

SPRING IN THE HILLS

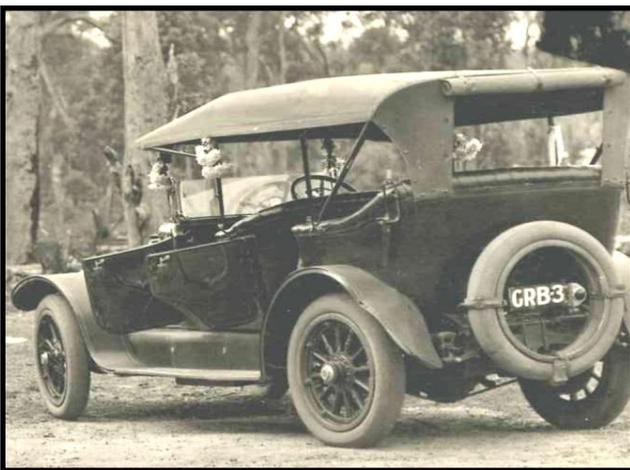
1st September is the First Day of Spring

Everyone loves springtime. The temperature is mild and air clean. Plants, bushes and trees are flowering and should be showing traces of green. What better place to be than the Perth Hills.

We are not the only ones to feel this way. In past times, picnickers flocked to the hills to partake of the clean fresh air and the beauty of the environment. Picnic trains were a regular sight. Mundaring saw special Picnic Trains steaming up from Perth to Mundaring Weir for a special price of 2s 6d, with children 'practically half fare'.

Train passengers would leap out of carriages with their picnic baskets and race down to the Weir wall and surrounding bush and river and set out their picnics under the trees or on the flat rocks.

Fruit and wildflower sellers did a brisk trade and there was even a photographer who would set up his tripod at the north end of the wall to take photographs of the day trippers. At one time there was also a brass band on the terrace where the O'Connor memorial now stands.



Above: This is the Cadillac belonging to Fred Jacoby which took the picnickers from Mundaring to Mundaring Weir.



Above: A picnic train at Mundaring Weir in 1941.

In 1916, on days the picnic train did not go all the way to the Weir, Mr Jacoby, the proprietor of the Mundaring Weir Hotel, offered a pick up service.

Picnickers were advised that if they took the train to Mundaring, then rang the post office at the Mundaring Weir, Mr Jacoby's motor car would meet you and take you to his establishment.

Hot water was offered at no cost, and milk and cream from the hotel's own dairy was available along with fruit and vegetables from their orchards and gardens.

Relaxing in the temperate weather amongst the majesty of the forest, enjoying produce picked fresh from the land must have been luxurious.

Did you know 1st September is also National Golden Wattle Day?

The day was introduced in 1913 and formally recognised in 1992. The Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) was unofficially accepted as the national floral emblem in 1901 and proclaimed as the National Emblem of Australia in 1988.

However, in WA it is now known as an environmental weed due to its invasive root structure.



From the Curator's Desk: How to Make an Exhibition

Have you ever thought about how a museum exhibition is created? With 'Head for the Hills: Chidlow's WW2 Army Camps' now open at the Mundaring District Museum, the processes involved in planning, researching, and installing an exhibition are still fresh in my head. So how is it done?

- 1. Have an idea!** All exhibitions start with an idea – but not all ideas are worth pursuing. It is important to consider the museum's target audience and to vary the types of exhibitions presented, thereby encouraging a diverse array of visitors. Linking displays to community celebrations and anniversaries works well but exhibitions that use intriguing items held by the Society or that tell untold stories of the region are also worthwhile. 'Earthwatch', for example, used some of the rare geophysical instruments that were donated to the MHHS by the Mundaring Geophysical Observatory when it closed in 1999.
- 2. Does the idea have legs?** The idea can only become an exhibition if there are items to display and/or intriguing stories to tell. The best idea in the world will only work if there are 'things' to show off. While the MHHS has some interesting items in its Collection, we generally do not have enough material to create an exhibition around one theme. Fortunately, the museum network in WA is fabulous and other collecting organisations are often willing to lend items for display – the Embroiderers' Guild, Australian Army Museum of WA, and the Royal West Australian Historical Society are especially generous. Private collectors also lend objects – sometimes very valuable ones! For example, the MHHS borrowed, for one day, C.Y O'Connor's 'levee dress' from his great-granddaughters for a museum exhibition. Along with objects to show, there must be stories to share. Preliminary research is essential to determine if there is enough content for an interesting exhibition.
- 3. From an idea to a design.** Having objects and stories to tell is step one, turning these into an exhibition requires developing a key message as well as main themes – this message is the golden thread that runs through the display. Finding an appropriate exhibition title is useful at this stage as it helps clarify the exhibition's focus - Diana Frylinck is the MHHS's go-to person for exhibition titles! This is also when I consider the exhibition's interpretive strategies – is there scope for oral histories, different media elements, and interactive components? A draft plan of the exhibition space is developed. Butcher's paper is an essential tool for all this!
- 4. Research, research and more research.** Now the hard slog begins. Depending upon the topic, I might spend time in the State Library, or in other public archives (for Bush Bounty I spent many hours in the Parks & Wildlife Library researching WA wildflower artists), researching the exhibition's themes and looking for interesting stories. It is important to place local stories within a broader historical context, so some general historical research on the topic is also required.



Talking also constitutes research - and there are always fascinating people with expert knowledge to consult. Peter Gregson, Observer-in-Charge of the Mundaring Geophysical Observatory for many years, was a wonderful source of information for 'Earthwatch'. Sometimes I record these interviews so that extracts can be used on the Listening Post in the Museum.



5. Designing the Posters. Now it's time to turn the research into posters with lots of pictures and not too many words. For someone who likes explaining EVERYTHING this can be difficult to implement, but most people lose interest after reading a couple of sentences so concise language is necessary. I use Canva, an online design program, to make the posters. These posters are edited and redrafted many many many times with other people checking the posters, and sometimes providing content. These posters tell the story of the exhibition and connect the narrative to the objects on display.

6. Stories without words. With the text of the exhibition written, developing the non-text aspects of the exhibition comes to the fore. This might include editing oral histories for the Listening Post, creating photo slideshows, or developing hands-on activities for the museum such as the 'fuzzy-felt' flowers for 'Bush Bounty'. Display case design is also part of this process. How will objects be organised, will each case have a theme, do I have too few or too many objects? The content and organisation of each case is photographed ready to be recreated in the museum. A final plan of the exhibition space is confirmed, with measurements of large objects checked to make sure everything will fit!

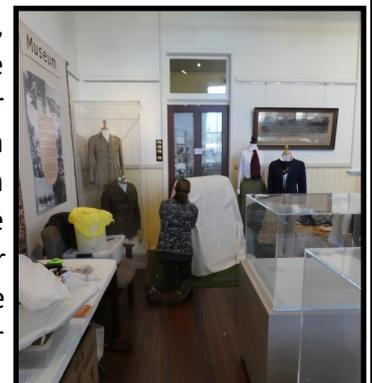


7. Taking Down and Setting Up. The old exhibition is usually removed three weeks prior to the opening date for the new exhibition. Objects are carefully packed and returned to lenders or to the Museum's collection room, exhibition posters are rolled up and stored to become part of the MHHS's archive along with other research materials.

Installing an exhibition takes a little longer than taking one down. Items lent by organisations and individuals are picked up just before the start of an exhibition – this is because we have very little storage space – documentation covering the loan is completed and filed. Posters are printed at Officeworks. New props for the exhibition are made ('Head for the Hills' required a new hessian wall panel), digital components of the display are installed, props such as carpets and mannequins retrieved from storage, labels for items in display cases are written.

8. The Final Countdown. The days prior to an opening are usually ones of controlled panic by the Curator – so much to do! Thankfully I am ably assisted by Fiona who is a whizz at sewing, climbing up ladders, and determining how to hang difficult objects such as parachutes and mosquito nets.

Posters are stitched onto panels or suspended from picture rails, display objects are positioned in cases or on the floor, labels are printed and attached to items, hessian or calico is used to cover unsightly props and anything else that looks out of place, media releases are posted on Facebook or sent to the local paper, and a banner announcing the new exhibition attached to the outside of the museum. Enough time needs to be left for the unexpected – a poster printed on the wrong material, the prop that doesn't work, or the audio that is too faint to hear. Eventually it all gets done, and another exhibition is installed and ready to open.



Ensure you visit 'Head for the Hills: Chidlow's World War 2 Army Camps'. It is at the Mundaring District Museum until 29 April 2021.

UPCOMING EVENTS 2020

DATE/TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
Saturday 19 September 10am	Tour of Hovea Sustenance Camp Tour Guide—Fiona Bush	Meet at Cnr Wedgetail Circle and Boronia Rd Parkerville . Bring your walking boots and wet weather gear!
23 September 4pm	Executive Meeting	Mundaring Stationmaster's House 3060 Jacoby St Mundaring
28 October 4pm	Executive Meeting	Mundaring Stationmaster's House 3060 Jacoby St Mundaring
Saturday 21 November 2020 2 pm	General Meeting	Venue—To Be Announced
Date to be announced	Christmas & End of Year Celebration!	Venue—To Be Announced



Seaborne Street runs north from Great Eastern Hwy approximately 2.5 kms to where it intersects with Riley Road. From here the continuing road becomes Byfield Road. It is the main access road into Parkerville and the location of the Recreation Ground, Pony Club Grounds, Parkerville Baptist Church and soon will be the location of a Church for the local Brethren community.

Seaborne Street was named after Albert Henry Seaborne who was the Stationmaster and Mail Receiver (there was no Post Office) in Parkerville from March 1900 to March 1902. While serving in Parkerville he was active in establishing a Sunday School for the local children.



Albert Seaborne is on the right.

MUNDARING DISTRICT MUSEUM
7225 Great Eastern Hwy Mundaring
Next to the Visitors' Centre
MONDAY - SATURDAY
9.30am - 4pm
SUNDAY
10am—2.30pm



**MUNDARING STATION
MASTER'S HOUSE
OFFICE HOURS**

MONDAY AND FRIDAY
9.30am - 4pm
WEDNESDAY
9.30am -1.30pm

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Senior/pensioner \$15 (Couple \$20)
Single \$25 (Couple \$30)
Company/Institution \$35

Acc: Mundaring & Hills Historical
Society Inc

BSB 633-000 Acc No 122609431

Please quote your surname in reference