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Bringing history to life

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The cast and crew pose for a photo after the successful December livestream.

Ben Hall was briefly brought back to life last year thanks to The Project Zone, Department of Education/DART Connections, Eugowra Museum, Orange Museum and eight primary schools across the Central West NSW.

Held on the last day of school for 2018 the story of Ben Hall's gang was retold in short films written and filmed by students, including some from St Joseph's school in Eugowra, with a Q&A with author Craig Lawler.

The film had a particular focus on a three-day siege in Canowindra in 1863, with actors riding into the town to reenact the scenes.

David Foley, Advisor Distance and Rural Technologies NSW, directed the day and thanked the Canowindra community for their support.

"This project was a bit of fun and was based on the humor that comes from the premise of a three day siege in town with no-one was allowed to leave but all the drinks were paid for," he said.

Mr Foley said the project was about engaging students with their histories.

"We found that primary school kids more often than not aren't excited about history," he said.

"So telling it this way, with this project, the kids love the history and can't get enough.

"This project is the first of what we hope will be many that follow and will allow students to own and celebrate their own history," he added.

"Next year we're working on a day with the Mitchell libraries getting access to a lot of fabulous material on the bush ranging days.

"Official documents, telegrams, objects, guns, wood from coaches and lots of different things on bush rangers.

"We'll go live there in May 2019 giving this project life again.

"It all forms part of the gold area of study, a lot of schools study gold and their local history," he said.

Mr Foley said those interested in re-watching the project could search for the NSW Department of Education learning systems YouTube channel online.

At time of publication, it was the most recent clip posted, titled Ben Hall Christmas Special - Live From Canowindra.

If you're interested in Ben Hall history there is a permanent exhibition at the museum in Cross Street, which is open from 2pm to 4pm each day.