

# Friends of MANDURAH Museum

*Building bridges to Peel history*

March 2025



## *‘A gift to the whole community’*

Volunteers and staff have said a heartfelt thank you and farewell to Jan Baker after she called time on more than 23 years of capturing and preserving local history. Pictured above: Museum education officer Kat Gauci (left), retiring volunteer Jan Baker and museum curator Nicholas Reynolds.

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# Celebrating Crab Fest's

## *Journey Through Time*

### **Crab Tales**

**Tues 4 March - Fri 4 April**

**Mandurah Museum**

**Tues - Fri, and Crab Fest**

**weekend 15 - 16 March, 10am - 3pm**

Mandurah Museum will be open during Crab Fest weekend, running activities for children and hosting 'Crab Tales', an exhibit inviting visitors to discover the history of Crab Fest and antecedent events. From humble beginnings in 1999 with just 3,000 attendees, Crab Fest is now one of WA's largest free events, attracting over 100,000 visitors. The exhibit features photographs and newspaper clippings - showcasing iconic moments and festival highlights - and historical videos, as well as an art display by celebrated local artist Emma Blyth.

More Crab Fest info - [www.crabfest.com.au](http://www.crabfest.com.au)



## Museum open for all manna of fun

Kids and parents will have the opportunity to celebrate Crab Fest through craft at Mandurah Museum during the festival weekend. The museum will host origami specialist Sanny Ang, showing kids how to create origami crabs, fish and boats. Local artist Sarah Petrich will showcase some colourful ways to decorate a wooden surf-board or dolphin.

## Friends of Mandurah Museum

### **Friends of Mandurah Museum**

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**The mission of the Friends** is to provide assistance and support to the museum in all its endeavours, and to promote the heritage and history of Mandurah

**Membership** of the Friends is by a yearly membership fee of \$10 due each August. Meetings are held 4 times per year as notified.



# CURATOR'S REPORT



Aerial photograph of Mandurah, circa 1968.

## Crab Fest Display Video

Since I've been back from a break it's been pretty busy for the Museum in general, with our current display being the Crab Fest exhibition and I thank Kat for working so hard on that.

At least I've been able to make one contribution after Tim Hartland, who is our Executive Manager, gave us some videos of the festival over the years. He was the manager of the event for a very long time and after being in charge of Crab Fest he also has a lot of memorabilia which he is going to be lending to us to put on display.

He also remembered a lot of videos about Crab Fest which had been uploaded to YouTube both by members of the public and also by Channel 7 through their sponsorship. I've been able to get those off of YouTube and I've been able to edit these together into a video which will be able to be displayed on the TV in the Local Studies room during the exhibition, (Crab Tales, Tues 4 March - Fri 4 April, including Crab Fest weekend, 15 - 16 March, open between 10am - 3pm).

## Heritage Month (May 2025)

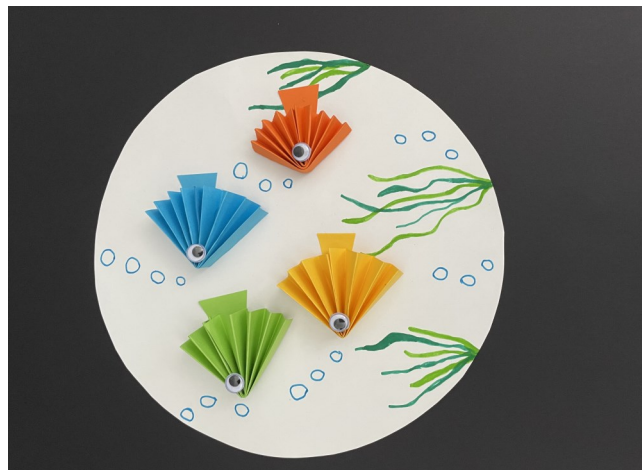
Certainly the biggest thing on my plate at the moment of course is looking beyond the Crab Fest display to National Heritage Month. This will be occurring during the time of both our next archaeological dig and associated exhibition. I've got to get all of the quotes and other things for the dig ready and I've also been working at

quite a fast pace on the exhibition as we need to have that ready so that the text can be provided to the marketing team. They are going to put that onto the panels for us along with the photos and that's something which I think is going to help going forward. If we can just give text and photos for displays and have them produced for us rather than by Krisiti and myself it will take a lot of the pressure off Kristi and also allow the whole process not to be dependent on one person alone. But the trade-off is that it has to be in quite early so I've come up with some text and I've come up with most of the images.

The display will look at the archeological digs we've done both in the past focusing on the Hall's cottage dig and also looking ahead to see what other projects we could have in the future. But it's not just of course the display and the dig, we're also going to be having during Heritage Month a heritage walk, for which I'm going to be a guide - an extended one which goes over into Hall's Head. We're also going to be having a talk by Sandra Playle on the battle of Fromelles as it does fall during the general Anzac period and she's going to talk it because we had some of the Mandurah World War One veterans who were veterans of the Battle of Fromelles.

I've also spoken with the Leslie Street Hall Committee regarding having the archaeological dig on the potential 1830 barracks site on the foreshore and they are very receptive to that. They advised they needed to put it to a meeting of their full committee.

# EDUCATION MATTERS



It was a busy start to the year. January holiday activities, the launch of the Rhythms of Persia exhibition and a farewell to Jan Baker. Children visited Mandurah Museum during the January holidays to create goldfish in a bowl (pictured right). This piece of artwork was inspired by the Rhythms of Persia exhibition. Children learnt about Nowruz the Persian New Year and the items displayed on the Haft Seen Table while listening to a story. Children completed this fun and easy paper craft. The children used the skills of cutting with scissors, listening to instructions to do concertina fold, creating a scene within their fishbowl and glueing the fish in place. Sixty-one children made

goldfish in a bowl attended by 46 adults who assisted. Feedback from participants was very positive, they were all happy with their creation. A special thank you to Museum volunteers Linda Jackson and Debbie Stasiw for your assistance. Children could also complete a Nowruz Quiz. Images of the objects displayed on the Haft seen table when celebrating Nowruz were hidden throughout the galleries. This free activity was available to do at any time during museum opening hours. 155 children completed it. Thank you to the museum volunteers for explaining to children how to complete the quiz and providing clues when needed.

— **Kat Gauci**

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## THE PRESIDENT'S POST

I would like to introduce myself. I grew up in Mandurah, attending school at the Mandurah Convent in Creery St in the Church. After the nuns boating tragedy I went to Mandurah Primary School in Hackett St, then on to Pinjarra High School by bus each day. After 2 years I attended Harvey Agriculture College, receiving a Certificate in Agriculture. I then enrolled at Fremantle Technical College, and after 3 years received my

Professional Woolclassers Certificate. During this time I worked for my parents on the family farm at Pinjarra. Over the summer of 1969 I worked for Bell Brothers driving a bulldozer developing the Yunderup Canals. Kay and I married in 1970 and moved to Redcliffe Farm at Pinjarra. Over the next 10 years I worked part time for Roy Adam on his farm - shearing sheep and occasionally goats, and breeding and training trotters (pacers). I was then employed as groundsman and track curator at the Pinjarra Paceway. Two years later I was offered the Stud Masters Position at the Murray River Stud which I accepted. During this

time I attended Muresk Agriculture College and achieved my Certificate in Artificial Insemination in the breeding of horses. In 1986 I started work at Alcoa Pinjarra as a trade assistant, then truck driver, front end loader and crane driver. In 2018 I retired from Alcoa. In 1995 I purchased my family farm at Blythewood and have enjoyed breeding sheep, cattle and horses and training pacers. Kay and I purchased a house in Pelican Place, Soldiers Cove and moved back to Mandurah. Three years ago I became a member of the Friends and look forward to being involved into the future.

— **Jim Tuckey**





Left: Volunteers Deris Caddy, Julia Lindley, Phylis Hardy, Ruth Watkins, and Jan Baker. Above: Volunteer Suzanne Tischler signs a thank you card.

## *‘More than a colleague, a friend’*

Around 25 past and present volunteers joined museum staff for morning tea event to farewell Jan Baker on 28 January. Museum educator and event organizer Katrina Gauci presented Jan with a unique gift on behalf of the museum and the gathering: a composite image of Jan and her fellow museum volunteers. Museum historian and curator Nicholas Reynolds expressed his own feelings, and the sentiments of many: “When I started here as curator two decades ago, it was you, Jan, who was one of the people who helped me the most to get a start in my role,” Nicholas said. “As volunteer coordinator, you helped me navigate not only the day-to-day workings of the Museum but also learn its rich history. Your guidance and generosity of spirit were invaluable, and I’ll always be grateful for the foundation you gave me in those early days. But your greatest legacy, Jan, I think, is the work you’ve done in collecting oral histories.

You’ve preserved the voices, stories, and memories of our community, creating a treasure trove of local history that will be cherished for generations. Thanks to your dedication, future visitors and researchers will have a window into the lives and experiences of

Mandurah’s past. This is a gift not just to the Museum but to the entire community.

“Your role in capturing these stories reflects who you are—a listener, a caretaker of history, and someone who understands the power of connection. Through your work, you’ve ensured that the stories of ordinary people won’t be forgotten.

“On a personal note, Jan, you’ve been more than a colleague; you’ve been a friend. As you leave Mandu-



Volunteers Allan Acott, Colin Warne and Ursula Brimble.

rah to be closer to your family, please know that your impact here has been significant. You will always be a part of this Museum, just as we all will be, woven into its fabric through the stories you’ve collected and the work that you’ve done here. “On behalf of everyone here, thank you, Jan, for your kindness, your wisdom, and your unwavering passion. You will be deeply missed, but we wish you all the best as you begin this new chapter.”



# Rhythms of Persia a *Hit with Locals*



Traditional music and dance graced the launch event for Rhythms of Persia.

Museum visitors experienced a portal into an ancient and living culture over the past month with the Rhythms of Persia exhibition, 14 January – 21 February. The launch event on 18 January saw a capacity crowd of 200 people attend. Guests were treated to enchanting performances, including a Persian ensemble and traditional dancers. The catering was also authentically Persian. Feedback from launch attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with many praising the immersive experience. The exhibition itself was also well received, especially the display of traditional and intricate handmade garments.



*An ancient and living culture*