

# Friends of MANDURAH COMMUNITY MUSEUM

BUILDING BRIDGES  
TO PEEL HISTORY

Friends of Mandurah Community Museum Newsletter

JULY 2020

## VE and VJ Day

Victory in Europe day is widely commemorated around the world as marking the anniversary of the surrender of Nazi Germany to the allied powers on May 8th 1945.



## The famous "Dancing Man" filmed from a tram in Sydney during Australian celebrations of VJ day

After Hitler's suicide in his bunker underneath the streets of Berlin it was left to the remains of his government to bring an end to the terrible conflict that he had inflicted on the world. (Continued page 2)

**From the Editor.** With the return to our museum, things are starting to get back to normal. Within this newsletter and our next one we are celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of World War 2. This includes articles on both the Victory in Europe and Victory in Japan days. We have been to our volunteers who actually experienced the war and asked for their memories from during that time. We will then feature memories of the end of the war in our August edition.

Should any of our Friends out there be able to write down their own personal memories either from during the war or at the festivities at the end of the war, we would love to receive them from you.

We have also searched our oral histories and within this edition of the newsletter show some excerpts of war year memories. When we first started doing this I had no idea just how many of those memories we have recorded. We are unable to print all of the memories here so have selected a few subjects relating to civilian experiences and put them into subject matter to include them here. To complete this we will print all those memories we have, both written and recorded into a folder containing them. This folder will be available until after our November Armistice Day exhibition, it will be placed in the front gallery. We are indebted to our interviewees with their help on the subject.

With the Essex car being garaged safely elsewhere, the museum has taken the opportunity to display one of our heritage boats. More information on this display later in the newsletter.

While most of our volunteers returned in June, due to our need to protect older volunteers we haven't brought some back until now. We hope that by the time you receive this newsletter it will have been possible to have everyone returned. As a volunteer myself, I can't tell you how much I missed being at the museum amongst friends who have become almost another family to me. I am sure there are others who feel the same.

We hope to be able to bring you our next newsletter by time by the end of September. Until then please stay safe.

**Editor Jan Baker.**

## Special features

VE and VJ Day  
War Memories

Nicholas Reynolds  
Dave Austin  
Derise Caddy  
Eleanor Kay

Book review

Jan Baker

Mandurah memories

Rogers family display

## Regular features.

From the MDO .  
Chairpersons report.

Nicholas Reynolds.  
Jan Baker

As such, it was Admiral Karl Donitz, the last head of the third Reich as appointed in Hitler's will who ordered General Jodl to enter surrender negotiations. After agreeing to US General's Eisenhower's demand for unconditional surrender on all fronts the document was signed on the morning of May 7th in Rheims, France. Another surrender document was signed by General Keitel in Berlin before Russian Marshal Zhukov the following day. But as American President Truman said, it was as yet a victory only half won.



**Perhaps the most iconic image from the war's end, taken in New York.**

Tragically, it was to take two atomic bombs along with a declaration of war by Russia to convince the Japanese empire to surrender. Prior to this it was feared that an invasion of the Japanese home islands, given the prospective name 'Operation Downfall', could have claimed over 500,000 allied lives and well over one million Japanese. However, this was averted by Emperor Hirohito announcing on August 15th Japan's acceptance of the Potsdam declaration and its acceptance of unconditional surrender. Now the world could truly celebrate the end of the most destructive conflict in history.



**Signing formal surrender document, Tokyo bay September 2nd 1945**

## MDO Report

On Wednesday June 10th, the museum was able to reopen with the implementation of stage four Covid restrictions. After shutting down on March 24th we saw a period of just under three months when the entire facility was closed. During this period we were fortunate to have the City's Rangers using some of the museum offices to assist with their social distancing in the workplace. This enabled them to both 'keep an eye on things' and make sure the facility was secure during the shut-down period. With this span of time covering our usually scheduled ANZAC exhibition we were unable to mount the 'Operation Jaywick' display from the National Maritime Museum which we had booked. Fortunately we have secured this interesting display for ANZAC 2021.

Upon reopening under stage four restrictions we have put in place several new practices to keep both staff and visitors safe. Hand sanitiser has been made available and visitors are encouraged to practice social distancing when moving through the museum. Staff are wiping down workstations and high traffic areas while also practicing social distancing in the staff room and offices. We're using and washing our own dishes and cutlery while avoiding any 'finger food' which might be handled by multiple people. If we all follow these rules we can stay safe and healthy while doing our bit to make sure that the Museum isn't in a situation where it might unfortunately need to shut down for a second time.

"Life in the Past Lane". Starting on Friday May 8th during the museum's shutdown period a new initiative was launched to keep Mandurah's heritage, and the continuing role of the Museum in its promotion, in the public's awareness.

This was achieved through a series of half hour live presentations given using Facebook. It's without a doubt important for the Museum to move into undertaking more promotion and other activities in the on-line sphere and these Facebook live shows have been the first foray that we've taken on social media.

Using 'Life in the Past Lane' as a title for these presentations allows us to have a wide variety of topics that we can cover, not necessarily all relating specifically to Mandurah's history.

So far, topics covered bi-weekly have included the Peel Settlement Scheme, a focus on our Curious Community Collectables display, and the Hall family's role in the early settlement of Mandurah.

This programme will be continued on now that the Museum is open again and will fit in well as content for the new Facebook page that the City's library and heritage services will be setting up.

**Nicholas Reynolds**



**Dave Austin's War Memories.** My recollections of life during WW11: I lived in the county of Somerset in the West of England, born, and raised in a farming community. As a lad I had to do the work of a man because most of the men were away fighting the Germans. We had an army search light in our orchard hidden amongst the cider apple trees. This light would be activated to illuminate German aircraft as they flew overhead on their way to bomb Bristol, thus enabling the British fighter aircraft to easily pick out a target. The German escort aircraft would shoot down the beam of the light in an attempt to destroy the light, fortunately they didn't succeed, but we sustained a lot of damage to the roof of our house.

Mum did the washing for the troops in the old copper that was heated by burning wood. When we had nothing else to burn Mum told the Officer in charge of the search light unit that she would no longer be able to do their washing because she had nothing left to burn to heat the water. He went off and requisitioned a lorry load of coal from Radstock railway sidings. When tipping the coal, the army lorry accidentally demolished our small coal shed but that didn't matter because to get coal when it was rationed was wonderful. It meant that in addition to heating the wash water the old kitchen range would be able to keep the house warm. A small downside was this coal was steam coal used for steam trains and came in huge chunks that meant us kids had to smash it with hammers into smaller pieces.

Food, like everything else, was rationed but we managed ok. Rabbits were plentiful because myxomatosis hadn't been invented (thought to have been an experiment that escaped from a lab) and thus we were able to go out with nets and ferrets and catch loads of rabbits which we took to the army kitchen where the army cooks would make wonderful rabbit pie which they would deliver to our house in huge metal trays; often accompanied by a large pot of rabbit stew.

Mum would buy stock feed potatoes that were treated with a purple dye and were only sold as animal feed. I remember seeing Mum's hands being dyed purple as a result of peeling these potatoes for our dinner. We also grew a huge type of cabbage called cow cabbage intended for stock feed, but they found their way into mum's cooking pot.



Meat generally was one of the most difficult foods to obtain but Dad had a mate who was a carpenter and the village undertaker. He would rear a couple of piglets until they had grown big enough to kill, then he would shoot one with his twelve bore shotgun, butcher it and place the pieces of meat in a coffin before covering them with salt and placing the coffin on two stools in the "chapel of rest" draped in a velvet cloth accompanied with a candelabra standing on the top of it. This was how he kept it hidden from inspectors.

The army guys were very good to us and helped us out in any way they could. I remember on one occasion our bull 'Billy' got stuck in the mud in the river, Dad got a large rope and put it around Billy's neck and we all tried to pull him out but to no avail, so Dad got our Shire horse, Captain, to try again. During this time, the army officer came up to purchase some eggs. He looked at the problem, went away and returned with an armoured tank to assist, this was able to pull Billy out onto the riverbank.



To assist in Billy's recovery Dad covered him with straw and drenched him a couple of times per day. Drenching was a way of treating sick animals that was done by getting a cow's horn, cutting off the pointed tip, filling it with hot milk and with a finger over the end placing the end in the animal's mouth, removing your finger to let the hot milk run down the animals throat. After a few days Billy was up and about again but I am not sure if he was still able to do his job.

Mum raised nine kids during the war. I also didn't dwell on life as a young boy: young lads living in the country in general were working like men and supporting the family in many ways. We had no water at our house and as a result of this I had to go to the village pump which was a old cast iron hand pump to fill a small galvanised bath tub that was mounted on a soapbox trolley. It was the only water Mum would have to do the washing and cooking, (mains water was not brought into the village until 1953). All the cooking was done on the old iron kitchen range which Mum would keep brightly polished with black lead polish. We had no electricity so our only means of lighting was oil lamps and candles. Dad would hang a thick blanket over the window before lighting the lamp to maintain the blackout that was in force to prevent enemy aircraft spotting the lights. Dad would call me at five in the morning when I would go downstairs to the smell of hot toast which he had just made by using a wire toasting fork holding the slices of bread in front of the kitchen range.

After breakfast we would harness old Captain our shire horse, hitch up a cart and head off to do the milking. We had no milking machine and hand milked the cows in the field they happened to be in, which was often very uncomfortable because it could be blowing a blizzard or pouring with rain. Before sitting down on a little three legged stool you had to put a span on the cow; this was a platted horse hair rope with a loop on one end and wooden peg on the other end, you had to put this around the back legs of the cow to prevent her kicking you whilst you were milking.

In addition to the normal school holidays I would get six weeks off for haymaking, another few week off for harvesting and more time off for mangle and potato digging. The highlight of the kids' year was the arrival in the village of the traveling thresher. This huge steam engine would arrive pulling a thresher behind which was a live-in van for the driver operator and behind that again was a water cart to provide water for the steam engine: it was a very impressive sight. The thresher would be positioned beside the corn rick (like a haystack) and would be powered by the steam engine; the ricks were built on bundles of sticks called faggots which enabled air to circulate under the rick. The kids would be standing around with Jack Russell dogs waiting for the rats to run out.

I was hardly ever at school thus I had very little education. As kids we had little time for playing but we managed what little time we had in a totally different way to today's kids. Every country boy would have a knife of one sort or another; it would be a sheath knife or a pocketknife, the favoured being the army issue. This knife had in addition to the usual two blades and can opener, a large spike folded along the back of the handle apparently used to pry stones from horses' hooves. In addition, most of us would have a catapult and a bow and arrows. Some would have a Webley air rifle or pistol, but I never heard of any kid getting hurt.

### Local Oral Histories. 'In the Trenches'.

There are several memories of digging slit trenches and then schoolchildren practicing their trench drill.

Roy Adam (Pinjarra School) "Yes, we had to dig trenches in the school, Pretty hard work actually. The ground was very hard .. Clay. Probably 20 feet long and about 3 feet wide, 6 feet deep.

Ray Bradshaw (Cottesloe School) "I can remember being issued with a tag, a metal tag, which was strung on a piece of leather lace and along with that was a piece of jelly rubber, probably about two inches or 50mm long, be half an inch or 10mm thick and that was in case of when they had an air raid siren when you were at the school you all had to get out of your classrooms and assembled and head off down towards the air raid shelters which were just trenches in the ground, and you used to have to stick this piece of jelly rubber in your mouth, so as your teeth wouldn't get damaged I believe from the percussion of the bombs."

John Layton. (Hackett St School) "When the siren went off at the old Mandurah Power Station which was run by Pat FitzGerald and Jimmy Orrocks, we used to have to run out of the school and get down on our knees in the trench and our head down between our knees, and then when the all clear sounded we were all allowed out. I can remember the trenches home in our backyard. Thank God we didn't really have to use them but whenever there was a warning siren we had to go and do it."

Neil Morfitt (Hackett St School) "we did have an identity disk. It was a small disk which we wore around our neck on a string and it was just our name, just your name on it. Your full name! Also attached to that was a piece of cork. Now this cork, the idea of it, was if we'd had bombing or anything the cork was to be put in between your teeth so that your mouth was held opened with your fingers stuck in your ears so that the blast wouldn't affect your hearing or damage you as much. That was the theory of it. But the old corks used to get chewed around a bit and ....

Especially the one under the big fig tree (trench), it was a huge tree, and because after a while the kids thought well this would make a good cubby house so it had a top put over it with paperbark and we used it as a cubby house. You could go in either end and play in that. But the old fig tree itself was a more or less a, what they'd call now a jungle gym, which they have that you can swing off it, climb over it, it supplied you with figs to eat and all this. Also a fig fights on occasions and things like that. It was a great place for the kids to meet.

Esme Nobbs (Hackett St School) "I remember too during the war years, they dug trenches and we had little dummy runs, there was an air raid and we had to climb down, crawl into these dug out trenches. ....and we had dummy runs if the plane came over and could have been the Japanese, could have been bombing us. We had to climb into these dirty old dug out trenches."

Lloyd Tuckey (Hackett St School) "The one that feels of greatest importance was the digging of the slit trenches after war broke out with Japan, and they were along the perimeter of the fencing and both inside and outside the fence line as Hackett Street didn't continue very far so nobody used it or they weren't a danger to the public and we had to be aware of a possible, the possibility of a raid and we were either given or we were told to buy a rubber peg to place between our teeth in the case of a

### 'Air Raid Sirens'

Ross Walmsley (Waroona School) "And the siren went you had to run for these little sort of holes dug in the ground. we used to have dig our shelters, what do you call them air raid shelters to go and lay in, in case the bombs came over."

Pat Harrison remembered that they ran the air raid siren from the powerhouse. At that time after her husband had been called up, she and Jim Horrocks were responsible for sounding the alarm.

(There are more mentions of sirens to the left in the memories of the trenches.



**Manpowered.** During World War One, when men vital to the home effort had signed up, left many necessary areas unmanned. This experience meant that during World War Two many occupations were deemed too vital to the home effort to allow people to sign up. Included in these was prominent past citizen of Mandurah Dudley Tuckey. Dudley had signed up with several friends and Melville Tuckey soon after the war started. He went through quite a bit of training and was later selected for Officer Training.

*I was at Northam OTS school. This was after about nine months, and low and behold the next thing there was a van with a cage on the back of it {and bound up and they were looking for, .....Dudley Tuckey?"*

They questioned Dudley about his experience with a shearing team and as a wool classer. Then told him to get his gear and climb on the truck.

*"The next thing I knew I was down at Claremont. I went before the Big Bear {Boss} and he said to me, he said "Do you know, you could be in serious trouble?"*

*He said "You have misinformed the Army," he said. "To what your position was your workplace."*

*I said "Oh!" I said "Well I just joined up with the boys."*

*He said, "That's alright!" He said "Listen here, if you don't get out and get on that train on Thursday night to Meekatharra," he said "you will be with the boys," he said, "down there in Fremantle, in the lockup!"*

*I said "Oh! That's lovely."*

*"So anyhow they straight away just told me that there was nobody to lead [manage & class], to take this team on and I had to go up to take the team over and finish the contract."*



### Airplane spotting and Coastal Watch.

Hilda Cooper. "...when I joined the Spotters. Yes, it wasn't the same you know. It got quite different. In Mandurah. This air force chap [Officer] came down, and he gave us a lesson or two. And as I say we set up on the corner near the bridge in the school grounds.

[There was no uniform but they were issued with badges and supplied with binoculars.]

A few (aircraft) went over. I remember a bomber, and I remember a tiger moth and a ?? battle. a few went over. We recorded them. You told them (by phone to Perth) what you thought it was and if you told them if in any way they were carrying on different, suspiciously. I used to go on duty with Sib Scott. She was a mate of mine. We used to go on duty together and we used to take our lunch and all that down there. The men mainly did the night. But there wasn't a lot of us, you know." Hilda Cooper remembers them being in the area near our museum.

John Layton. "Dad, he had a heap of telephones in his place and they were connected to the Coastal Watch, and some time a phone was ringing and you'd go round to 8 or 9 phones before you found the right one."

(Coast Guard) 'Well, he used to get messages in from them, I never knew what the messages were about but we used to answer the phone and we'd call Dad and he'd come in and talk to the blokes. They had outstations all along the coast,"

(The boat Avenita was used for search and rescue.)

"Dad still had it, control of it. You know he went out on a search one night for people who were missing. And of course you couldn't flash a spotlight or anything those days.

Anyhow they did, flashed a torch looking for these people and they were lit up by Rottnest, you could of picked a pin up off the deck, I remember Dad saying "you could have picked a pin up and I was waiting for that big gun to go BOOM and be blown out of the water." But they had to put a torch out because these people were missing, I don't know, I suppose they found them, I don't know."

**Volunteer Defence Force.** Neil Morfitt. "Well the Volunteer Defence Corps was set up here, they were mainly older men that was too old for military service. Some had been in the World War I ...others weren't or hadn't been. Mr Goode himself, the school teacher here, he was the Lieutenant, Mr Butcher, the butcher, he was a butcher, he was the sergeant, I don't know if they had a corporal or not but the rest as far as I know were privates (laugh). That was the... just the area, the Mandurah area because they had a unit in Mandurah and I think they had another one in Pinjarra and different like this. When they first started they were issued with what they call cadet rifles, which was a 3.10 single shot Martini Henry action. In other words they were cocked from underneath with a handle and they were loaded through the top, a single shot. But then when they were taken away from them when more arms were obtainable and issued with the Lee Enfield short version 303.

They used to do practice, they'd have practice shoots. They were issued with a uniform. Some of the VDC uniforms were actually green but the local ones here were khaki similar to with the... had a red flash of VDC in black or blue or something on their arm. They would have rifle shoots over at Halls Head over the rifle range over there."



### Manpowering continued.

Pat Harrison [the manpower man] "came down and I was over in the little house. Jim wasn't there, because he had to sleep in the day because he worked at night and I used to go over in the morning and oil up the engines and things. It was a terrible day. One of those Mandurah days when it was blowing and raining and oh, it wasn't very nice. He came to the door and he said who he was and I think, on the kitchen table I had the meter books out and I was writing them up or something, or doing something like that and I said "Oh, yes" and invited him in and gave him a cup of tea I think. And there was a terrible storm on, and bang!, out went the lights. I thought "Oh dear, what am I going to do". Jim was probably asleep, so I said "I must go over and see if I can do anything over in the powerhouse, because on the switchboard there and all the switches had blown out. So I started trying to push the switches in. The flames went everywhere and he just stood at the door looking and as we walked back he said "I'll have him home next week", and he did you know"

Jim Marsh. Originally was a dispatch rider but in 1943 he was manpowered out to work in the mill.

Roy Adam also recalled his father being manpowered to work on the family farm.

Vic Beacham "...there was a lot of other men around Col-lie of my age were manpowered in their position, I was just manpowered looking after the telephone network,



### 'Lights on cars'

Roy Adam. "I can always remember the lights on the cars, you weren't allowed to have full beam on your cars, you had, it was a metal thing that fitted over it, just had a little slit in the middle with a shutter on it, so that it just directed the light down in front of you."

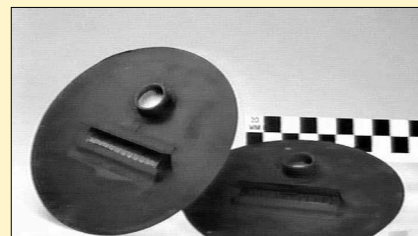
John Layton. "the car headlights having one inch of clear across the headlights. Instead of having a full round headlight, you had one inch which wasn't painted black that's all we had to see with."

### Lighting in houses.

John Layton. "I remember the windows being coated black .."

Below Left. Ration ticket for petrol.

Below Right. Headlight cover courtesy Victoria Museum Collection.



**Derise Caddy**, remembers. I was 10 years old and living in Northam. I attended the East Northern State School and remember all. The air-raid shelters in the grounds which we had to enter every time the alarm sounded. We also had an air-raid shelter in our yard. There was an army camp just out of Northam and I remember a lot of soldiers coming to our house when they got leave. My mother often had their wives visit for the weekends so they could see their husbands. I spent a little time with them.

Terry O'Loughlin (Hackett St School, Terry was Derise's brother) ..... *'and in the winter time the War was on and we used to at morning play time we were given either a soup or some hot cocoa, which was made at the school and that was put on during the War, I think a lot of it was to make sure that children did get a bit of nourishment because times were hard and there was a lot of fishermen still here operating which were having hard times too and well most of the people in Mandurah at that time during the War were having a hard time so I think it was just to give some of the school children a bit of nourishment.'*

[Editor's note. My mother remembered the people of Northam fondly. She often remarked that when she was visiting my father in hospital, men would stop and offer her (and my brother, then a baby) a lift to the hospital. The lift was much appreciated as it was a fair walk from the station in the heat.]



Mandurah Terrace Circa 1940

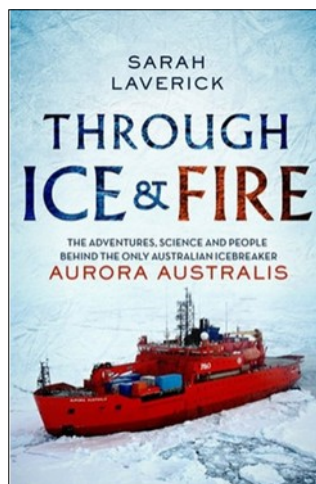
**Eleanor Kay remembers the war.** Born late 1938 I was quite young during the 1940s war years so my memories are very limited.

We lived on a farm 17 miles from Goomalling, so didn't get to town much to talk to others or see much of what might have been happening in a country town. Though I can remember going to the Town Hall to the Pictures, and seeing the News of the War, of course they were in black and white. Some of my school friends have memories of things which happened in town.

Even though there were ration books, we had farm produce, so my mother was able to swap the coupons, she didn't need for some she did.

I remember later, my brother bringing home a felt kangaroo he made while in hospital, though I am not sure if this was when he had a stomach ulcer, or when he was there after getting shrapnel wounds during the Darwin bombing, luckily they were fairly minor.

One time he came home unexpectedly with the mailman, and our poor Mother cried, being so young I didn't know why she would cry because he was home. Many years later I understood when I experienced something which made me cry tears of relief.



**Book Report.** (I haven't done a report for the newsletter in a long time, but recently I read a book which I thought people might be interested in.)

I recently read this book which my brother recommended. I found it interesting with many events which piqued my interest.

The first and only Australian-built Antarctic flagship, *Aurora Australis*, and her crews have likewise secured a place in Antarctic history, for 30 years she transported

and supplied expeditioners and scientists to Australia's stations in the Antarctic. When you know that she was actually commissioned, built, repaired and provisioned in Australia it gives you a great sense of pride.

Building her was not easy, but the build story is told with care by Sarah Laverick, daughter in law of the family who built the ship. Sarah was also a scientist and voyage leader so is able to speak with confidence about the experiences of crew and scientists.

The crew did not have it easy with several very life threatening events causing major problems which are documented in the book. At times the ship needed rescuing and conversely did its own rescuing.

To quote one review *"This is a tale of engineering brilliance, team tenacity and human resilience. It brings polar research to life and unveils stunning scientific discoveries. It transforms the Aurora Australis into a compelling character in Australia's chapter of Antarctic history and makes heroes of the men and women who have guided her through the most inhospitable seascapes on earth."*

I thoroughly recommend this book as I found it a most interesting read. I didn't find it overly technical nor in any way boring. It is interesting at this time to hear that the replacement ship has been delayed. Sadly this ship is not to be built in Australia as the Aurora Australia was, however it is great that the naming of these ships have become a tradition.

Australia's new Antarctic icebreaker, RSV *Nuyina*, will be the main lifeline to Australia's Antarctic and sub-Antarctic research stations and the central platform of our Antarctic and Southern Ocean scientific research. *Nuyina* means 'southern lights' in *palawa kani*, the language of Tasmanian Aborigines. It is pronounced noy yee nah.

Construction of the ship at Damen Shipyards in Romania commenced in May 2017, with a steel cutting ceremony, while a keel laying ceremony in August saw the first building-block of the ship consolidated in the drydock. In September 2018 the ship was floated from the dry dock to the wet dock, for the next phase of construction. As of July 2020, construction of the ship is 98% complete, but final harbour testing, and sea and ice trials, have been delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the ship is expected to arrive in Hobart in 2021.

**Jan Baker.**



Neil Morfitt remembers - Charles & Theo Wearne with their boat *Selamat*.

*They were from Singapore and they used to come over here and stay at various times, well when of course they got out of Singapore, but they had a quite a large launch... it was built over there and I think it was built of teak. It was a double ender a whaler, and they used to go out on... when the islands fell they used to do a patrol for some months up between Mandurah and past the Bouvarde trying to... well their idea was if anyone had escaped from the islands and they'd got off course or anything and landed on the beach then they could... well they'd pick them up or knew where they were because there was nothing on the beach. I mean not like (laugh) it is now. I mean you had Mandurah and then you had nothing there then you had Bunbury sort of thing as far as a town was concerned on the beach. But it would have been difficult landing there to have to know where exactly where they were I suppose for one thing.*

*They used to go out early in the morning and they'd do their patrol and they'd come in oh, just after lunch, round about lunch time they'd come in. But you'd see them coming in there and they'd come under... as they come under... to get under the bridge they had a... they'd have to drop their mast down because any of the boats that were up the, what you call Soldiers Cove, it was always just known as the Mill Creek at most times, it used to be known as. They'd have to drop their mast to be able to get under the bridge, the big ones.*

*They'd come in there and they'd be all dressed in their white duck... white naval type... he'd have... Mr Wearne himself well he'd have his naval cap on there. He looked real part there coming in. We'd often see them coming in with big... I don't know the proper name of the boat, I think it had some Malaysian name, but it had a big "M1" on it, written on the side of it and I think they may have, well for doing a job like that I think they must have had been allowed petrol and that to run it, because otherwise they wouldn't have had enough petrol to be able to do it. So that was that lot.*



[The Friends newsletter featured both the Wearne brothers in previous issues. There is more information relating to them at the museum] As we are talking about Coast Watch during the war, I thought we could include these memories from oral history recordings. Photographs of the *Selamat*, and *Selamat 2* courtesy of John Layton. Editor.]

**Naidoc Week Exhibition.** This exhibition concluded with the school holidays ending. While numbers of visitors to the museum have been less, children came with their parents and grandparents and took part in the activities provided. Volunteer Linda Jackson provided much support to the museum in this exhibition during the absence of Katrina Gaudi.

Below is one of the paintings displayed during this time.



**Rationing.** As oral historians we have asked quite a number of interviewees about rations. While many remembered a shortage of items like clothing and petrol, so far as food is concerned they didn't believe there was much of a problem. I suspect this was because most lived in a rural (or had relations there) community. With access to eggs, milk and some form of hunted meat, plus Mandurah's abundant supply of fish, people would not have gone without very much. Most people in the country kept at least a few chickens and also many raised batches of young chicks to replace the older chickens. Of course the older chickens weren't wasted and found their way into stews and soups.

John Layton. Well they sailed that out of Singapore, when the Japs bombed it. He had as many people as he could fit on board and he sailed that to Darwin. Yes, he sailed it to Darwin and then he sailed it on down to Mandurah here, and it was always moored behind Wearne House which is now a old people's home. But he was a lovely chap, old Charlie, I can still picture him with his pipe and I remember just before he died he came up to Dad, he used to call Dad 'Di', he said "Di, I've come up to see you," and Dad said "What for, Charlie?", "To say Goodbye", and Dad said "Why? Are you going?" He said "No, I'm going to die soon." And Dad said "Don't talk like that", and it was only about a week and he was gone. Yeh, I'll never forget that, old Charlie, dear old chap. Lovely man.



### **Boats - Netting Dinghy - Donated by Gary Rodgers.**

The most common species of fish caught in the Peel Harvey Estuary were mullet, cobbler and school whiting.

Whiting one of the most tasty fishes, fetched a much higher price at the Perth Markets but required a much smaller mesh size than the mullet and cobbler.

So the fishermen towed a netting dinghy behind their larger fishing boat with a fine mesh net all set up to shoot should they come across a school of whiting.

They would then anchor the larger boat and row the netting dinghy around the whiting.

Mullet and cobbler were the fishermen's bread and butter, whiting were the occasional cake and cream.

### **The Rogers Family**

The Rogers family had a farm fronting Pinjarra Road at Barragup where they ran a small herd of dairy cows. They also fished in the Peel Estuary, keeping their boats in the Serpentine River at the rear of the property. Pinjarra Road was an ideal location for direct selling to the passing public and the Rodgers sold fresh milk, cream and butter alongside cooked crabs and fresh fish. The signs in the display were at their front gate.

In earlier days a homemade wire basket and an old laundry copper were acceptable for cooking crabs. Later the WA Health Dept. demanded more rigorous standards in preparing cooked food for public consumption and the stainless-steel basket and cooking pot became mandatory.

When the Mandurah Community Museum staff and volunteers went out to collect the netting dinghy, the donor, Gary Rodgers, invited us to take anything else that took our eye. The signs, the crab cooking equipment and many other bits and pieces give a great understanding of the life of this fishing family.

Above right.

**Michael McGhie and Dave Austin** beside the maritime display. Dave Austin's wartime memories are recorded earlier in this newsletter.

Right.

**Jim Tuckey** shows the small marine engine which he donated to the museum.

**Chairpersons Report.** At this time we have not met since the Lockdown commenced. As many of you are aware, the majority of your committee as well as the volunteers are in an older age group and in the high risk category for Covid 19.

With the resumption of our museum we have seen a gradual increase in numbers visiting but we still hope for more to come through the door.

We hope to have our A.G.M. during October as is normal but we will be sending out more information on this closer to the date. Prior to that your committee will get together. We will also be sending out our yearly reminder of membership renewals and we hope you will all support us in continuing the organisation.

In the meantime can I ask you all to stay safe, practice physical distancing but remember for all our health both physical and mental to stay in touch with each other and with us?

*Jan Baker*



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

**Telephone: 9550 3680.**

**Email: [museum@mandurah.wa.gov.au](mailto: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 4 times per year as notified.**

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.