

RAVENSTHORPE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT MARCH 2020

Once again it has been a very busy and productive year to be proud of.

Priority No 1 has been the RAVENSTHORPE STREET HERITAGE WALK TRAIL. Colin has built the picnic shelter and painted the roof over the table and benches on the upper level of the old railway station. This part of the project is now complete. Chenda, Madeleine and Ann met with Simon Russell, Technical Officer for the Shire and showed him where the plaques are to go which he recorded on his phone!

There were, however, some setbacks to get the plaques up by the 2019 Wildflower Show. The Shire did not accept the 25 plaques as they were. This meant that they were returned to Perth for graffiti coating. The Shire also refused us approval to use the jarrah pedestals made by the Hopetoun Men-in-Sheds and approved by the previous Shire staff. With help from my son Paul, Rob, Geoff, Andy, Derek and Joe Jones we made completely new pedestals from steel to the Shire's approved material and design. After many hours of intense hard work these were completed and painted by the members. The silver lining to this was the Cattlin Shed proved to be extremely workable as our own Men-in-Sheds. We thank Ravensthorpe Progress Association for their financial contribution for Dial-Before-Dig. Shire employee, Terry Dyszel, this week started digging the holes for the pedestals. We may have the plaques up for the Wildflower Show this year!

HAWKS NEST HERITAGE WALK TRAIL. During the year this project disappointedly has not progressed. Several meetings have been held with managers at Galaxy Lithium with virtually no result. Chenda and I marked out the car park turnaround area. Galaxy has not yet delivered the gravel as promised. I ran my grader round the site to direct away water. Graham Steel of the Shire Engineering Services took over the production of a Hawks Nest sign requesting visitors to the site to respect it. This came about as during the only wet spell we experienced in 2019 deep gouges were made by unknown big vehicle wheels near the Blacksmiths Tree. We are awaiting Galaxy to deliver gravel as promised to enable repairs to the done.

HEADS TRAIL SMELTER REMAINS. This relic was in the way of Galaxy mining and after consultation with us in 2018 they removed it to their house on Cattlin Street. As a result of the move, the smelter is collapsing. I have made

temporary support measures. It will need further urgent work in the very near future if it is to be saved.

BLACKSMITHS TREE. The tree looks very unhappy. Galaxy commissioned Terratree Pty Ltd who stated it was affected by dieback. We were not satisfied with this. Andy approached Tim Nolen, local tree expert who does not agree as the crown of the tree is still intact, but rather the tree could be suffering from lack of ground water or concentration of saline ground moisture.

MUSEUM EXTENSION. The official design drawings papers were signed, sealed, stamped and returned to Roger Veen. We have a successful Ravensthorpe Hopetoun Future Fund grant approval towards the cost of the extension. We are awaiting results of the Shire Budget for our request for Shire funding so that we can move forward. This also depends on the Shire fund application result from Building Better Regions for Ravensthorpe Cultural Centre.

Our project for this coming year is the 50th CELEBRATION OF RHS and MUSEUM. Plans are underway.

We have supported the following local events during the year:

- Joined Cocanarup Conservation Alliance and Andy represents us.
- Ravensthorpe Spring Festival when Rob drove the newly acquired Fordson Super Major in the Street Parade.
- We kept the Information Centre open seven days a week before, during and after the Wildflower Show and as usual loaned them our EFT machine.
- Ravensthorpe Expo in the Jubilee Park with a museum extension display and buggy competition.
- Feature display of No 1 Rabbit Proof Fence memorabilia at the Jerdacuttup Hall official lunch following the opening of the new Jerdacuttup to Condingup vermin proof fence by State Minister Alana McTiernan.
- Successful nomination of (local) Australian Citizen of the Year 2020 Jenny Chambers.

We welcomed one NEW MEMBER this year, Tony Keen. We are very pleased to have him join our team. Jessie Fairhead, as a result of Madeleine making Facebook posts, has joined us to help Enid with MOSAIC records.

At long last Gordon Halbert's gun has been returned to the museum by the police. It is now on the wall with the other decommissioned guns.

School Visits. Jerdacuttup Primary School and Ravensthorpe District High School pupils paid us visits. The children were full of enthusiasm and were in no hurry to leave. As a result of one putting her figure in the spinning wheel, we purchased a St John First Aid Kit.

From our ever-growing archives we continue to help numerous people, especially descendants who enquire about their forebearers who lived and worked in this area. We also receive interesting details to record from them.

Visitor numbers to the Visitor Centre continue to rise with 5,544 for 2019 from 5,065 in 2018. Thank you to all volunteers who keep the door open and perform a valuable service.

I would especially like to thank Colin Hughes for refurbishing the original Cocanarup woolpress and bringing it back to its original glory. It is now safely under cover in the Cattlin Shed after its travels around the Southwest.

As is the 'norm' we received many donations of objects, a Chamberlain C6100 Tractor from Larry Bolly, a large pin board from Julia Bell and numerous smaller items.

Madeleine will cover the financial situation of the society – which is very sound due to her great ability as a treasurer.

I would like to thank all members and their helpers for their valued contribution and outstanding interest in the valuable preservation of Phillips River Goldfield history for the good of those who will come after us.

Ian Dickinson

President

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