

Single Wheeled Grain Mower

Found by Stewart Dyke of Feilding, about 1990, the single wheeled, grain mower was resting among the lupins on the banks of the Rangitikei River, up stream from the old Onepuhi Bridge, on property farmed by Snow Anderson's family.

Stewart Dyke appreciated its age and uniqueness, arranging to have it brought to his Austin Museum at Maewa on Lethbridge Road, Feilding. He later passed it on to Brian James to clean and display as part of his private collection at James Road, Halcombe. There are several points on the machines 'wearing parts' that show it had done a significant amount of work, probably at the end of the 1890s or early 1900s.

How it arrived on the banks of the Rangitikei River is speculation, as any people who may have worked with the mower, from either side of the river, are now deceased. The farms on both sides of the river were and have been grain growing properties under the management of several well known families: Thoms and Lee-Jones, from Porewa on the western banks, and Lee-Jones, Anderson, and local Reu Reu Road iwi on the eastern banks of the Rangitikei River.



We believe this could be the oldest example of harvesting machinery on display in New Zealand. Thanks to Brian James and Brian Schnell for their rescue, restoration and research of this piece of early, harvesting machinery.