

# On The Land



**MEN AT WORK:** Volunteers learn artisan trades during a six-day intensive learning program at the Glencoe Woolshed. Participants will put heritage building skills into practice as they restore the 154-year-old building.

## Heritage restoration

### Woolshed project enables tradespeople to learn 19th century construction methods



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SEVENTEEN tradespeople from as far as Queensland began a week-long restoration project at the heritage-listed Glencoe Woolshed on Sunday, eager to learn traditional 19th century building skills.

The volunteer conservationists are each paying their own way and undertaking hands-on work to learn to conserve limestone and timber, as well as lime washing and lime mortar techniques - artisan trades no longer accredited in Australia.

While learning skills, the participants are also delivering a vital revamp to the building, protecting a significant window into agricultural practices of the past in the South East.

Facilitated by Applied Building Conservation Training (ABCT), the program demonstrates a partnership between the National Trust of South Australia and Construction Industry Training Board (CITB).

ABCT director Keith McAllister said the six-day program was an opportunity for tradespeople to earn a certificate of competency recognised by Australian conservation authorities.

"ABCT has been operating for around 10 years now, offering courses in heritage conservation," Mr McAllister told *The Border Watch*.

"There is a national shortage of heritage building skills as there is no accreditation in Australia - unless old buildings are maintained in the old ways, the results can be disastrous.

"We mentor participants as they learn artisan trades, the application of materials and techniques and complete restoration of historical buildings.

"During this project we will focus on timber conservation



**HISTORY RESTORED:** David Marshall restores the timber frame of the iconic arch window at the Glencoe Woolshed. Pictures: BRITTANY DENTON

and stone masonry."

Mr McAllister said attempting to use modern materials or techniques to restore the Woolshed would damage and potentially destroy the 154-year-old building.

"Old lime mortar allows a building to breathe moisture - if it is replaced by modern impermeable cement, the moisture will attack the limestone on buildings like the woolshed," he said.

"Likewise for modern paint versus traditional lime wash."

Managed by the new Glencoe Woolshed branch of the National Trust, the restoration drive is the first major project on the building

since 1977 when Premier Don Dunstan raised \$100,000 to prevent it falling into ruin.

Built in 1863, the Woolshed is one of the finest examples of early Australian rural architecture and is believed to be the only woolshed still in its original blade-shearing condition.

The woolshed has never been converted to accommodate mechanical shearing technology, remaining intact as an example of an original farming technology and practice.

This week's project will address the need to conserve the original stonework and structural timbers.