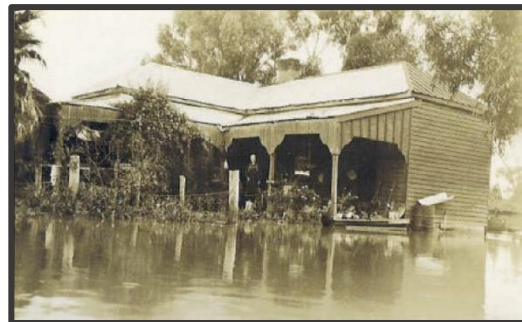
William Elliott's account **The Kelly Raid on Jerilderie, by One Who was There**, first published in serial form in his **Jerilderie Herald and Urana Advertiser** during 1913-14, describes the lock-up, or "logs" in great detail and refers to the cell door thus: *"The only light to the compartment (lock-up) was through an aperture in the massive door in the west, about ten inches square, through which the prisoners were passed their food and water."* Elliott goes on to state (in 1913) *"The old 'logs', long since the days of which I write, have given place to the present brick buildings, with their concrete floors to the cells, and built nearer the centre of the population of the town."*

William Elliott also describes the isolation of the police barracks from the rest of the town as being situated *"...at the eastern extremity of the town, fully half a mile from the post office. There were few buildings, in fact none at all, within the last quarter of a mile between the barracks and the town, which did not extend eastward beyond Bolton Street..."*

Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that prior to the construction of the pumping station and water tower for the town water supply in 1894, very few buildings existed east of Bolton Street, apart from the 1882 police station and cells, and the old barracks that had been converted to the police sergeant's residence. Again, knowing the nature of Mr Chapman Snr, it would also be reasonable to assume that in his fossicking around for materials to adapt and re-use, Mr Chapman stumbled across the cell door lying among the debris at the rear of the sergeant's residence. Alternatively, the police sergeant at the time may have simply given it to Mr Chapman Snr to do with it as he wished.



The old pump station demolished in 1964



Chapman residence surrounded by floods in 1931

Mr Chapman Snr continued in the employ of the local Council as manager of the town's water supply and, as from 1925, the role of managing the town's electricity supply was added to his list of duties. He fulfilled this role until his retirement in 1937, whereupon one of his sons, Valentine Chapman took over the position. Val continued in this role, although in a somewhat different capacity, firstly as Manager

of Council's Electricity Department from 1948 when bulk electricity was supplied from Victoria, and the commencement of extension of supply to rural properties. Then from 1958, with the advent of County Councils, Val Chapman continued in a dual role as an employee of the local Council responsible for water supply (until 1979), and as the District Engineer for the Murray River County Council electricity supply, until his retirement from that organisation in 1970.

As previously mentioned, Val Chapman was imbued with the same desire to collect, restore, and to fashion things out of nothing. Some photographs of his restoration projects are appended to this article, but above all Val was instilled with a true pioneering spirit, as evidenced by his commencement of regularly showing pictures in Jerilderie as from 1923 until 1953, including the branching out to show films at the nearby towns of Berrigan and Finley, and becoming a licensed aeroplane pilot in 1930 (licence No. 272).

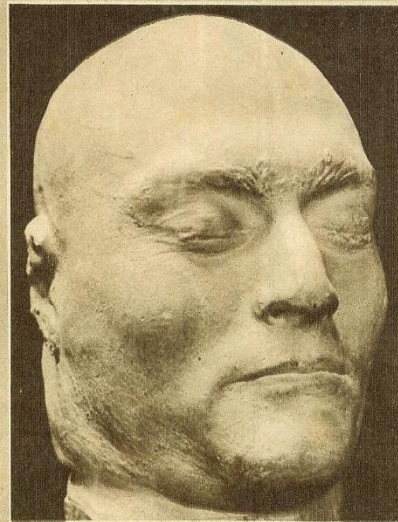
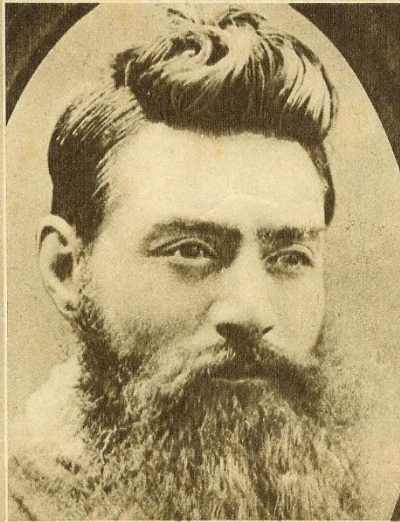


An early plane belonging to Val Chapman

Val's possession of the original lock-up cell door relating to the raid on Jerilderie by Ned Kelly and his Gang first became generally known to the wider public when an article appeared in *Modern Motor* magazine in 1954. That article was reproduced in their February issue of 1962, and is reproduced as an attachment to this article.

Note. In 1985 the Jerilderie District Historical Society received notification of a Federal Government Bi-Centenary Grant to carry out renovations and extensions to the Museum, which included the construction of the verandah at the rear of the Museum, overlooking the Billabong Creek. The verandah posts used are posts salvaged by Val Chapman when the original pump station was demolished in 1964. (Note: The Museum is no longer operational.)

A copy of the page from February 1962 **Modern Motor** magazine, (supplied by historical researcher John Lanser) depicting Val Chapman displaying the cell door from the Jerilderie police barracks lock-up. Mr Chapman is standing adjacent to the pump station, on the access road from the Newell Highway to the town's pump station and electricity supply depot.



LEFT: Ned Kelly, the day before his hanging —photo from Victoria Police Museum in Melbourne. ABOVE: Ned's death mask — plaster cast kept at Canberra Institute of Anatomy ... as inspiration to our Federal politicians?

Touring the KELLY COUNTRY

**In the tracks of
the Kelly Gang
through Victoria
and New South
Wales — by car**

NED KELLY and his gang have been riding again lately. On television screens throughout Australia and in the pages of Sydney's Sunday Telegraph they repeated the exploits that rocked the country 80-odd years ago and nettled the colonial governments of Victoria and New South Wales into offering the biggest reward ever put on a band of outlaws:

£8000, dead or alive—equivalent to ten times that amount in present-day money!

And even this was chicken-feed compared to what was spent on

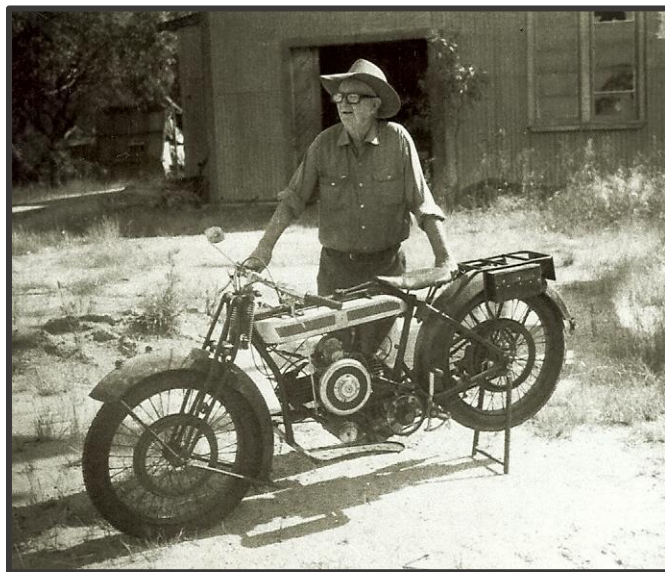
IRON DOOR behind which Kellys locked up Jerilderie police—held by present owner Val Chapman.



Some photographs of Val Chapman's restored vehicles. Unfortunately, there are no known photographs of Val's fully restored Ryan aeroplane, used by the RAAF for training purposes during World War II. The plane and spares were sold to an American collector.



Val Chapman and his fully restored 1913 Humbrette



*Val Chapman and his 1925 Douglas motorcycle.
Note the old pump station in the background*



Val Chapman driving "Four Corners" presenter Caroline Jones in the Ned Kelly Centenary street parade, 1979



Val Chapman's plane parked outside the General Store (now the site of Jerilderie IGA) – in readiness for 'home deliveries'!