

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)



The History of Braidwood Community Radio

(Part 1)



Wallace Street, Braidwood NSW

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

The management of Braidwood FM Inc

Braidwood Community Radio is a not-for-profit Incorporated Association. Its incorporated name is **Braidwood FM Inc** and it has an executive committee of four people, consisting of a President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Station Manager, and three ordinary committee members, and is staffed by unpaid volunteers.

It follows the Community Radio Code of Practice (CRCOP) and its Rules of Association and Objects of Association are based on the CRCOP.

Braidwood Community Radio is also known as Braidwood FM, and its call sign is 2BRW, and it is lovingly referred to by some presenters and listeners as “The Barbed Wireless”.

When Braidwood Community Radio first began broadcasting its studio was located on the first floor at 141 Wallace Street, Braidwood.

The planning years

Braidwood Community Radio came into being in 2003, when it began broadcasting on air on Australia Day, the 26th January.

The idea of having a radio station for the community of Braidwood and the surrounding district goes back a lot further than that. When Rob Davidson, the founder of Braidwood Community Radio (and it's President from 2003 until 2015) came to Braidwood to visit in 1996 he noticed the absence of decent radio reception in the area. When he came to live in Braidwood in March 1999 the problem still existed, and he said to his wife Meg, “this town needs a radio station”.

Rob had been interested in radio and music all his life, and he began to wonder if it was possible for Braidwood to have its own radio station.

Rob knew that a commercial radio station was not possible in a small town such as Braidwood, but as he searched the internet he came across community radio. He read as much as he could about it, and then he contacted nearby community radio stations in Goulburn, Moss Vale, Yass, and Queanbeyan to find out how they got started and how they continued to operate.

He visited each of the stations and saw their operations, and talked with the station managers and technicians. He realised the huge task that he had ahead of him should he proceed with trying to establish a community Radio station in Braidwood, but his passion and desire to do this outweighed what looked to be insurmountable odds.

Some of the stations he visited were housed in the most unusual of places, for instance, in Yass the radio was housed in an old concrete water tank that overlooked the town and used to supply the town's water. It had been abandoned many years earlier and various small rooms had been built inside it to house the radio station.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

The Station Manager of QBN-FM 96.7 Queanbeyan asked Rob if he would like his own program and Rob said “yes, sure” without thinking too much about it until he was driving back to Braidwood, when he thought to himself, “what am I going to do on air?”

Rob came in the next week for training, but it wasn't what he thought it would be. Rob thought he would do a few hours each week, for a few weeks in their spare studio, but instead, he was in the broadcast studio with a skilled presenter for a 3-hour program.

After 30 minutes of observing, the presenter asked Rob if he would like to read the weather forecast 'live on air', which he did. He was then asked to pick a few of his favourite songs, and once he had done that the presenter asked him to swap seats and he could be the presenter and play the songs he had chosen. Rob did that, and was then told to stay there and 'keep going, as you are doing well'. Rob ended up doing almost two and a half hours on air in his first 'training' session.

One more live on air training session took place the following week at the time slot Rob had been allocated. The presenter who 'trained' Rob the week before was there to assist him should he need it. After that Rob was on his own with his own weekly program from 6pm to 8pm every Thursday night, which commenced in late 2000.

Rob spent just over two years on QBN-FM and during that time he learned a lot from the station manager and their technician on how to work through the mire of government red tape that was needed to obtain a community radio licence.



Rob on air at QBN FM 2001

During his time at QBN FM Rob was also raising the funds needed to establish Braidwood Community Radio, around \$20,000. Funds were raised through monthly markets, locals joining as members and paying membership fees, and donations from individuals and businesses.

The problem with getting a broadcasting licence for the Braidwood area was that the ABA (Australian Broadcasting Authority) had not allocated a licence frequency to the area, and they would have to search for a suitable frequency and there were very few available to allocate.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

The ABA also had concerns as to whether a community radio station would be viable in Braidwood being such a small population base. The ABA did not want to allocate a frequency to something that may not operate in the long-term.

Rob held public meetings in Braidwood at the Braidwood Servicemen's Club, did letter box drops to encourage people to support it by becoming members, spoke with businesses about being sponsors of the station, and asked for letters of support from the Councillors on Tallaganda Shire Council, the Braidwood Services Club, the Braidwood Central School, and the businesses in and around Braidwood.

These letters were to accompany the application for the allocation of a broadcast frequency, and a licence to begin test transmissions. They were important in showing the level of community support for the establishment of a community radio station in Braidwood.

It took two years of raising funds and filling in government paperwork when Rob was finally notified by the ABA that Braidwood Community Radio would be allocated a frequency and could begin test broadcasting. The test broadcasts were limited to broadcasting from the roof of the broadcast studio, however, there was no site for the broadcast studio at that time. Denver Shoemark, the son of the local real estate agent in Braidwood, Shoemark Real Estate, was quite interested in the prospect of Braidwood having its own community radio station, and showed Rob a room above the Real Estate offices which became the Braidwood Community Radio broadcast studio, and it was located at 141 Wallace Street, Braidwood. This room was generously donated for the radio to use at no cost by Phil Shoemark, and in exchange Braidwood Community Radio offered to broadcast sponsor announcements for Shoemark Real Estate.



The entrance stairwell to Braidwood FM studios (looking down the steps). This was a later photo, as when the radio moved in there was no railing on the right side and the section of steps at the bottom used to sway from side to side when anyone walked on them.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

There was one more thing needed before the station could begin broadcasting. There were still more funds needed to purchase the remaining equipment that was needed to begin broadcasting, and at the time only \$10,000 of the \$20,000 needed had been raised. This is where QBN-FM played a big part in getting Braidwood Community Radio on the air.

They had some spare equipment and loaned Braidwood Community Radio a small mixer desk, some CD players, a mini-disc player, microphones, and most importantly, a small transmitter. These items were enough to enable Braidwood Community Radio to begin broadcasting and in turn bring in sponsorship revenue in order to purchase its own equipment.

Technicians Paul Brodie and Scott Watkins-Sully volunteered their services to help in preparing the station to go to air.

Scott had been involved in radio for several years and had his own program on the ABC. He was also involved in building broadcast studios for stations in Sydney such as 2UE and 2GB. Scott was living in Braidwood so he was close and able to help.

Paul was a radio technician, and had volunteered his time over the years to maintaining and repairing radios and transmitters for the SES and Rural Fire Service among others, and his expertise was in external transmissions.

The licence granted to Braidwood Community Radio by the ABA was a **test broadcasting licence** and was restricted to transmitting from the roof of the broadcast studio. The station broadcast for a radius of around 10kms from Braidwood and it broadcast on frequency 92.3FM.

The date that was set for Braidwood Community Radio to begin broadcasting was 9am on Saturday the 26th January 2003, Australia Day.

The studio had been set up and everything had been tested on the Friday night before. Everything worked in the studio and with the transmitters on the roof.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

The launch day

On the launch morning of Saturday the 26th January 2003 the studio was full. Rob Davidson was to be the first person on air and he was all set to do a 2-hour program from 9am to 11am. Rob had undertaken training at QBN-FM studios with Braidwood people interested in becoming presenters in the weeks and months leading up to Braidwood Community Radio's launch date, and they were also going to do 2-hour programs on the Saturday. Those going to air on the launch day were Rob Davidson, Michael Gill & Chris Payne; Jill McLeod; Shaunea Reynoldson (later to become Shaunea Exon); Paul Brodie; and Scott Watkins-Sully.

9am approached, all equipment was operational, and then faders were put up, the microphone was opened, andnothing! The station wasn't broadcasting.

A mad rush ensued with Paul and Scott checking everything over, and finally the station went to air around 9:15am, with Rob playing the first song heard on Braidwood Community Radio, John Farnham's "You're The Voice". That song was chosen as it was felt that it represented the station, 'the voice of Braidwood'.

Everything went smoothly for the rest of the day, and in those early days of test broadcasting the station was on air from around 8am to 8pm, as there was no computerisation, and only a handful of presenters.



Braidwood FM (original) studios, 2003

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)



Braidwood FM (original) studios, 2003

Launch day presenters



Michael Gill & Chris Payne



Shaunea Exon (nee' Reynoldson)

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

Launch day presenters (continued)



Jill McLeod



Paul Brodie



Rob & Meg Davidson

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

Staying on air

Some presenters like Shaunea Reynoldson and Rob Davidson often did 3 or even 4 programs of 3 or more hours duration each week to keep the station on air, and other presenters often did 2 programs a week of 2 hours or more.

Before the station was computerised, at one stage a 300-CD stacker was installed to keep the station operating when no presenters were available. Compilation CD's were placed in the stacker, along with CD's that had sponsor announcements on them, so at the end of each compilation CD, an announcement CD would play, then another compilation CD and so on.

It was cumbersome but it kept the station on air for the few months it took to set up a computer to do the work when presenters were not available.

The early computer system that ran the station when there were no presenters on air operated on Windows Media Player and it intermittently "froze" and had to be re-started often. Initially that was done by having to go up to the studios at whatever hour it was and physically restart the program on the PC. Later, Rob was able to dial into the PC from home and restart the program.

Later, our technician Paul Brodie, introduced a new program called "Zara", and it was specifically designed for small stations to operate when there were no presenters on air. It was a brilliant program and put playlists of music to air, and played sponsor announcements at the programmed times, switched to the satellite at pre-programmed times to bring in the news, did time calls, and anything else that it was programmed to do. It was god-send to a small station like Braidwood FM and enabled the station to broadcast 24 hours a day every day of the year.

Early interference problems

There were some interference problems caused by the station broadcasting from its roof in the main street of Braidwood. For example, the Butcher shop next door to the radio station received only Braidwood Community Radio. Every station frequency they tried to tune in to had Braidwood Community Radio on that frequency. This was caused by the proximity to the transmission aerial and the fact that the Butchers shop was full of metal fridges and freezers. Needless to say the Butcher was not impressed and became quite vocal about it. He later sold the Butcher shop and the new owner became a business sponsor of the station.

Another example were the flats above the Albion Centre, one block away from the radio studios. All the television reception in the flats was interrupted by Braidwood Community Radio's transmissions, and one of the residents wrote a letter of complaint to the ABA who had given Braidwood Community Radio its broadcast licence.

The ABA told Braidwood FM to fix the interference problem, and our technician Paul Brodie went and inspected the flats and found that the aerials were extremely old, He installed a filter on the aerial at the Albion Centre and from then on everything was ok, and they could again watch television without radio signal interference.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

Licencing history and Australia Day awards

On the 1st May 2003 the ABA granted a **Temporary Broadcasting Licence** to Braidwood Community Radio, and on the 25th January 2004 the transmitter was re-located to Mt.Gillamatong and transmissions began on frequency 94.5FM.

The broadcast radius increased to around 50 kms from Braidwood, reaching as far as Gundillion, Bungendore, Wakefield Park near Goulburn, Nerriga, Mongarlowe, Majors Creek, and Captains Flat. Transmission were intermittently received as far down the Clyde Mountain to Nelligen, and in parts of Batemans Bay.

Exactly 12 months after Braidwood Community Radio began broadcasting (Australia Day 2004) Rob Davidson was recognised by his community in the Australia Day Awards for Braidwood. He was presented with an award by the then Tallaganda Shire Council for **Cultural Achievement** for his work in bringing Community Radio to Braidwood and the surrounding district.



Meg and Rob Davidson at Braidwood FM's 1st Birthday at Ryrie Park Markets, January 2004.

At that time (2004) Braidwood Community Radio was only licenced by the ABA to broadcast within the Tallaganda Shire, and the ABA LAP (Local Area Plan) was limited to Braidwood.

Later when Tallaganda Shire was merged and became Palerang Shire, which then included Bungendore and other regions the Board considered expanding the stations reach, however, when our technician Paul Brodie left for England and we had no permanent technician we were unable to carry out the technical assessments and work that would be required to be submitted to the ABA, and basically we operated what we had in place, hoping no major technical failures would occur until Paul returned or another technician could be found.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)



Rob Davidson, founder, president and presenter – Braidwood FM inc – Australia Day Award 2004 for “Cultural Achievement”

Twenty months after Braidwood Community Radio first went to air it was granted a **Permanent Broadcasting Licence** by the ABA on the 22nd November 2004 and was able to broadcast 24 hours a day. Rob later found out that 20 months was an amazing feat in obtaining a permanent broadcasting licence, as was being able to broadcast 24 hours a day, as a number of community stations have to wait up to 5 years for their permanent licence, and are often restricted in the daily hours they can broadcast, and often are test broadcasting for say 6 hours a day for one month, and then they cannot broadcast again for another two months, and then they broadcast again for 6 hours a day for one month, and on it goes. They had very strict (and restrictive) testing before being given their permanent licence.

Rob followed every direction the ABA gave him, and supplied them with detailed technical information about transmissions, that were compiled by Paul Brodie, and it is thought that this, together with Braidwood’s isolation and lack of other radio stations in the area, is what led to the ABA granting a permanent licence in such a short time.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)



Braidwood FM studio, 2005

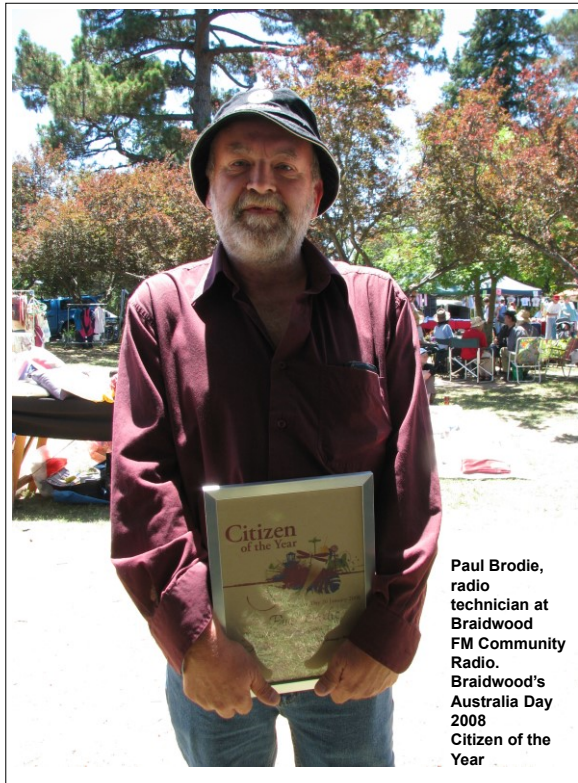


Mt. Gillamatong where Braidwood FM's broadcast transmitter is located.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

Braidwood FM Technician receives an Australia Day Awards in 2008

Paul Brodie, Braidwood Community Radio Technician, received the “Citizen of the Year” at the Australia Day Awards in 2008 for his voluntary work with Braidwood FM, the Rural Fire Service, and the SES.



Paul Brodie,
radio
technician at
Braidwood
FM Community
Radio.
Braidwood's
Australia Day
2008
Citizen of the
Year

Paul Brodie, technician and presenter – Australia Day Award 2008 – “Citizen of the Year”

Later in 2008 Paul Brodie left Australia for England as his mother was in her 90's and wasn't well. He expected to be away for about 2 years but as time went on his mother's health improved and he stayed in England.

From late 2008 through to July 2015, when Gordon Waters became Station Manager, Braidwood FM did not have a technician. The station relied on assistance from Brian Warren at 2UUU Nowra and Ron Parkinson at 2QBN-FM Queanbeyan if there were ever any major problems.

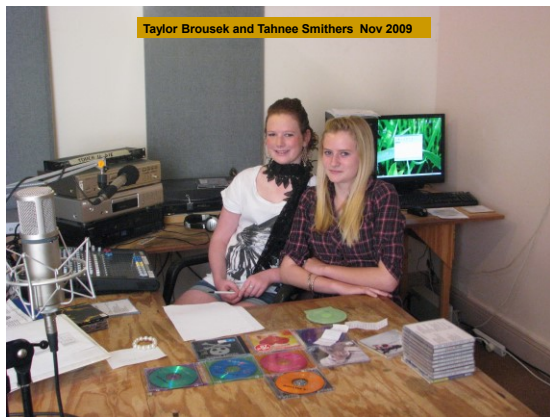
This limited our ability to progress the station forward in a technical aspect.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

Involvement of school students in Braidwood FM

In the first few years (2003-2007) school students made up around 45-50% of the presenters on the station. Most of their programs were on air between 4pm and 6pm Monday to Friday.

This came about because Rob Davidson spoke with Rod McClure the Principal of Braidwood Central School when the station first opened about involving the students. Rod was keen to get the school involved and Rod arranged for interested students to assemble at the school and Rob Davidson came and spoke to them and there was a good level of interest from the students.



Taylor Brousek & Tahnee Smithers, presenters, 2009



Amy Roberts & Georgia Dale, presenters, 2004



Sullivan Kovac, presenter, 2015



Anna Westworth & Alana Allen, presenters, 2004

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

Involvement of school students in Braidwood FM (continued)



Elisa Wood-Ward, presenter, 2004



Savas Papsokratis, presenter, 2011



Ella White-Wilkes, presenter, 2003



Vanessa Williams, presenter, 2004



Taryn Bevege & Nathan Elliott, presenters, 2004

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

Braidwood Presenters over the years



Gavin Pillidge, presenter



Mistin, Singer/ songwriter/ presenter, 2005



Meg & Rob Davidson, presenters



Jill McLeod, Presenter

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

Braidwood Presenters over the years (continued)



Angel Brennan, Singer/songwriter/
presenter



Susan Tate, Presenter



Barry Waters, Presenter



Gordon Waters, presenter/Station Manager, 2016



Rod McClure, presenter/President, 2016



Peter Malone, presenter, 2015

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

How Braidwood FM Inc is funded

Braidwood Community Radio obtains the funds it needs to operate through donations from individuals and businesses; individuals and businesses becoming members; and businesses becoming sponsors.

The station is eligible to apply for grants to purchase equipment, but not to pay day-to-day running costs such as electricity, rent, licence fees, copyright fees, insurances etc. The funds for the day-to-day operating costs come from memberships and sponsorships which are so important to the continuing operation of the station.

Braidwood FM assistance to community groups

Braidwood Community Radio assists local community groups whenever it is able to, and provided its first donation to **Braidwood Junior Soccer** in 2004.

Over the years Braidwood Community Radio has provided funds to the **Braidwood Central School** to assist with the purchase of Safety Play Equipment for the Primary School children, and towards the new school bus, and to **Braidwood Scouts** and **Braidwood SES**. It is also an annual sponsor of the **Bendigo Bank Braidwood Lions Billy Cart Derby**, and **The Braidwood Quilt Event**.

“The next phase” in 2014

In early 2014 Rob Davidson undertook another major project, that of relocating the Braidwood Community Radio studios. The current location was getting harder to access due to development around the rear of the building, and the difficulty of many presenters being able to get up the steep stairs. It also had no access for persons with physical disabilities or those in a wheelchair. The building had been on the market and there was the danger of it being sold and the radio having to move out, with nowhere to move to.

Initial funding

Around March 2014 Rob approached Mary Mathias, Grants Co-ordinator with the Braidwood Community Bank with his idea for new studios in the hope that the Community Bank would provide some financial support towards the project. Rob informed the bank that the radio would be contributing \$10,000 towards the estimated \$68,000 cost of the project. Rob supplied Mary with full plans and costings for the project and Mary presented it to the Board and convinced them it would be a worthwhile major project for the Bank to become involved in. The Bank agreed to support the project with a grant of \$25,000.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

Finding a site for the new studios

Rob began looking for suitable sites, and a basic enquiry was made to the Braidwood Services Club but it was rejected by their Board.

Rob approached the Braidwood Show Society to see if the studios could be accommodated at the Braidwood Showground. Their Board showed great interest in the idea and several discussions took place, before Rob was invited to one of their regular meetings to present his proposal. A few days after the meeting Rob was notified that the Board had accepted the proposal and would welcome the radio being located at the Showground.

A mutually agreeable location was agreed upon within the Showground site and Rob approached Palerang Council to discuss the project. This was done as the Braidwood Show Society is a 355 committee that reports to Palerang Council, and there are heritage issues with the showground site.



Braidwood Showground – proposed site for Braidwood Community Radio

Rob met with the Town Planner, and the Heritage Advisor at the showground in late April 2014 and was told that the radio station could not go where both the radio and the show society had agreed on, as it was within a heritage “envelope” and nothing could be built within that “envelope”.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

There was not another suitable location within the showground so the idea of moving the studios to the showground had to be abandoned.

Rob searched again for suitable sites for the studios and could not find any suitable site other than the Braidwood Services Club. It so happened that the club Manager, Michelle Griggs, was extremely keen to have the radio at the club and asked Rob to prepared a new and detailed submission for the Board's consideration.

Michelle said there was no space inside the club and Rob and Michelle looked for a site on the club's grounds that could accommodate a demountable building. Rob found that Mordek (Moruya Cladding and Decking) could make a building to specifications required, and so Rob presented his proposal which this time involved installing a two-room purpose-built demountable building behind the squash court wall. The building was originally designed to be 9.5 metres in length and 4.5 metres in width.



Site for Braidwood FM's new studios 2016, behind the squash court at Braidwood Servicemen's Club

Braidwood Servicemen's Club Manager, Michelle Griggs, worked tirelessly to convince the Board of the Club to agree to have the radio relocate to the Club and in July 2014 the Club provided written approval and the work got under way to plan the new studios and to raise the estimated \$68,000 needed for the project.

Rob thought things would flow smoothly from then on, as "how hard could it be to install a two-room pre-constructed demountable building?"much harder than he thought!

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

Sourcing a purpose-built building and the DA

Several manufacturers of demountable buildings were approached for quotes, and the best style of building and the best overall cost was provided by Mordek, who are based in Moruya, and who had also been a sponsor of the station for several years.

Over several months Rob had discussions with Mordek commencing with a basic floor plan and refining it till it included disabled toilets, doorways and entrance ramps, as these were requirements of Palerang Council. Rob also visited Mordek's manufacturing site at Moruya to see the buildings first hand.



Basic design of the proposed new Braidwood Radio studios - 2015



Basic design of the proposed new Braidwood Radio studios - 2015

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

Rob had several meetings over the coming months with Palerang Council planners to work through the plans, and amend them where necessary to meet the building and fire requirements for a demountable building.

Over these same months the Board of the Braidwood Services Club was kept informed of the progress and also had questions and input into the site for the studios. There was an opinion within the Board that the radio building be located one metre from the squash court wall, whereas Council wanted it 3.5 metres off the squash court wall to meet building and fire regulations.

Rob engaged a Certifier to assess the project and the Certifier advised that if there was a firewall between the squash court wall and the radio building then one metre was legally allowed, otherwise the distance would have to be 3.5 metres.

Delays were experienced for a couple of months as the Club still insisted it wanted one metre distance between the buildings regardless of what Council wanted.

In January 2015 Rob was asked to do a presentation to the Board of the Braidwood Services Club, and he was accompanied in that presentation by Mary Mathias and Nick Fry from the Braidwood Community Bank, as the Bank was a major contributor to the project.

Several days after Rob's presentation the Board re-confirmed that they still wished to proceed with the project, however, the distance between the buildings was still an issue.

Rob approached Mordek and told them of the problem. They saw no problem as the "firewall" could simply be the fire rating of the new radio building. If it met the 90/90/90 fire rating it could be one metre off the squash court wall. Mordek said that the building would meet that standard and issued a letter to that effect.

One other issue the club had was the width of the building, and it was reduced from 4.5 metres to 3.5 metres in width.

The letter was presented to the Board and the project proceeded again.

The next step was to get the DA (Development Application) into Palerang Council. Over the past few months Rob had presented a draft copy to Palerang Council on two occasions, and had made amendments as per Council feedback.

The DA was completed and given to the Services Club for sign-off by two Board members before it could be lodged with Council.

The Club then sent the DA to their solicitors to look it over, and this further delayed things. Further discussions took place between Rob and new Club Board liaison Karen Hansby.

The Club Board had still not signed the DA after several weeks and they eventually came back in April 2015 with another problem, electricity capacity on their electrical switchboard.

The Club said there were no more switches and that the radio may need to consider bringing power directly from the power pole to the radio building. An assessment by a local electrician put this cost at \$6,000.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

The project had already increased from \$68,000 to \$78,000 due to a price increase in the cost of the building, and additional costs for the disabled facilities needed to comply with current regulations, and an extra \$6,000 would push the project cost to \$84,000.

Rob asked the electrician if there was capacity to increase the number of switches on the board. The electrician said he believed there was as he said many changes had occurred over the years and some switches more than likely had nothing attached to them, or if they did those attachments were not functional. The electrician provided his assessment that 2 to 3 switches could be created, which would give one for the radio, and the capacity for another one or two switches for future use by the Club should they need them.

With that problem solved Rob presented the electrician's report to the Club Board and a few days later the DA was signed-off by the Club.

Rob had the council planners look over the DA one more time, and they thought it looked pretty good, so Rob lodged the DA on the 5th May 2015 and paid the \$1,905 lodgement fee.

As soon as the DA had been approved the building was ordered from Mordek. It would take 3 months from the time the order was placed to the date of delivery. In the meantime builder Stephen Orford constructed the footings and piers ready for the arrival of the building.

Once the building was in place Stephen Orford brought in the plumber and electrician, which he had already lined-up for this project and they installed the utility services.

Rob arranged for Radio Technicians, Brian Warren and David Hawksworth from Radio 2UUU Nowra to come to Braidwood and set up the new studios and to ensure they are functioning properly, and to realign the transmission signals from the new studios to Mt.Gillamatong, however, Gordon Waters the new station manager, had learned enough in his almost 12 months in the position to set up the studios and the transmissions to Mt.Gillamatong himself.

The initial estimated completion date of the project was early December 2015, with the new studios expected to be fully operational by mid-December 2015.

There were further delays and the eventual completion date was June 2016, with the Open Day to be Friday 17th June 2016. The station actually commenced broadcasting from the new studios of few days before the Open Day to ensure everything was operating well.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

Further funding required for the project

During the previous months Rob had managed to secure further grant funding from the New South Wales State Government under the **CBP (Community Building Partnership Grant Program)**. This grant was for **\$12,413** and was enthusiastically supported by local National Party member for Eden-Monaro, John Barilaro, who was instrumental in getting these funds for the project approved.



Nationals' Member for Eden-Monaro, John Barilaro with Rob Davidson in the original Braidwood FM studios, November 2014

Grant Administrators from Goulburn Mulwaree Council whilst assisting Palerang Council were successful in obtaining a grant from **Southern Phone Company** and Rob attended the Palerang Council chambers in March 2015 to be presented with a cheque for **\$5,000** for this project.

Braidwood Lions had also pledged **\$2,000** towards the project, and further donations were received from **local businesses and individuals** totalling over **\$1,000**, and **Braidwood FM** itself had increased its financial contribution from \$10,000 to **\$11,000**, making a **total of \$58,000** raised as at June 2015.

In May 2015 Rob lodged a grant application with **Veolia Mulwaree Trust** for **\$22,000**. These funds were the remaining funds required to complete this project.

The final cost had increased further and additional funds were provided by the **Braidwood Community Bank**, who increased their funding from \$25,000 to **\$37,000**.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)

Rob Davidson resigns and moves on

After 13 years as President Rob Davidson resigned effective 30th June 2015. Rob's wife Meg had suffered from lung problems all her life. The cold and erratic weather conditions in Braidwood were extremely bad for Meg, and they had made the decision to move north to a warmer area where temperatures were fairly steady throughout the year.

Their home sold and was exchanged in June 2015, and they moved from Braidwood on the 6th July 2015, leaving behind them the great legacy of Community Radio for this beautiful small town.

A new Board consisting of Rod McClure (President), Mary Mathias (Secretary), Nick Fry (Treasurer) and Gordon Waters (Station Manager) took over from the 1st July 2015, and Rob presented them with an Operating Manual and provided one-on-one training for their respective positions.

Six weeks after leaving Braidwood Rob stepped back into the position of Treasurer in August 2015, when Nick Fry, because of business pressures, was unable to devote sufficient time to the duties of his Treasurer position. Rob was Treasurer until the 31st December 2015, when Janene Collins became the new Treasurer.

The opening of the new studios at Braidwood Servicemen's Club

The new studios opened at the Braidwood Servicemen's Club in June 2016, around six months later than the original planned date.

An Open Day was held at the Braidwood Servicemen's Club on Friday the 17th June 2016 and Rob Davidson was invited to attend. The opening was attended by speakers John Barilo (National Party member for Eden-Monaro), John Reynolds from Veolia Mulwaree Trust, Mary Mathias from the Braidwood Community Bank, the Palerang Mayor, Gordon Waters Braidwood FM Station Manager, Rod McClure Braidwood FM President, and Rob Davidson founder and ex-president of Braidwood FM.

Many others attended the opening such as Keith Potger (ex-member of Australian 60's band The Seekers) who was now a resident of Braidwood, a representative from Mordek (the builder of the studios), several 2BRW sponsors, and many Braidwood locals.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)



John Barilaro, National Party member for Eden-Monaro at the Open Day ceremony held at the Braidwood Servicemen's Club on Friday the 17th June 2016 for Braidwood FM's new studios.



John Reynolds (Veolia Mulwaree Trust) and Mary Mathias (Braidwood Community Bank) at the Open Day ceremony held at the Braidwood Servicemen's Club on Friday the 17th June 2016 for Braidwood FM's new studios.

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)



Founder and ex-president Rob Davidson receiving his “Certificate of Life Membership” from National Party member for Eden-Monaro, John Barilaro.



President of Braidwood FM, Rod McClure, at the Open Day ceremony

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)



Gordon Waters, Station Manager, giving his vision for Braidwood FM's future at the Open Day ceremony.



New 2BRW Studios 2016 at Braidwood Servicemen's Club

The History of Braidwood FM (part 1)



New 2BRW Studios 2016 at Braidwood Servicemen's Club

Rob Davidson returns as Treasurer

Janene Collins resigned as Treasurer and Rob volunteered to help and fill that role in late October 2016, and was nominated and elected as Treasurer at the November 2016 AGM.

The future

The Braidwood Community Radio is preparing its five year Business Plan and Strategic Plan.