

Friends



Building bridges to Peel history

Friends of Mandurah Community Museum Newsletter.

Issue October 2009.

Long serving teachers of the mid – 20th century.

Mrs Tonkin came to Mandurah as a married lady and at that time she wasn't permitted to teach due to her marital status. A ruling which was liable to be ignored when times were such that the Education Department needed the expertise of women. One such time was during both World Wars, and in Mrs Tonkin's case she was brought back into teaching very early in the history of Hackett St School in 1943 and assisted both Mr Goode and Betty Morehouse.

In Mrs Tonkin's first years she taught grades one through three and managed up to 64 children in these three years, later gaining the assistance of a part time monitor. Mrs Tonkin also taught sewing, and played the piano for the school, as well as assisting with teaching folk dancing, which was demonstrated during parent's day. Another activity Mrs Tonkin undertook was teaching piano after school hours.

Out of hours Mrs Tonkin also accompanied dances at the Capitol Theatre with Max Kay and a lady saxophonist, travelling around the area to play at fund raising functions during the War. In later years she also provided pensioners entertainment.

After 25 years of service to the children of Mandurah, Mrs Tonkin retired, later marrying again and being known as Mrs Hall. She died in 1995 at the age of 87 years.

(excerpts from Flashback, Coastal District Times. 01/12/1995)

Ross Kirkpatrick. Came to Hackett St School following his teaching times at Fairbridge. It was during the war that he taught refugee Dutch children who had been evacuated from Indonesia. He grew to like Mandurah and requested a transfer here after the war. Ross taught three generations of children, retiring in 1977. During his teaching times he also involved himself with the school swimming lessons and assisted with school concert productions.

Ross's wife Margaret was also a teacher, specialising in infant teaching. She was also a very good painter. She had left teaching when she married but returned on a casual basis teaching also manual arts and sewing as well as relieving.

Another area of expertise for Ross was his writing skills and he had occasion to write several articles including one which is repeated in full in a book produced by the Museum on the Borehole rescue of 1957. At that time he also reported his experiences to the ABC and received a letter of commendation from them.

A community member, Ross was involved in the commencement of the Halls Head Golfing Club and was active in the Our Lady's Assumption Catholic Church of Mandurah.

Jan Baker

Musing at the Museum *"This is a very interesting museum because it shows 'back in the old days'. I really enjoyed the school and the folder about Megamouth. A very remarkable museum!"*

Next year is the 110th Anniversary of the Schoolroom.

Special features

Long Serving Teachers.

Mrs Tonkin
Mr Kirkpatrick.

Bouquets to Eleanor.

Value Adding at Museums.

Other Museums - Wagin.

Hackett St. Memories - Phyl Hardy.

Museum assists Hackett St School Reunion.

Regular features.

From the MDO .

Nicholas Reynolds.
Education Matters.

Katrina Pritchard.
'Friends' Chairperson reports.

Musing - From the
Visitors book.



MDO Report. Following on from our last newsletter where we farewelled our previous manager, I'll begin this one by welcoming our new one. John Hughes has taken up the position of Manager Libraries, Learning, Arts & Culture for the City. John has a background in library services, arts, education and culture and his career has spanned several UK local governments including Hammersmith, City of Westminster, and Barnet and Brent. Before migrating to Australia recently, he was Library and Information Manager at the London Borough of Lewisham, building a new library as part of a shared facility with health and sport and undertaking major refurbishments of two others.

His other interests include sport and recreation, assuring us he is a participant as well as a spectator, and – of course – reading: biographies, history and fiction. John's qualifications include a BA (Hons) from the London School of Economics.

John says he is looking forward to working with new colleagues and the community in Mandurah, improving the quality of life for local people and particularly providing better opportunities for young people locally.

Moving on, measurements have been provided and an order has now been placed with James Cooper of Creative Spaces for the three travelling display cases. The cost of one will be covered by the Friends, the second through a very generous donation from the Tuckey Family in remembrance former Mayor Dudley Tuckey, and the third by the Museum. He will be forwarding final design details soon. The official launch of the cabinets will be at our Roads Board exhibition in December.

The MDO has been continuing to work with Jenny Nichol to move forward with our updated Interpretation Plan. Through our joint efforts with James Cooper we now have a framework and an outline for the staged implementation of the ideas that will be contained within it. The first stage will be the creation of our hotels and recreation gallery which will coincide with Hotels temporary exhibition early next year. The draft plan has now been delivered and I am in the process of reviewing it. One of the outcomes of the preparation of the Interpretation Plan was the provision of our visitor figures to Jenny Nichol. It's always good to have an outside opinion of how we're doing. She was very positive about the steady increase that we have seen over the last four years and suggested that we must be doing something right to have achieved this.

The next item in the task list for the plan is for the MDO to outline stories that can be told in each gallery and the methods that will be used to tell them. These can include objects, images, AV material or oral histories to name a few.

On the 19th of August a photo crew along with the Manager of the Mandurah branch of the Westpac bank came to the Museum in order to include us in local publicity for a new marketing campaign. This will help greatly with our promotion.

It's also interesting to note that the Manager, Stephen Harding, has a link with the Museum. The large red scooter in the schoolroom once belonged to him. He grew up in Mandurah and before his parents moved further south, they donated it to the Historical Society in 1995. With Stephen returning home to Mandurah it makes a nice ending to a period where we've had many new friends come and join us at the Museum. **Nick Reynolds**

Bouquets to Eleanor. From early this year Eleanor Kay has been working on a project to promote the Anniversary and school re-union at Hackett St School. While Eleanor did not attend this school she was involved with it through her children at a time when the schools' numbers reached above 700 promoting the need for yet another school to be built within the Mandurah area, and this was only the first of several schools.

The idea of a re-union was not received with great enthusiasm at first but through perseverance on Eleanor's part, and the assistance of several past pupils, the current headmaster Tim O'Keefe and to a lesser degree the P & C of the day, a date was set and plans proceeded with.

The 70th anniversary is of particular importance, as this may be the last opportunity for pupils who were part of the great shift from the small school near the Mandurah Bridge, to take part and as such these people were a very important presence at the event.

Saturday 17th of October was to be the hottest yet of this spring and provided the perfect setting for everyone who assisted with the function. Many past students attended bringing their spouses or partners, their children or parents, all appeared very happy and eager to see how the school was going and what was the current type of students work.

Mandurah Museum, its Volunteers and Friends have played a large part in the promoting, research and assistance of the event. However without Eleanor's dedication and hard work I do not believe that any function would have taken part to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the opening of Mandurah Primary School at Hackett Street.

For those interested, next year will be the 110th Anniversary of Mandurah Primary School and Mandurah Community Museum plans to commemorate that also, but more about this next year. **Jan Baker.**

Value Adding at Museums. While we were travelling around I realised that much of the enjoyment we receive going to museums or art galleries is identifying the building and past uses of it.

The Musee de Orsay holds collections of Impressionist art, as well as sculpture but doesn't really live up to the Musee name until you realise that the museum part of it is really the building. Built in 1900 it was originally the Gare de Orsay and as such was one of the biggest railway stations in Europe. Now, you won't hear the sound of a train in the building at all. It is a favourite of tourists and they quietly move through this huge area stopping and looking at the artworks. I wonder though, do they see the train station?

We saw the train station, but then we are train nuts. As you approach the museum you can see high walls with windows arched over the roof, grand entrances and beautifully preserved surroundings. Inside you are able to look down on where trains would approach and leave, look across to the concourses where people would mill around.

With your sight soaring upwards you see expansive ceilings and the most gorgeous clock overseeing it all. You are able to climb almost to the ceiling so you can actually look right down on this huge building. At night, floating past it on the Seine you can see the building lit up appearing huge, and through the windows there it is – the railway clock. (see back page) **Jan Baker**

Other Museums - Wagin Heritage Village. The buildings of this complex are situated in the showgrounds at Wagin. A trip to Wagin is possible in a day from Mandurah but is quite long. You might instead consider making it a bit of a holiday and overnighing somewhere.

Many of the buildings have been resited into the complex from their original placement and are historic in their own right. Several have been built in the traditional style by the very enthusiastic group at Wagin Historical Society.

This was a really interesting place to visit and we spent several hours wandering around the complex and learning new things. We found that Edward Barron, involved in a spearing in Mandurah, ended up down there. The rail heritage of the town is well celebrated as are the early and later settlers.

Finishing that we wandered through the town seeing several lovely old hotels, one of which was built by Paddy Durack and another by the Moran family.

An interesting museum and well spent time visiting it. (see picture Orderly house this page) **Jan Baker.**



Hackett St Memories. Over the past months both Eleanor Kay and Jan Baker have been recording some of the memories of Hackett St School.

On the day of the re-union at Hackett St, Phyl Hardy undertook to collect brief memories specific to the school-days of any of the attendees of the re-union. Congratulations go to Phyl as this is her first time using the digital medium and this way of recording is at first look quite daunting. However, Phyl overcame all problems to collect about a dozen of the memories of attendees which were prompted by the return to the school and conversing with old school friends.

Over the next weeks, these memories will be transcribed and added to the museum's collection in a special grouping called Hackett St School. The transcriptions will also be sent to the interviewee as well as a digital copy of their voice recording.

We thank all those who gave us their memories on the day.

Musings at the Museum "Great to be able to see history for a donation."

Our museum is free or a donation only!

Education Officer. Wow! I can't believe it's near the end of October. Before we know it Christmas will be here.

I've attended two weekend workshops at Edith Cowan University, Mt Lawley Campus. They were Conservation of Artworks and Conservation of Books. These workshops provided the basic guidelines for assessing conditions, together with appropriate handling and storage techniques.

I went to the Museum Australia Conference held at Wanneroo. There were many different topics covered over the three days I attended. The session I found most relevant to my role as Educational Officer was a session called New Audiences. It was presented by four different speakers related to the importance of providing education and programs to students and teachers to engage, inspire and empower them to value their heritage. A strong view shared by all presenters was the importance of providing students with 'hands-on' activities. These speakers presented some of the programs and projects they had done with students. There was much discussion about the limited opportunities & difficulties providing such programs.

I came away with a positive feeling that I'm on the right track with putting together education kits for students and teachers to use at school.

Through approaching one of the presenters, I am now a part of a group of Educational People that meet to share educational information, plans and programs a few times a year.

It has been busy with school visits to the Museum, Riverside, Glencoe, TAFE and Greenfields. Thank You to Nicholas and the Volunteers on those days for helping with the tours. **Can You Help?**

I am still looking for items to put in an education kit, 'School Days Past'. Items such as reading books, a slate board, a cane, ink wells, school case etc.

I also require games that children and families played: Quoits, marbles, knuckle bones, pickup sticks, board games etc.

If you can help, please contact Katrina on 9550 3682

*Two little dickie birds sitting on a wall,
One named Peter, one named Paul.
Fly away Peter, Fly away Paul.
Come back Peter, Come back Paul*

The above is a skipping rhyme used by several people and a long rope.

Can anyone out there remember some Australian Rhymes for either a single person or more to skip to?

Record numbers of visitors. We have had a record attendance for August, with 305 people visiting the Museum. This is an increase of 18% over last year's figures.

**Come & see us at our
stall at
SENIORS EXPO 2009
Friday & Saturday 30 & 31
October**

Friends of Mandurah Community
Museum

Holiday Homes and Shacks of Mandurah 2010



Calendar available at the museum
\$7.50



Chairpersons Report. As many of you know I have been away in Scandinavia, Russia and Paris but I haven't been idle. Touring around these places gives you an opportunity to view some wonderful museums and I hope to be able to write a little about some of these over the next few months.

In my absence Cherry Burton chaired the meeting and of course a variety of activities continued. The Museum Volunteers have completed the process of preparing a calendar for next year and this will once again be on sale at the museum for a price of \$7.50. This year we decided to feature the Holiday Homes & Shacks collection which was prepared several years ago for an exhibition. Since that exhibition we have continued to collect photos and some new as well as old favourites are featured.

Volunteers and Friends will once again be present at the Seniors Expo on 30 and 31st October and we hope all those people we count as Friends and Supporters will make themselves known at the table.

We continue to collect the subscriptions for the Friends and money received will be used for either special items or to provide costs for the Newsletters and Calendars.

Our next Friends meeting will be on Tuesday 10 November following the Volunteer meeting. Unfortunately I will be unable to attend but hope to resume my duties for the December meeting. **Jan Baker.**

Museum assists Hackett St, reunion. Nicholas Reynolds assisted Eleanor Kay with preparations for the reunion.

On the day Nicholas prepared and mounted displays which involved a Power Point projection of the school's past. Within the same area were photographs of the school and school photos, many of these from the Museum's collection and many donated to Eleanor as she talked to past students over 2009.

Nicholas was at the school from early morning until the end of the re-union and during the time many people wandered through the room looking at photos and talking about them.

The headmaster, Tim O'Keefe (who is also a member of the Museum's Advisory Group) asked Nicholas to leave the photo display in place so other children who had not attended the open day might have a look at them.

From the week commencing 27th October the school display will be exhibited at Mandurah Community Museum, the display will remain available to the public until the end of November when it will be carefully stored in preparation for the next reunion. There will also be several artefacts, photographs and memories collected during the reunion which will be stored to provide memories for the next generations of students. **Jan Baker.**