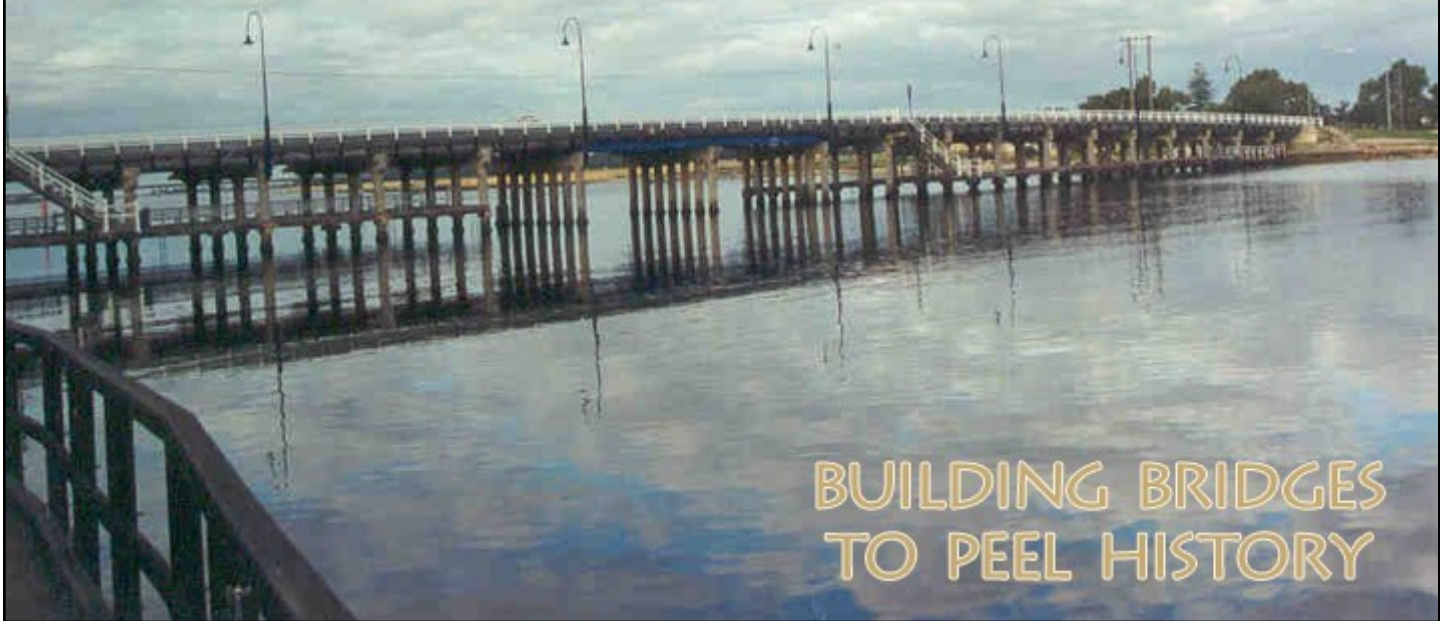


Friends of MANDURAH COMMUNITY MUSEUM



Friends of Mandurah Community Museum Newsletter.

June 2011.

Captain Fawcett of Pinjarrah Park

In a past issue of this newsletter we looked at the Pinjarrah Mounted Volunteers and their role as the Peel Region's only ever dedicated military force. It is well known that Captain Theodore Fawcett was their commanding officer, but it's time to talk about this significant settler of the district in more detail, as the role that he played in the development of the Murray is much greater than just his command of the Pinjarrah volunteer force.

As we may expect from his military role after settlement, Fawcett's family background was deeply embedded in the British armed forces. His Great-Grandfather brought the news of victory against the French at the battle of Marburg in 1760 to King George II, and was later Commander in Chief of the British army. Fawcett's grandfather was a Major General in the American War of Independence, and his father was a Colonel with the Duke of Wellington in Spain during the Napoleonic War. He even had an uncle who was a midshipman with Nelson at the battle of Trafalgar. It is little wonder then that the young Theodore Fawcett was bought a commission in the 6th Dragoon Guards in 1851. At this date promotion was still obtained through purchase and it was not long before Fawcett saw service in the Crimea. After the conflict had ended he resigned his commission and found himself in a position to take up one of the family estates in Australia. It seems he had a choice between a few hundred acres in Tasmania or 10,000 acres at Pinjarra and we can thus see why the young man chose to relocate to the Swan River Colony. It's interesting to suppose what might have been had he known that the Tasmanian land was much more fertile than the location he was to take up on the Murray.

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Special features

Captain Fawcett.

Nicholas Reynolds.

Photo Collage of Captain Fawcett from Museum's collection.

Regular features.

From the MDO .

Nicholas Reynolds.

Education Matters.

Katrina Pritchard.

School Holiday Program.

Spotlight on Volunteers. Volunteer Lunch.

Take another look at our collection: Dental Vulcaniser.

Gary Henchie.

Looking at the Web.

From the Visitors Book.

Chairpersons report.

Cherry Burton.

Editor.

Jan Baker.

Education Matters. School Visits

It has been a busy term with many school excursions. I was delighted to receive letters from the Assumption Catholic Primary School students. Here are a few excerpts from their letters.

*I liked the beer car because it is all shiny and I like hot rods. **Jacob***

*I liked the old fashioned sewing machine; it had many details on it. **Brianna***

*It was amazing what Mandurah use to look like. **Rachel**
The telephone was fun because we could talk to our friends in a different room. The ink and paper was hard and fun at the same time. It was scary in the cells. **Alex**
I loved the Museum I will come back one day with my mum, dad, brother and sister. I liked the old school chairs the best. **Zayde***

*My favourite was Halls Cottage because I loved washing the clothes and making butter. **Asia***

*It was fun going to the Museum and Halls Cottage; I can't wait until I can go again. **Mia***

*I loved the cell. It was so cool. It was freaky when I walked in the jail, I thought the man was real. **Jada***

*My favourite bit was the school and the desks. I wish we had them at our school. **Luron***

*At the Museum I love the typewriters. **Tristan***

*My favourite part was the old car and the shark. **Oskar***

*I liked the school chairs because they were so comfy. I also liked the phone it was awesome. **Jyec***

The students' letters and feedback forms are in the school room to read.

School Holiday Program

The Spare Parts Puppet Theatre will conduct workshops at the Mandurah Community Museum during the July School Holidays.

Creativity will be unleashed as your children are guided through the process of crafting and developing their very own puppetry show.

SPARE PARTS PUPPET THEATRE

CREATE, MAKE & MANIPULATE

Join the famous **School of Puppetry** at the Mandurah Community Museum. Get creating, making and performing these school holidays!

Creativity will be unleashed as your children are guided through the process of crafting and developing their very own puppetry show.

Price: \$12.00 including materials

Bookings Essential Phone: 95503682

July School Holidays

Tuesday & Wednesday July 12 & 13

Tuesday & Wednesday July 19 & 20

Workshop Times

Workshop 1: 10.00-11.30am. Ages 4-8 years

They will be involved in making simple and perfectly suited hand puppets.

Workshop 2: 1.00-2.30pm. Ages 9-12 years

They will be involved in making Junk Puppets- utilising found and recycled materials to create puppets.

We can be sure than the Murray district would have been the loser if Fawcett had set his compass for Hobart instead of Perth.

The land that Fawcett took up was known as Murray Location 1. It was originally granted to Richard Wardell in January 1830. At that time during settlement, the Murray was a remote and daunting area with its original inhabitants, the Binjareb people, still proudly in control of their land. It is reputed that Wardell took one look at his grant and exchanged it with a Captain Briggs for passage back to England. Briggs later sold it to Francis Day Wickham, the brother-in-law of Fawcett's father. Initially the 'fee simple' duties, the obligations of a grantee to improve the land before title was officially granted to them for their lot, were carried out by W. E. Oakley. This was valuable work for many settlers like Oakley who would perform this service for absentee landlords. But by the time the property came in to the Fawcett family, the block had returned to its natural state. Fawcett began work again on the block in 1858, living in a rough shed. This must have been a great contrast to his former life as a cavalry officer and shows that far from being a stereotypical landed gentleman, Fawcett wasn't afraid to get his hands dirty.

One element that made life for the settlers of the 1850s different to that of their forebears was the introduction of convict labour to Western Australian in 1850. For Fawcett this meant labour to help with the construction of farm buildings such as his imposing barn and the main house on his property which he named Pinjarrah Park.

In 1861 Fawcett's father died in England. After returning to the 'old country' to settle the affairs of the family estate the newly established landholder felt he was in a position to marry and bring his new bride Eliza to an established estate at Pinjarrah Park. Eliza's family were also of military background, and instead of returning straight to Western Australia Fawcett took the popular 'grand tour' of Europe. This however could be looked at as working holiday, or at least a study tour as this farming gentleman made a special study of the grape growing regions of southern France and Spain, taking cuttings and looking at techniques for warm climate grape growing which was to be put to use at Pinjarrah Park.

Upon his return with Eliza Pinjarrah Park was developed in to a model estate. Besides pioneering winemaking in the Murray district Fawcett introduced scientific methods and meticulous record keeping of the various crops he planted. Agriculture in Western Australia was to profit greatly from this during 1887 when Fawcett was able to provide some of the best testimony, backed by evidence, to the Royal Commission on Agriculture.

During this period it was men like Fawcett and Singleton who now saw themselves as the 'gentry' in the Murray district and made sure that they fulfilled their obligations to the other settlers in a way that Peel before them did not. Fawcett was very active on the Murray Roads Board after its foundation in 1871 and before that in road construction which was often financed straight from his own pocket. He was active in lobbying the colonial government for funds to build bridges and other necessary pieces of infrastructure for the district. This was helped by his membership of the Legislative Council during 1866-74 and 1886-89 for the Murray-Williams district.

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Museum Development Officer's Report.

After a hiatus of nearly two years work has finally recommenced on the interpretive signage for Gary Aitkin's James Service artworks at the Ocean Marina. Carolyn Marks has returned to the City to work on this and other tasks associated with the city's collection of paintings and public artworks. The bowler hat sculpture that was previously stolen has been reinstalled at the site and the interpretive panel will be installed at the viewing platform that looks out over the estuary entrance. I've been helping Caroline with the text and hope to put a mobile phone web link to our website onto the panel along with a possible link to the James Service video that was recorded a while back and which will be launched when the interpretive panel is installed.

The Mature Adults Learning Association lecture series which the MDO participated in has now come to a close. Presentations on the original European settlement of Mandurah and the role played by the Hall family in the early years were delivered along with a segment on the Pinjarra Massacre and more. Two tours of the old Murray district, one by boat and the other on the estuary including Cooper's Mill have just been completed. These presentations to yet another group in the Mandurah community will ensure they will go on to be advocates of heritage in the area. One of the first issues raised in question time at the end of the original lecture was the future of the Museum.

The Museum's annual contribution to the City's Stretch Community Arts Festival was a photographic exhibition by local photographer Kerina Puttman. The exhibition focused on the Hearts sewing group, a collective of local Sudanese migrant women who support each other in their transition to Australian citizenship. Their stories are written on to the evocative photographs and reveal some wonderful narratives of their often tragic past and bright futures.

An important event for the Peel Chapter of Museums Australia and heritage in our region generally occurred on the 20th of May when the new edition of Peel Regional Museum brochure was launched by Mark McGowan MLA, member for Rockingham. This complete redesign of the older brochure will enhance visitor numbers to both our Museum and others in our neighbourhood and is a sign of how active the Peel Chapter is. I'll be able to give you some more news of activities within the local chapter in our next newsletter.



Oversize bowler hat and castor oil tin in place at art memorial for James Service wreck, Mandurah Ocean Marina.

Take another look at your museum. Vulcanizer.



In America, Charles Goodyear discovered the process by which rubber is cured in 1844, while he was experimenting in his kitchen. He dropped a mixture of rubber and sulphur on to a hot stove and found that it was still flexible the next day. The process was dubbed vulcanisation after Vulcan, the Roman god of fire. Around the same time that Goodyear

received his patent on vulcanizing, anaesthesia was patented by a fellow named Wells. Relatively speaking, Wells' discovery made getting your teeth pulled a moderately painless experience, so teeth were being pulled left and right. This meant, of course, that the demand for false teeth was rising proportionately.

Before vulcanization, denture bases had been made primarily of gold and were both costly and difficult to make. After vulcanization, denture bases could be made of vulcanized rubber set in plaster moulds. This process did not demand a great deal of skill, and soon scores of dentists had small, round vulcanisers with which to ply their trade. These were called "dental pot" vulcanisers and would be used eventually to manufacture the first rubber stamps.

Vulcanisers had an unfortunate habit of regularly exploding much to the consternation of dentists and patients alike. An investigation into this phenomena concluded that in most cases it was due to dentists exercising insufficient care in their maintenance and operation.

Definition

Vulcanised - cured: (used of rubber) treated by a chemical or physical process to improve its properties (hardness and strength and odour and elasticity)

The museum's Vulcaniser was donated by Neil Morfitt, ***"although I never actually ever made a denture we used to repair them and oh they used to smell, the rubber it really used to stink [laughter] interviewee, and um the little vulcaniser we had would do two flasks in, it would be an upper and lower or two repairs, because we were mainly repairs,"***

"I forgot it one day, it blew up and it was right beside my ear and it absolutely screamed as the steam pressure came screaming out of the small hole and oh boy did it scream, of course we were rather scared because you're right beside it.



Example of puppets to be made from Spare Parts Puppet Theatre.



Another leadership role that Fawcett took up was the foundation of a volunteer military unit after British troops were proposed to be withdrawn from Australia in 1859. Thus, the Pinjarrah Mounted Volunteers were duly constituted on the 23rd October 1862 with an authorised strength of 15-17 men. This maximum enlistment was met at once, and Fawcett was duly appointed as Captain Commanding. This now left the Murray district as being the only area, outside of Perth and Fremantle to have managed to raise any kind of defensive force for the Colony. This goes to show how the fortunes of the district were picking up by the 1860s allowing such a force to be formed on the initiative of the local population.

Fawcett set out to uniform his corps along the same lines as his old regiment from England. Black over boots and white pantaloons were complimented by a scarlet tunic with white Austrian knot lace at the cuffs and five rows of white lace frogging across the chest. For headwear a white 'foreign service' helmet, a type of tall pith hat, with a horse hair plume was selected. It was a spectacular uniform, but not one entirely suited to local conditions. Supply of the uniform was also intermittent due to delays and misunderstandings of the army ordering system in England. Delays of up to two years were experienced at times.

For many years the volunteers provided a focus and recreation for young men of the district at a time when few such opportunities existed. Attendances at muster were dropping by 1870, falling to 30 in 1873 and 26 in 1882. Age, and 20 years of voluntary service at their own expense had taken its toll. The PMV were officially disbanded on the 3rd of November 1882.

Fawcett went on to lease large acreages for grazing and a sizeable grant of land at Marradong. It was in pursuit of this land, more fertile than the Pinjarrah Park property that Fawcett was to use his army scouting skills to blaze one of the first tracks through to the Marradong district. It serves as another reminder that Fawcett was no mere 'tea and cucumber sandwiches' gentleman, but a skilled bushman and surveyor in his own right. But as the years passed, his profile in the district began to fade. Pinjarrah Park with its groundbreaking experimental work was never a great source of income. Fawcett was supplemented by an income from England but when this dried up combined with his public expenditure on roads and activities such as the Pinjarrah Mounted Volunteers his fortunes contracted. Leadership in the district was moving on once more to families such as the McLartys whose fortunes were very much on the rise by the 1890s.

When Captain Theodore Fawcett passed away in 1898 he was mourned by the entire district and his funeral was one of the largest held in Pinjarra. Even his old comrades from the Pinjarrah Mounted Volunteers turned out in their uniforms to form a guard of honour for their captain. It truly was the passing of an era. In a way that Thomas Peel could never be, Fawcett was a practical, hospitable, thoughtful leader who gave back so much of his time and wealth to the community. He was gentleman in the true spirit of the time, but it was a time which was passing with Federation and new century only a few scant years away.

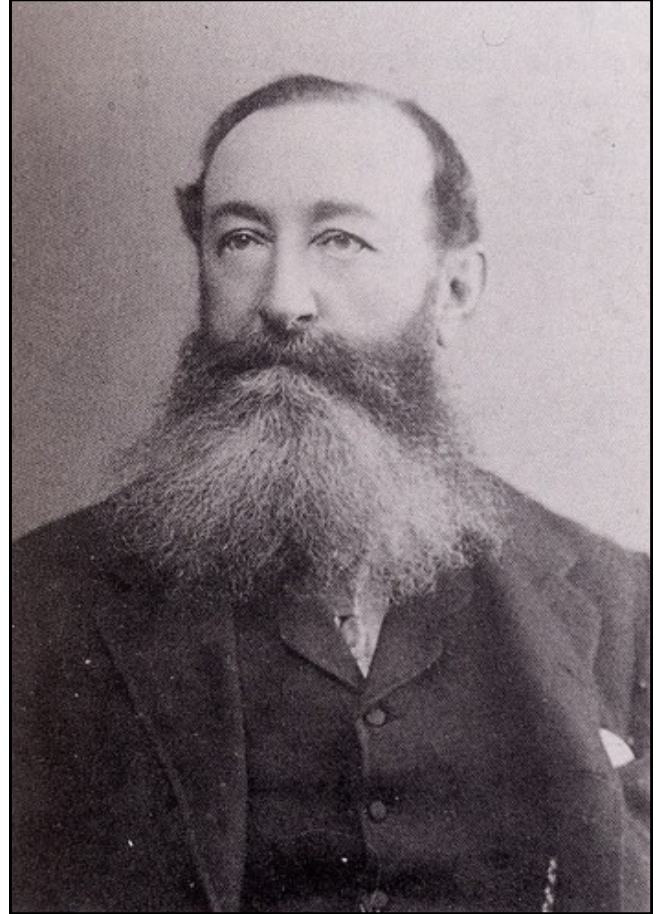
Nicholas Reynolds, July 2011.



Above: Helmet badge of the Pinjarrah Mounted Volunteers.



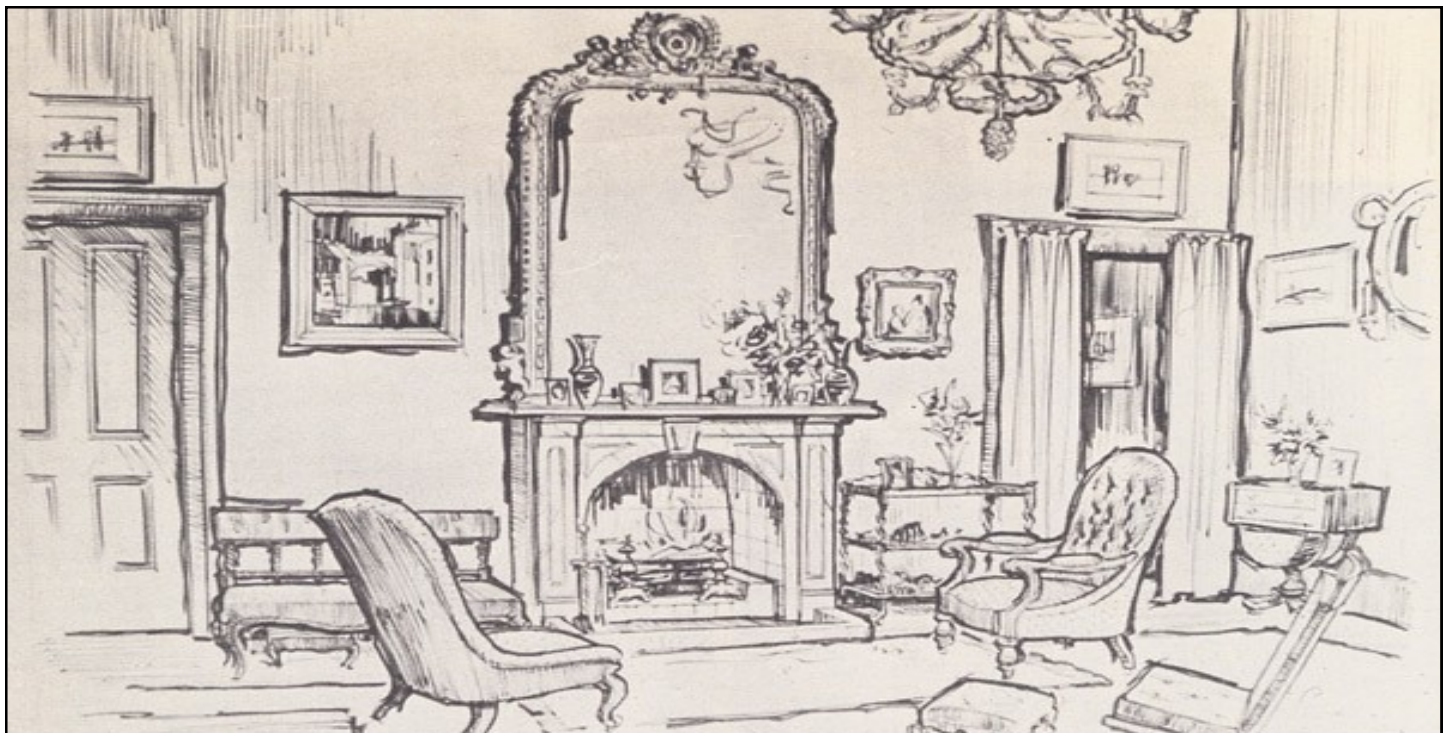
William Hymus, trooper, Pinjarrah Mounted Volunteers.



Left: Captain Fawcett in his uniform as commander of the Pinjarrah Mounted Volunteers.

Above: A studio portrait of Fawcett taken in 1887.

Below: A sketch of the drawing room at Pinjarrah Park.



Volunteer Week Luncheon. Once again the City of Mandurah by way of Nicholas and the Museum funded a luncheon to show appreciation to the volunteers of the Museum. This year we returned to the Ravenswood which had been popular on a previous outing and it again proved itself able to feed our volunteers with a hearty lunch.

Prior to our luncheon we undertook both a meeting of volunteers and also 'Friends of the Mandurah Community Museum' meeting at the Museum, moving from there with some sharing of transport to the site of our meal.

Twenty volunteers including both Eleanor Kay in her capacity of Oral History interviewer and also Ursula Brimble who lends her valuable archiving expertise to the Museum on a regular basis and is well known to many of the volunteers for her occasional presence at the Museum. We all enjoyed a relaxed meal, catching up with old friends and making new ones amongst the volunteers. The Ravenswood is a pleasant place to have lunch and the day was both dry and sunny without being too hot.

Absent friends were missed and these including Katrina who was unwell on the day, Cheryl Brewer and Nancy Taylor as well as Dave Brown we hope they will all be able to attend our next event.

The volunteers would like to thank Nicholas for once again arranging this event.

Chairperson's Report.

On Monday 16th The Friends of the Mandurah Community Museum hosted a workshop on the preservation and care of photographic materials. Paul Malone a specialist in photographic conservation presented the one day workshop. We had 20 participants; consisting of people from the Mandurah Community Museum, Historical Society and the wider community.

Paul examined the differences between conventional photographic types and digital images and what can be done to preserve the different types and when all else fails how they can best be copied. Many participants brought in photographs which were examined. The causes of deterioration identified, practical methods for do-it-yourself restoration discussed and how best to store them. Everyone enjoyed the morning tea and lunch supplied.

This day was made possible by a \$950.00 grant from the City of Mandurah. The workshop was very successful with all participants now aware of how to preserve their photographic collection.

During **Volunteer Week**, Nicholas arranged for an outing to Ravenswood Hotel for lunch. The weather was perfect, the meal delicious and it was lovely to catch up with volunteers that I hadn't seen for some time.

Cherry Burton.

Looking at the Web. Recent visitors to the museum were undertaking a Geocache search. They stopped long enough to explain a little bit about this way of visiting new locations and getting a bit more information or fun from them. They suggested we went on line to look up Geocaching (pronounced geo-cash-ing) which is a worldwide game of hiding and seeking treasure. A player places a geocache somewhere in the world, pinpoints its location using GPS technology and then shares the existence and location of that geocache online. Anyone with a GPS unit can then try to locate the geocache.

These visitors were debating providing a Geocache search which acknowledges the unique history of Mandurah and some elements around our area. Sadly for them many of our areas had been 'Geocached' but they thought that the western foreshore with its important historical buildings such as the Sutton's Farm and Halls Cottage might lead to a good project for them. (next)

These people mentioned that now when they travel whether it is within this state or elsewhere their enjoyment of travel is enhanced by undertaking a 'search'. For this reason we thought we might feature this website for Friends to peruse if they are unaware of this activity.

[www/Geocache.com/guide](http://www.Geocache.com/guide).

There are over a dozen "cache types" in geocaching, with each cache type being a different variation of the game. See the full list of [Geocache Types](#).

From the visitor's book.

Very interesting, cheerful, helpful volunteers.

**Mandurah Community Museum,
3 Pinjarra Rd,
MANDURAH. WA. 6210.**

**Telephone 9550 3680.
Email. museum@mandurah.wa.gov.au
Internet. www.mandurahcommunitymuseum.org**

**Opening hours.
Tuesday to Friday. 10 am to 4pm.
Saturday & Sunday. 11 am to 3pm.
Closed Mondays and Public Holidays.**

**Friends of Mandurah Community Museum,
3 Pinjarra Rd,
MANDURAH. WA. 6210.**

Meetings are second Tuesday of the month at 11 am.

The mission of the Friends is to provide assistance and support to the Museum in all its endeavours. The 'Friends' also seek to promote the heritage and history of Mandurah, and to assist other like minded bodies.

Membership of the Friends is by a yearly membership fee of \$10 due each August.