

## ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT – 2024 FROM MARGARET RIVER & DISTRICTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Margaret River district celebrated the centenary of the Margaret River Hospital in May 2024. The local Community Centre hosted the day with the MRDHS putting on a medical/nursing display and had launched a 2024 Calendar about the history of the hospital late last year. The day was a success with people travelling great distances to attend and catch up with other 'locals' who worked and those born in the old hospital.

Two of our members, Bill & Jenny Bunbury, were involved over the last three years in the production of a book called "Settlement, Struggle & Success" about the hospital's history from 1924-2024, which was launched the day before the event.

The Heritage Festival this year was a 'Timber' theme, and we participated with talks and several displays at our Old Settlement Blacksmith shed.

Local, Lloyd Sheperdson whose family was involved with the operations of the Witchcliffe Timber Mill.

Don Briggs spoke of the 'Pioneers of the WA Timber Industry'.

Both timber talks were followed by an enjoyable afternoon tea put on by our volunteers.

Another talk we hosted in February was by Guy de le Bedoyere who spoke of the wreck of the Batavia off the WA coast.

The local Agricultural Show we displayed an exhibition this year with the theme 'Sewing'.

A display at a local musical event to help promote our Society involvement in the local community.

Some of our members are involved with the local Shire representatives in the newly formed Friends of the Cemeteries (Margaret River & Karridale) to preserve the history of the older grave sites and to keep the present grounds in a presentable state.

A Concept Plan that is underway and controlled by the Shire, involving several other people including our President Viv Halsall. The plan is to change the look of the Old Settlement and Rotary Park precinct.

We recently published a historical walk trail leaflet to enhance our QR codes that are designed to allow historical information to those who wish to find out more about the town as they walk around the town centre. (the QR codes are on about 30 buildings in the main street)

This year the school excursion groups from our local primary schools totalled 320 children (Bunbury Grammar & Dunsborough PS included) and many teachers and parents. That is a lot of scones our volunteers must cook!!! The children get to help make the scones and bake in an old metters wood stove, wash clothes on a wash board, peg out the clothes and go to the 'naughty corner' at the school..... The excursions are very hands on with lots of fun had by the children. And at the end of the various stations and after eating the scones with jam & cream of course, watch a very funny black and white Laurel & Hardy movie in the Blacksmith shed.

After the school excursions a very exhausted team of volunteers went out to a lovely lunch at Woody Nook Café

A dedicated team of volunteers have recently set up the Blacksmith shed adding a blacksmith 'fire' , cabinets to house our carpentry tools (photo supplied) and the theatre area has been upgraded with new equipment.

Lastly, our Treasurer John Alferink was awarded the 2023 Volunteer of the Year for the District. John is not only our Treasurer but is involved in the Lions Club and the districts Fire Department, all of which take up a lot of his time. He was a WA finalist for Volunteer of the Year that recently held a Gala event in Perth. There were only three other people in the category. He did not win, but his dedication to the local community is one we at the Historical Society certainly appreciate.