MEDIA RELEASE

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WAGGA WAGGA FAMILY CLOCKS OFF AFTER 58 YEARS

A father and his sons have been honoured for keeping Wagga Wagga Courthouse's historic clock ticking for more than half a century.

Attorney General Mark Speakman congratulated members of the Breust family who, for almost six decades, has been climbing the city's courthouse tower each week without fail to wind the clock.

"Des Breust and his sons Heath and Mark are now calling time on their caretaking duties, and will hand over all clock maintenance to the Wagga Historic Engine Club. I'm thrilled to have been able to unveil a plaque today to celebrate a family tradition that has stood the test of time," Mr Speakman said.

"The courthouse clock tower is an iconic landmark. It has watched over Wagga Wagga since the days of horse and cart. Des and his boys have hands down kept that heritage alive. We thank them for the monumental effort they have put in, year after year."

Mayor Greg Conkey OAM said the job was sometimes demanding, with the Breusts climbing the tower in the middle of the night to adjust the time for daylight savings twice a year.

"They may have been ticked off by having to climb ladders at 2am, but the Breust family showed true professionalism and dedication," Mr Conkey said.

Des, now in his late 70s, first started servicing the clock in 1962 while working as a 17-year-old apprentice for a local jeweller.

"In the mid-1980s I taught my teenage sons the trade. We call it a labour of love," Des said.

When Des left Wagga Wagga in 1989 he handed over the reins to his youngest son Mark for several years, before Heath took over the role which he has continued for the past three decades.

"The old timepiece itself is 143 years old - a similar vintage to Big Ben in London. So it needs regular care. Strong winds affect the swing of the 50 kilogram pendulum, which causes it to run fast or slow. And the locals notice!" Des said.

The clock tower was restored in 2017 during a $17 million courthouse renovation that enabled the complex to more than double in size.