



Forrest seeks local history for Museum

Welcome to the inaugural newsletter of the Forrest Historical Society.

This group has recently been established to facilitate the gathering of historical memorabilia for the Forrest Museum. The Museum, located in the former Bureau of Meteorology building, was established in October 2004 by Bea Myers whom was the manager at the time.

Bea, through the willing support of Jen Ford at National Archives, has been very successful in gathering some extraordinary information and photographs of Forrest in times gone by. This has been supplemented by former residents also sending in their stories.

The Forrest Museum began with a few questions: How long has the hangar

been here? Why such a big runway out here? Does someone have a sick sense of humor calling somewhere on the Nullarbor Forrest? Then a grader driver and his friend travelled through Forrest. The friend, Stuart Shipard mentioned that his mother Joy (Miller) Shipard had worked at the Hostel as a maid in the early 1930's. The Hostel was used by the West Australian Airways (WAA) for the overnight stay of passengers traveling from Perth to Adelaide in DC-33 Hercules. Stuart and his brother David then provided fabulous accounts and photographs of their mothers time spent at Forrest. And from this chance meeting, the Museum was born.

The Museum now has sections pertaining to the life and times of WAA, the sealing of the runways in the 1940's, the occupation by Department of Civil Aviation

(DCA) in the former Hostel site, the railways and the Bureau of Meteorology. However, more memorabilia is needed.

We are keen to seek further information from persons or groups who have resided at Forrest during one period or another of its life. You never know who has spent time out here. Even Denis Cometti, the AFL football commentator, lived at Forrest as a child when his father worked for the DCA.

If you, or anyone you know, has any memorabilia, photographs or can even recall their time out here, please contact Jenny Kox by telephoning (08) 9022 6403 or by e-mail on info@forrestairport.com.au.

Our website at www.forrestairport.com.au also offers an overview of Forrest history and will soon have on-line access to this newsletter.

Thanks offered to willing contributors.

Many thanks must be offered to the growing number of willing contributors to the Forrest Museum. In particular, the following must be acknowledged for their time taken in providing memoirs and photos of their time at Forrest. The Shipard brothers, Graeme

Grieve, Andrew Forte, Arthur Rae, Brian Cleary, Alex Williams and Jen Ford are just some of the names of people who have generously donated time and articles for the Museum.

On the 8th March this year, the Museum had its official opening, when David Shipard travelled to Forrest to take part in the official opening ceremony.

David's commented in the visitors book "It has been my very great pleasure to have been able to make available to the museum my Mothers photographs. My Mother, Joy (Miller) Shipard valued the

memory of her time at Forrest, and would be thrilled that the photographic record of those early days have been displayed so well in this Museum. I am honoured to have been involved."

For those who have contributed to the development of the Museum, we offer a very hearty "thank-you" and hope that you can make the journey out to Forrest to see you memories so beautifully displayed.

A Museum Contributors honor board has now been made to proudly display the names of the major contributors to the Museum.



Bea Myers assists Davis Shipard (Right) in cutting the ribbon to officially open the Forrest museum. The commemorative occasion is overseen by Forrest local, Daryll Herbert.



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www.forrestairport.com.au

New Developments at Forrest

Since the inception of the Museum, a number of associated projects have also commenced. The first of these was the development of Forrest Postcards from photographs taken by Joy Miller (Shipard). These postcards were produced to celebrate the airports 75th Anniversary in 2004. The postcards sell for 50 cents each and have been snapped up by many a tourist.



We have also had a visit from Greg Wallace and Ross Chadwick of WA Museums. They provided useful information in progressing the Museum even further. Greg and Ross stayed a night in

one of our refurbished cottages in April and have been avid supporters of Forrest ever since.

Through the involvement of WA Museums, we have also initiated contact with the Heritage Council of WA. This is to look at the possibility of heritage listing of the hangar and the railway station.



The railway station is the last remaining of its type on the Trans-Continental Railway line and therefore an important part of history to try to preserve.

Come and Visit

Want to revisit Forrest (or make your inaugural trip out)? We'd love to see you here.

The best place to start is by checking out our website at www.forrestairport.com.au

The website offers trip information and has an on-line booking area catering for flying, driving and train travel.

If you don't have internet access, you can call us on (08) 9022 6403 to discuss travel options.

As Forrest is not a designated stop for the Indian Pacific, we need to know if you are traveling by train so that we can organise the train to stop here to enable you to disembark.

So plan a trip out. A cuppa is always at the ready and the biscuit barrel is always full of home-made treats.

See you soon!