

Friends of

Mandurah Museum

BUILDING BRIDGES TO PEEL HISTORY

3 Pinjarra Road
Mandurah WA 6210

Friends of Mandurah Museum

Newsletter February 2023.

Evangeline Wager (nee Tuckey) 1865 – 1953

Evangeline was the first child born to Eliza and John Tuckey, she was born just as Eliza arrived in Western Australia having met and married John in the goldfields of Victoria. More information on Eliza will be part of an upcoming exhibition of the Tuckey women.

Growing up in the small town of Mandurah, she would have experienced difficult times. During her childhood she received some education probably both from her mother Eliza and her grandmother Mary, while at the same time she experienced assisting with the post office which her grandmother was responsible for.

This was to lead to her undertaking training as a telegraphist in Pinjarra and becoming the first post mistress – telegraphist in Mandurah. Pinjarra had first received the telegraph cable in 1872, with Mandurah not following until 1886.

Moving to Singapore in 1895 at the age of thirty, it is possible she was housekeeping for her father John who had moved much of his business interests to there. It was here she met and married William John Wager, born in Cirencester U.K in 1896. John (as he was known) was a printer who had been sent out from England for the Methodist Mission Press.

Theirs was a late marriage as by that stage she is 31 years old, the couple subsequently having six children, five survived. There would have been dangers involved in having children at this late stage of her life. While two children who appear to have been born in Singapore, one daughter Ellen born in 1899 is shown to have been born in Mansfield – England, it must have been shortly after that when she returned to the state of Western Australia, as Lavina was born during the Federation year of 1901 in Cottesloe.

Records show that 3 of her children were born in Cottesloe, but one of those was stillborn.

John died in Singapore 1923, leaving Evangeline with six children all having reached what could be considered adulthood. Evangeline died in Perth in 1953, having lived to see telephones largely take over from telegrams.

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Telegrams in Western Australia.

The telegraph system first came to Perth via a line from Perth to Fremantle in 1877, having commenced in Australia in 1858.

There was competition from the Australian States as to where the international cable would enter Australia, with Western Australia featuring in two routes. Finally, the overland line between Adelaide and Darwin was completed in 1872, this linked Australia to the rest of the world.

The first line to Western Australia (via Albany) from Adelaide was built along the coast. In total there was nearly three and a half thousand km to be built and was completed in 1877. West Australia's portion of this project was to take the line from Albany to Eucla along terrain largely uninhabited and plagued by major problems of wind and erosion. This line was later to be replaced by the one which was built along the railway line between Adelaide and Perth.

1889 Telegraph landed at Broome from Java (Jakarta).

During the 1890s, typewriters had replaced pen and ink.

Telegrams were to provide a valuable service to the people of Australia. Within Western Australia they were of particular benefit during both World Wars. In the end there were several routes from Asia into various states, during WW11 it was decided to cut the cable between Java and Broome to prevent the Japanese from 'listening in'.

1901. The salary for a telegraphist was between £130.00 per annum and £170.00 depending on experience.

As mentioned in a previous article, Evangeline Tuckey was Mandurah's first telegraphist when the service was opened in 1886. Prior to leaving the service she trained Clarence Cooper as her successor. The year after Evangeline died, the public telex service was introduced, from then on with both the increased number of home telephones, and the telex service the use of telegrams was reducing rapidly.

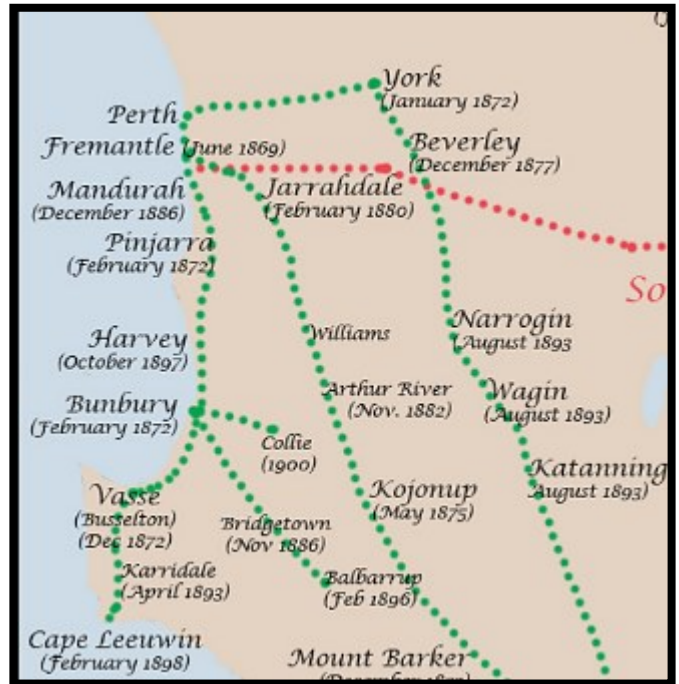
On the 28th January, 1989 Perth Central Telegraph Office closed its keys and switched off its teleprinter at noon for the last time.

Jan Baker.

<http://members.iinet.net.au/~oseagram/wahist.html>

<https://telegramsaustralia.com/Forms/Colonial/West%20Australia>

**Below. Mandurah First Post Office,
Right Evangeline Wager (Tuckey)**



Education Matters. Crossings Through Time

In February the Mandurah Museum had an exhibition about how people crossed the Mandurah Estuary throughout time.

On display were photographs, people's memories of the bridge and local resident's creations using the rich seasoned jarrah.

A big thank you to local residents; Alan & Deb Pritchard, Harry Butler, Bruce Edwards, Nigel Noakes and Jan Van Stekelenburg who contributed to the exhibition by loaning their wonderful pieces, for display.

A special thank you to Museum volunteers; Linda Jackson and Colin Warne for their contribution to the exhibition and for their assistance in installing the display.

Kat Gauci.

**Featured Photo, rustic framed Fishing Platform by
Jan van Stekelenburg.**



The Three Well Known Australians.

The Mandurah Museum hosted the *Three Well Known Australians* travelling exhibition through December and January. The work depicts three stick figure characters and viewers were invited to guess the identities and record their opinion in a yearbook. The artwork has been touring the country for 38 years.

Over the years, guesses have ranged from historic to popular culture, famous and infamous, serious and amusing people. While the exhibition was at Mandurah Museum 396 visitors saw the work and 28 people contributed to the year book. 71 of these visitors were children. Many of these children participated in creating a picture using geometric shapes and coloured paper.

If you missed seeing the display, it is at Bunbury Museum and travelling the south west of WA.



**Out of the Shadows
Tuckey Women**

We will be featuring the stories of several matriarchs from the Tuckey family who have had an impact on the history of Mandurah, including Mary-Ann Tuckey who worked as a post-mistress, Eliza Tuckey who ran the local school and Edith Tuckey who managed the Peninsula Hotel.

When: 11 March-30 April 2023
Opening Hours: Tuesday - Friday 10am - 4pm
 Saturday - Sunday 11am - 3pm
Cost: Free

Where:
 Mandurah Museum
 3 Pinjarra Road
 Mandurah WA 6210
 Phone: 9550 3683
mandurah.wa.gov.au

Museum Development Officer

The major project which the Museum will be undertaking in the next six months is an archaeological dig on a significant Mandurah heritage site. This follows on from our successful 2021 dig held at the back of the Museum near the door of the Dalrymple school room. We're currently deciding on the site for the dig. I'll outline a few possibilities which I've been asked to look at as potential sites.

Hall's Cottage Grounds



The cottage (also known as 'Dedallamup') was built by Henry Hall as the home for his family, who came to Western Australia in the Protector in February 1830 .

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Kevin Fowler reflects on Kimberley floods of 1963.

This interview between Kevin and Jan Baker was undertaken in 2004.

“One of the important things of course was the weather because the only way into Derby was generally by air or by ship. The roads were only dirt roads, and in fact, during the wet season the roads were impassable.

When I was up there in '63, the Queen in fact came to Broome on one of her visits and we couldn't get from Derby to Broome because the road was actually, the bridge was 30 feet under water.

The Fitzroy River had risen to over 30, because in those days the bridge didn't go across the top from one side to other. You actually went down almost along the bottom of the river bed and up the other side, so when the rivers were in flood, the whole area was unpassable. The road was so muddy. It was a red mud. In fact they had to leave their, the Main Roads had to leave their equipment on the Broome side of the Fitzroy River. They couldn't get it through to Derby and the equipment actually sank down and they put markers on the top and when the wet season had finished they dug, the grader had actually gone down 12 feet. So the top of the grader was 12 feet under the road and they dug it out.

What they then did, was knock over the big ant's nests and they were so hard. They were harder than concrete and they used to knock those over and drop them into the holes and that was how they patched the roads up, by using the ant's nests. Now they've got all weather strip. It's all been changed and they've built big bridges that go well above the rivers and that and there is now an all weather bitumen road right through to Derby.”



Photographs taken while a relation is working out of Derby with the Main Roads Department. These photographs taken mid—February at a time when the depth of the river was still 6 metres, there is no knowledge of what has happened to the old bridge which remains submerged.

After several years of hardship their first home and its contents were destroyed by fire. It was then, that Hall's Cottage was built, probably with the assistance of tradesmen and servants brought out by Hall from England. Further misfortune led the family to move to Perth in 1836, and Henry Hall to return to England in 1841 to acquire capital. At this time the cottage was leased to Thomas Watson, Mandurah's first mail contractor and an inn keeper. Later occupants included John Sutton and his family (1843),

Hall's cottage is one of the earliest homesteads in the district and is a fine example typifying the very earliest dwellings constructed by European settlers in the early years after the Swan River Colony was founded. Constructed of local limestone and originally roofed with hand-split she-oak shingles, the five-roomed cottage demonstrates a simplicity of construction and design. Although originally owned by the Halls, some of the earliest settlers in the area and a prominent Mandurah family, the cottage also has a close association with the Watsons and the Suttons, who contributed to the development of the Mandurah district. Located adjacent to the ferry across the Peel Inlet, Hall's Cottage was a local landmark during the development of Mandurah. The cottage is historically significant for its ability to demonstrate the lifestyle of early settlers and is highly valued by the Mandurah community.

Sundown Valley Farm

Henry Morfitt, born 1837 in England, was convicted at Leeds for larceny. He was at that time shown as an unmarried stonemason who was literate and Protestant. As he had previous convictions he was sentenced to ten years in Australia.

Henry arrived on the convict transport "Merchantman" on 15th February 1863, receiving a Ticket of Leave on 14th March 1863, followed by a conditional Pardon, 24th July 1865, and finally a Certificate of Freedom on 10 August 1870 while living in Mandurah. In 1872 at the age of 35 he married Matilda Eacott.



(Continued on page 7)

Writers in the Library – Dr Chris Berry

Join us for a fascinating talk with Dr Chris Berry about his book *To Dwell in Unity* on the history of Local Government in Western Australia.

2021 was the 150th anniversary of the first roads boards and municipalities, an important step in the creation of a comprehensive system of local government for Western Australia. The post-war period has seen the continued expansion of local government's role and the cementing of its place in developing the community. There have been many attempts at reforming local government, and that is an important part of the story, as are some of the personal stories of the characters and scoundrels who have been part of the remarkable story of local government in WA.

From humble beginnings, starting from scratch with limited revenue, infrastructure and capacity, local government has developed over the past 150 years to be an integral part of contemporary community life, employing thousands of people and providing vital and valued services to the community. From just six road boards and municipalities to a comprehensive system of 137 local governments of Western Australia. Discover how local government became more than just roads, rates and rubbish.

Dr Christopher Berry, born and educated in Perth, completed a Doctor of Philosophy in Geography in the 1980s at UWA on the topic of local government boundaries. Since then, he has worked in the local government sector in a variety of roles, including policy, funding, reform and regional development. He is currently working with the WA Local Government Grants Commission and the WA Local Government Association on road funding issues.

To Dwell in Unity was awarded the AE Williams - Lee Steere Prize of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society in 2022.

Light lunch will be served at 12.30pm.

Bookings are essential.

Where & When

Mandurah Museum

Thu, 9 March 2023

01:00 PM - 02:00 PM

About the Event



Silvina Lanyon
Business Woman and Theatre Proprietor:
Tracing her footsteps into
Western Australia 1903 - 1960



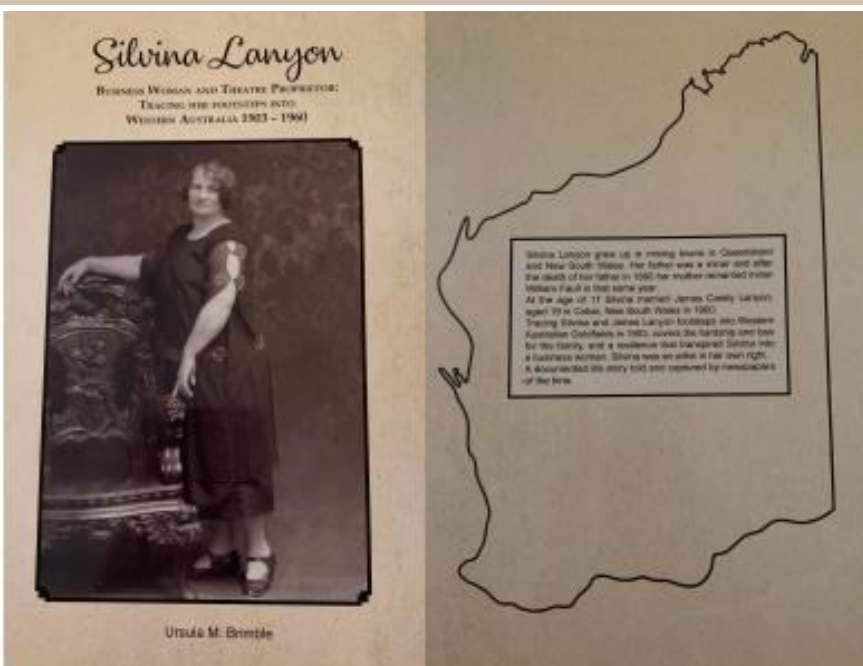
Silvina Lanyon challenged me to discover her story, and what led her to become successful in her business ventures leading to her eventual settlement in Mandurah, Western Australia.

The family's beginnings in the Western Australian Goldfields in 1903 were hard. Loss of a child and bankruptcy of her husband James and his father-in-law, did not help matters. Silvina's business of 'rooms to let and dining' did not go well. With five children to support and James away at war, led to Silvina finding a way to feed her family when they moved to Midland Junction.

Silvina's success in Midland Junction enabled her to expand the business, but with the burning of her grocery premises, the insurance payout gave her money to invest. This investment allowed her to buy a mobile projector and van. It is from this beginning that saw Silvina Lanyon move into the film industry in the Peel Region, establishing a guest-house, Picture Garden and building two Picture Theatres in Mandurah.

Aside from her business exploits, Silvina loved the 'Arts'. Cabaret dancing was one that she managed personally in her theatre. Oil painting was another and it showed her ability as an artist.

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**Copies of this book
are available at the
museum.**

**These books are
priced at
\$40.**

Volunteers are Priceless.

(Some Figures.)

Calculations for July 2022 – December 2022

Total number of Volunteer hours –

2,115.4 (July 2022 – December 2022)

As per the Volunteering Australia Report –

Value of Volunteering Support Services (2017)

Replacement Cost averaged by age demographic -

\$44.76/hours.

Calculated Value - \$94,658.30

This is the estimated value of all the hours undertaken by volunteers in the museum during one six month period.

It doesn't take into consideration extra hours which is spent by many volunteers by undertaking assistance while at home or in the community.

Halls Cottage Grounds

Cont. from page 3

Thomas Eacott arrived in Western Australia aboard the "Rockingham" in 1830. Thomas' wife, Elizabeth died in June of that year it is thought at Clarence. Thomas later married Charlotte Tuckey, daughter of John Tuckey, who also arrived aboard the "Rockingham". One of Thomas and Charlotte's daughters was Matilda born 7th November, 1852 in Mandurah.

Henry and Matilda had 11 children, when first coming to Mandurah Henry lived at Barragup. In c.1876 the family moved to an area near the estuary south of Mandurah in what is now considered Parkridge. It was from this home that he conducted fishing and took hunting parties out. Many old photographs of Mandurah show Henry in his occupation of fisherman. The family's homestead was once at the bottom of the hill but is now only marked by old fig trees.

We will have to develop our plans further, and with several other sites being looked at a decision will be made on which location is best in terms of what we may find and learn, along with the community participation which we can include as was such a successful part of our 2021 Museum dig. Stay tuned for more updates! **Nick Reynolds**

From the Editor. We bring to you the first newsletter for 2023, we seem to have been so busy that saying it is the first for this year seems strange. However, this is a bumper issue full of different articles and events.

The Friends held a committee meeting on Thursday 23rd of February, to discuss the up coming opening of a new exhibition in honour of Women's History Month. This year we celebrate several of the Tuckey wives who assisted their husbands so much and also achieved much in their own right. To lead into it, we open the newsletter with Evangeline Tuckey, first telegraphist/ postmistress of Mandurah.

Talking about post offices, led to a short research being done on telegraphy in West Australia, this features also in this issue.

For some years now, Mandurah Museum has collected oral histories of various people with memories of Mandurah. One of these was that of Kevin Fowler collected in 2003. In his history Kevin reported on some time he spent in the north, specifically in Derby. He experienced floods in 1963, so it seems appropriate to include these memories with some recent pictures in this newsletter. Fitzroy and the north will be many months before there is significant recovery, especially as the wet season continues to cause problems to those workers involved in repair.

It was decided to hold a talk relating to a book on Local Government at the museum, instead of the library. Many of you will know that the building next door to the museum was the first Roads Board building in Mandurah, after it ceased being a community hall. This building is now the Rangers Office. Dr Chris Berry will talk on his research on Local Government.

Capping off writers, there is news on a book published by one of the museum volunteers on her extensive research on Silvina Lanyon. The research in this book spans time in the Goldfields, in Midland Junction and extensively in Mandurah and surrounding areas.

Of course, we also bring to you, museum news from both Nick Reynolds our Museum Development Officer and Katrina Gauci the Education Officer.

Jan Baker.

**Mandurah 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

**Friends of Mandurah 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.