

Friends of Mandurah Community Museum Newsletter

OCTOBER 2019

Henry Benjamin Halliday of 'The Chimney's' Henry was born in England but by 1891 he lived in Victoria where he married Mary Ann Taylor. It isn't known when he came to W.A., however, their first child Eva is recorded in Victoria in 1892, with their second child Edith born in Fremantle in 1895, followed by William (1899) and Clive (1902), both born in Mandurah. On the couple's marriage certificate, Henry's occupation is recorded as a fisherman.

Clearly visible for many years was the Chimney's, part of the original home of the Halliday family which had been built on Sutton land. There is a road in Erskine named after this landmark plus an area near the estuary marked by an interpretive sign. Mention of Henry is found in Neil Morfitt's Oral History. He only knew his Grandmother, Edith Halliday, but talked about his grandfather as being a boatman and running stores between Mandurah and Fremantle in a small 20 to 28 foot cutter named the *Fairy Queen*.

From Neil Morfitt's Oral History. Well the area the Chimneys up the, well the top of the river if you like to call it there, which is Sticks Boulevard now runs into it, the Chimneys was the Hallidays original home here, it was built on land that was actually Sutton's land, but they must have rented it off them, and there was a house built on it, but what had happened, why its called the Chimneys it was burnt down in a bush fire, the house itself was burnt down in a bushfire and all that was left was a couple of chimneys, I can't remember ever having seen the chimneys I was too young to see it, but it was in that area and that is why it was called the Chimneys up there, because they say Henry Halliday was a marine carrier, he used to bring stuff down from Fremantle and take Tuckey's fish canned back to Fremantle.

While not sure where and when the *Fairy Queen* was built, we do know it was built to a Montague Whaler model, that was double-ended and clinker built. Henry used this between Mandurah and Fremantle from the late 1890's, until 1911 when he was declared lost at sea. His demise at the age of 51, had left Mary Ann Halliday with four children, all under 17 years. There is acknowledgement of contributions made by the Mandurah Community in the WA Newspaper November, 1911.

From the Editor This newsletter sees the end of our series on Coastal Trading with reference to Peel identities. We chose to complete the series at the end of the 1900s, however it should be noted that the Tuckey family and also the Hallidays and probably other families continued trading along the coast of Western Australia as well as to the Eastern States and overseas. We are indebted to Emily Chambers for her extensive research on this subject prior to leaving Mandurah to head to England for further studies.

This month's edition includes information on Henry Halliday; there remain many descendants of the Halliday family within the Mandurah community. We have also chosen to publish information about John Thomas, second owner and builder of Ravenswood Hotel. After purchasing the Bishopsgate property which he renamed Thomasfield, the small house on the property burnt down. He replaced that house with a more lavish construction which remains today.

The museum will have available shortly all references provided for the information, plus copies of the newsletter articles and the raw research data provided by Emily. These will be held in a booklet format within our Local Studies Collection.

This newsletter commences a series on volunteers with specific days, our volunteers are a really loyal group who have contributed to the museum for many years. We always welcome new volunteers who bring fresh ideas and help to the various activities.

Having just held our Annual General Meeting of the Friends, we give special thanks to our outgoing office bearers, their hard work over some time has meant that the organisation continues to have a real place within the museum.

Jan Baker, October 2019

Daughters Eva and Edith were to marry members of the Morfitt family.

Following Henry's death, the home fell into disrepair, Neil Morfitt remembers his Granny living further up Pinjarra Road. The house burnt down during a bushfire with only the Chimney's remaining to become the local landmark for some time.

Jan Baker

One of the earliest arrivals to the colony of Western Australia, on Peel's purchased ship *Gilmore*, was the Thomas family which included John Thomas, who was the eldest child, aged 14 years. Young John first hired himself out for wood cutting, then later tried his hand, in partnership with William Gaze, at farming in the Armadale area in 1832. Sadly, William Gaze died after a spear attack from aborigines; John narrowly missed the same fate. Due to this experience and the destruction of property, farming equipment, and their seed stock, this was the end of that farming venture for John Thomas.

Later to be known as "Captain John Thomas", he, with his brother James and after a time, brother William, commenced trading, fishing, and transporting cargo within the river areas of the coastal settlements. He and James used the *Jane* which his father had purchased for him. They also had the *Gypsy* which he petitioned to have returned to the family after it and all their possessions had been confiscated by the government of the time due to their fathers' plundering cargo off the wreck of the *Cumberland*. It was this plundering which led to the transportation of his father to Tasmania leaving the family without mature support. Being frugal, the brothers managed to save some money, and by 1839 the *Venus*, a cutter of 22 tons was built. It appears that John Thomas was the senior and driving force for what was to become a very viable business. He used the *Venus* to trade and transport cargo up and down the coast from Fremantle to Vasse and Bunbury.

A regular visitor to Mandurah, John became friends with the Cooper family and in 1841 married Elizabeth Cooper. There will be a further article on Elizabeth in a later newsletter.

As their trading increased, more boats were to be built including the *Elizabeth* and then the *Napoleon*. These two ships can be found on "The Return of Boat Licences (1844)" previously shown in this series on coastal shipping. With problems negotiating the sand bar at Fremantle, there was much work transferring goods and passengers between larger ships and destinations within the Perth area making this a lucrative undertaking. Often goods had to be shipped further north or south in smaller boats while the big ships returned to foreign destinations. The Thomas Company was involved in this small ship/boat movement of goods.

In 1850 after entering the larger ship trading business, Captain John Thomas who had had the *Venus* built in 1839 as a "cutter", lengthened and re-rigged it as a "schooner". It is believed that a sail plan still in the Thomas family's possession may be of this boat. The *Venus* traded both to the eastern colonies of Australia, to Mauritius and other Asian ports including Singapore. It was wrecked in April 1851 off the Abrolhos Islands.

To increase their boat capacity the company now organised the building of *The Privado* (as christened but later renamed *Empress* weighing 125 tons), which was once again a bigger ship and clearly destined to travel further afield as, prior to this the company's shipping went from strictly coastal to pursuing interests in transporting goods to Singapore and beyond. The launch of the *Privado* was to provide a spectacle to the people of Perth who were invited publicly to attend.

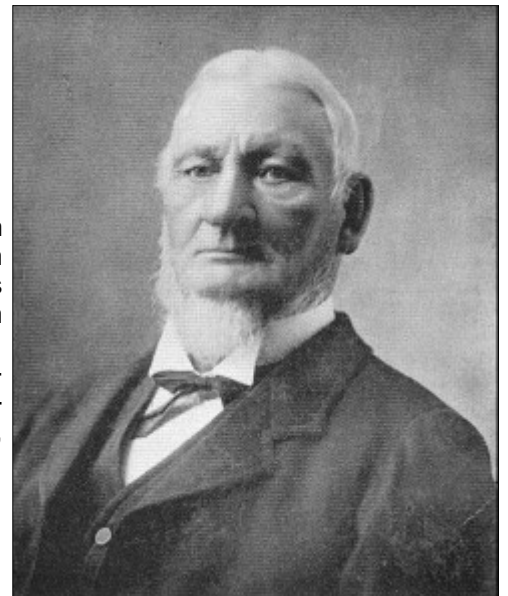
In 1858, while John was at sea his wife Elizabeth (nee Cooper) purchased a farming property near Pinjarra. The farm had been put up for sale some 5 years after previous owner, Adam Armstrong died. One of the Armstrong

sons had married Maria Cooper, much younger sister of Elizabeth. Also, in 1858, Captain Thomas put the *Empress* up for "sale", but it did not sell, so he invested in a barque, the *Rory O'More* (296 tons) which was sold to him in Singapore. This turned out to be an unlucky ship for him as in 1860 it was severely damaged in a terrible cyclone off Christmas Island. The ship was later repaired for a considerable cost in Singapore.

By 1860 John Thomas was finding life at sea to be not to his taste, he appears to have much love for family which by then totalled 8 living children. While the businesses in Fremantle continued, John and Elizabeth lived on the property first known as Bishopsgate, with the two-storey home known as Ravenswood being built following damaging major floods in 1862. This residence was later what we now know as The Ravenswood Hotel.

Over subsequent years the *Rory O'More* appears to have been both unlucky in her voyages but also in the management of cargo. It was for a wooden ship quite old and as Captain Thomas had always maintained his ships to the highest level, this meant constant refits and work to maintain it. This ship was finally sold at auction in Singapore in 1863.

There is a lot more to be written about John Thomas, he was much respected in Fremantle for his work, however, as we are mainly dealing with shipping, we will leave it there for now.



Captain John Thomas died in 1907, and his wife Elizabeth in 1888. John had married a second time to another Elizabeth, (Elizabeth Tracey) in 1899.

**Jan
Baker Oct 2019**

https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/History_of_West_Australia/John_Thomas

[History of West Australia](#). By Warren Bert Kimberly, JOHN THOMAS.

<http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/maritime-archaeology-db/wrecks/id-779> Venus

<http://museum.wa.gov.au/maritime-archaeology-db/wrecks/id-689> Empress

Special features.

Coastal Trading: A century ends.

Henry B Halliday.

John Thomas.

Emily Chambers & Jan Baker.

Regular features.

From the MDO .

Nicholas Reynolds.

Education Matters.

Katrina Gauci

Maritime Moorings

Dave Austin

Chairpersons Annual report – Eleanor Kay

Spotlight on Volunteers **Tuesday.** Jan Baker.

Editor Jan Baker.

Spotlight on Volunteers – Tuesday.

This edition commences introducing you to the various volunteers on specific days, also what duties they undertake. All volunteers take part in keeping the museum tidy and on occasions cleaning or dusting the displays. Everyone is also involved in meeting the visitors and giving them a warm welcome to the museum while finding out information which we need for statistics and the Council. Volunteers also undertake to show people around should they wish it.

However, there is more to volunteering at the museum than this and we thought you might like to know who we are and what we are doing while here.

Our first article will feature Tuesday volunteers and this can be read on the next page.

**VOLUNTEERS ARE UNPAID, NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE
WORTHLESS BUT -
BECAUSE THEY ARE PRICELESS.**

**See information below for the event being held at
Mandurah Museum during Senior's Week.**

**We hope all our Friends and Volunteers will sup-
port this project.**

City of Mandurah
Libraries

Human Library
Everybody has a story.
What's yours?

City of MANDURAH

f i y mandurah.wa.gov.au

Human Library

**Are you a community member aged
55 or over with a story to share?**

**Volunteer by October 21 to be a
human book as part of the WA
Seniors Week 2019 Celebrations.**

Human books share their unique stories and insights to make our community richer, challenge stereotypes and encourage advocacy through informal chats with 'readers'.

Seniors Week 2019 Human Library Events :

Tuesday 12 November @ Lakelands
Library and Community Centre

Thursday 14 November @ Mandurah
Community Museum

Contact Jo on 9550 3835 or email
manlib@mandurah.wa.gov.au



mandurah.wa.gov.au



Museum Development Officer.

The completion of the courtroom redevelopment project has now occurred with the final version of the interactive game being installed on the tablet located in the gallery. In creating the game from scratch a period of 'play testing' was needed to uncover any mistakes which had been made in the process of creating the storyline of the game, along with any inconsistencies in game play. Typos and punctuation errors had crept in with the text provided to the game makers being retyped and often made to fit into text boxes that were too small.

Another area which needed significant work was the gameplay itself with all screens and activities having to 'make sense' in terms of one event leading to another on the voyage from England to the Swan River and then on to Mandurah and Pinjarra. Many times changes to one element would place others out of order, hence checking involved playing the game through over and over again in order to test that every possible outcome 'made sense'.

After all this, we are now in a position where the game offers a challenge, is interesting and at times amusing, and will give players a taste of at least some of the hardships faced by Thomas Peel and the first settlers in Mandurah and Pinjarra.

An exciting project which is now well underway has been the production of a podcast series on Mandurah's history in conjunction with West Coast Radio. The podcasts will be a series of 10-20 minute interviews with Nicholas conducted by one of the radio station's hosts, with each episode focusing on one aspect or family who have had significant involvement in Mandurah's past. When complete the interviews will be available for download as a series for people to listen to at their leisure on their phones or computers. Ian Bassett-Scarfe was the instigator of the project and agreed that the completed interviews will be made available immediately to the museum for us to use as we see fit. The interview series is currently half way through, with interviewer Nick Morgan currently editing.

As part of the City of Mandurah's infrastructure works for the 2019/20 financial year the asbestos roof of the old police sergeant's quarters at the back of the museum will be replaced. The replacement will be made from colour-bond steel and require 75mm wide strapping to be placed down the walls of the building in order to secure the roof. This was explained by the structural engineer who is supervising the work as being necessary due to new regulations which require stronger tie downs for roofs as opposed to those originally incorporated into the building. This now needs to be added on the building's exterior whereas when new buildings are constructed the fastenings can be hidden inside walls. The lower weight of the steel roof verses asbestos sheeting makes this even more important.



The Chimneys. Descriptive plaque of the area, on a peaceful walkway. This is one of the favourite walks of those people living near the foreshore in Erskine, favoured by dog and nature lovers.

Photograph J Lindley, October, 2019.



Education Matters!

Come and Explore Space

During the month of August the Mandurah Community Museum supported National Science Week.

Children and adults had the opportunity to view an interesting display of objects and photographs on loan from the Perth Observatory. Some of these objects included a brass telescope, a celestial globe, an iron meteorite and a complete map of the moon done in 1910. We would like to thank Paul Jones and Matt Woods for the loan of the objects, for providing the information for the labels and for the video footage of the Perth Observatory History.

Visitors could take a photograph of themselves as an astronaut by putting their head through the astronaut cut out. Children could complete a scratch art space design. These activities were popular and enjoyed by all.

The Museum had 456 visitors during the month of August.

Save the Koala

September was Save the Koala Month. To increase awareness in our local community of the plight of koalas, the Mandurah Community Museum hosted a display provided by the Australian Koala Foundation.

Visitors had the opportunity to learn more about Australia's National Treasure and how they can help save koalas.

Juda the koala from West Oz wildlife visited the museum three times during September. Kendell was Juda's animal handler and she presented lively and engaging talks about koalas. Everyone had the opportunity to get up close and personal to pat Juda and to have photos taken with him.

79 people ranging in age from 3 to 83 attended the koala visits and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Children had the opportunity to make a koala mask and complete other koala activity sheets.

Visitors kindly donated \$65.20 to the Australian Koala Foundation.

Light Fantastic

During the October school holidays at the Mandurah Community Museum, scientist Richard Rennie from the Light and Sound Discovery Centre presented Light Fantastic. There were 77 participants, 51 of them were children and 26 were adults.

Richard began the session by explaining how our eyes work and how some of the 'hands on' technologies from the past, work. These 'hands on' technologies filled the room.

Children and adults had the opportunity to see moving pictures in a Zootrope, and a Phenakistoscope. They could experiment with mirrors using a kaleidoscope, periscope and an infinity mirror. Children and adults alike enjoyed trying the Star Challenge and making their own Fantascope Viewer and Thaumatrope to take home.

The participants were very enthusiastic and talented and completed the activities in the given time. Several participants didn't want to leave and continued exploring long after the session was over.

At the end of each session people were asked to fill in a feedback form. The feedback was very positive. Everyone thought the session was amazing.

The Museum staff would like to thank Richard Rennie for his time, enthusiasm and tireless energy over the three days



Museum volunteer Colin Warne and wife Sherry with Juda the koala.



Koala masks made.



We all enjoy seeing children come into the museum and take part in the various activities, however, one particular joy is having our own children or grandchildren visit us while on duty.

One Saturday in July, Alexis and Brennan Armstrong visited Saturday volunteer and grandmother, Debra Armstrong.

We reproduce this photo of the two making bookmarks etc. while visiting the museum, photo taken by Debra.

Spotlight on Volunteers – Tuesday.

This month we commence with our nonagenarian **Derise Caddy** who has been at the museum for 8 years. Derise is a long time citizen of Mandurah having grown up as an O'Loughlin with her parents and grandparents being involved in O'Loughlin's Guest House in Smart Street. Derise assists with answering research enquiries and also in typing up research documents into the computer.

Ruth Watson

has also been volunteering at the museum for more than 10 years and came to Mandurah many years ago. Ruth assists also with the research requests drawing on her long knowledge of Mandurah. She can be found behind the front desk and also inputs into the computer the



data obtained from visitors which Nicholas gives to Council.

Phylis Strother has been involved for some time in copying and filing into order notebooks which were compiled by Frank Semmens. Phylis started volunteering at the museum more than 10 years ago and is part of Tuesday's group who are older but still firmly committed to volunteering with us.

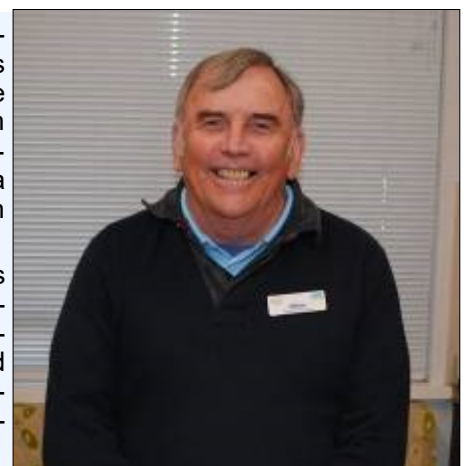
Colin Warne who is the last of our very long term volunteers in the Tuesday group, is well known in Mandurah.

Col's parents ran a deli and general store in Mandurah Terrace while he was growing up. Later they ran second hand shops, both being in the Smart Street Mall where Colin assisted them. Col assists where he can with research while also ensuring that accessioned items locations are documented so we might find them. This is an ongoing task as we're always rearranging items within the museum while receiving new items.



Linda Jackson joined the group when she retired from teaching. Within the museum she has primarily been assisting Katrina, both with the school groups coming in and also with taking them on Heritage Walks. She also assists with preparing for the school holiday programs. While Katrina has been on leave she has continued to help with specific education projects.

Allan Acott still works part-time but assists us in the museum with research. He has been looking at those enlistees we have found from Mandurah during the Second World War and has moved on to look at the Vietnam War and is currently researching the Boer War with the Western Australian enlistees.



Maritime Moorings. One of the projects we have been actively working towards is using the museum's licensed heritage boat to take our volunteers out to a number of heritage sites that are accessible by boat. The problem we have encountered is that due to neglect and lack of maintenance over many years our slipway has silted up making it extremely difficult to launch and retrieve our boat. This is often further aggravated by low water levels. We are trying to get over this problem by licensing the trailer on which the boat sits (this trailer and the boat was kindly donated by one of our volunteers, Brian Toussaint). To licence this trailer requires a considerable amount of modifications to meet modern regulations. This work would entail fitting a new hitch and safety chains, disc brakes, lights, new tyres etc. and once this work has been completed the trailer would have to go over "the Pits" to be inspected before a roadworthy certificate can be issued allowing it to be licensed. This will all cost a considerable amount of money, thus we have appealed again to Mandurah Murray Mayday Inc., for their valuable financial assistance. Having a licensed trailer would enable us to use the public boat ramps and it would also enable the boat to be displayed at various events, thus further promoting the museum and Mandurah's maritime heritage.

We will be able to take six volunteers per trip so watch out for a notice on the volunteer's notice board with dates etc. Volunteers will be taken in the order their names appear on the 'Expression of Interest' form. We hope to start in the next couple of weeks.

David Austin.

Stop Press. We are indebted to Mandurah Murray Mayday for their donation of \$2000, this has already provided us with a complete upgrade of the trailer for our working boat.

Chairperson's Annual Report. It is the end of my two year term and I am leaving my position open for new nominations though I will be happy to continue as a committee member.

I think it was really exciting to see where the money we raised helped in the Courtroom update. The interactive audios are great and our new TV setup for continually showing off Mandurah photos and events with Power Point presentations, videos, You Tube stories etc. is being used and enjoyed. We have so many photos donated it is good to be able to display them more. I think lots more ideas are in mind for new displays here.

Although not a duty of the chair, I continue to do some interviewing and I recommend my last interview with Les Wych, he gave me his memories of Mandurah from 1942. His first part time job was at the Movies working as a projectionist, looking after lawns etc. in the picture gardens, he also tells interesting memories of Mr. Goode, and the soldiers training in the Halls Head sand hills. I recommend you sit and have a read sometime; It is with the others in the research room.

The Members of the Friends keep helping where we can and are continually thinking of how we can raise money for special projects. Please can you all try to think of new ideas to present on either ways to raise money or a Friends project the rest of us may not think of.

It has been most enjoyable working with your committee members and assisting Katrina any way I was able with passing on any advertising to our Facebook group, and I thank everyone for the help you have given me. Especially Jan, who works so hard with the volunteers as well as

being editor of the Friends newsletters, and goodness know what else.

I wish the new officers a happy time on the committee, and every success in the year ahead for our Friends of the Museum.



*Eleanor Kay
(Chairperson).*

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

Telephone: 9550 3680.

Email: museum@mandurah.wa.gov.au

**Internet: [www.mandurah.wa.gov.au/Facilities/
Museum/Friends](http://www.mandurah.wa.gov.au/Facilities/Museum/Friends)**

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.