

The Claremont Museum - interpretation for the future: making  
meaning in a museum without walls



Prepared for the Claremont Museum

by

Lorraine Fitzpatrick

*vade mecum*



cultural industries research, planning  
& management

and

Peter Kenyon

BANK OF I.D.E.A.S.

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## Executive Summary and Recommendations

The Town of Claremont is rich in heritage and historic strengths. Its Museum is one of the valued icons of the Town of Claremont. The Museum has enabled the Town of Claremont to both house and exhibit an extensive and unique local heritage collection and to provide other important heritage services in terms of education programs, a research facility, organisation of special events and support for community heritage initiatives.

This interpretation and marketing plan, based on extensive community and stakeholder consultation and research, seeks to provide direction for how this facility and the Town of Claremont can further strengthen the unique contribution that heritage provides to Claremont, both as a tourism asset and community culture building tool. This plan highlights 33 recommendations related to -

- interpretation,
- marketing,
- resourcing,
- collection storage,
- volunteer development, and
- youth involvement

### (a) Interpretation

#### Recommendation 1 (p.8)

The significance of the Claremont Museum and its value and contribution to the community be recognised and the Town of Claremont continue to support the Museum, at a minimum, at its current level of funding.

Cost: Neutral

#### Recommendation 2 (p.10)

The significance of Claremont's heritage storylines be acknowledged and resources secured for their appropriate interpretation and promotion.

Cost: Neutral

#### Recommendation 3 (p.11)

The Town of Claremont adopt the concept of 'A Museum without Walls' and develop an action plan for its implementation.

Cost: Neutral

#### Recommendation 4 (p.28)

The Claremont Museum adopt the four broad interpretation themes of Family, Work/Education, Recreation and Environment.

Cost: Neutral

#### Recommendation 5 (p.11)

Given the heritage value of the Claremont railway station buildings and infrastructure, the Town of Claremont pursue the acquisition of the Claremont Railway Station buildings.

Cost: Under negotiation

#### Recommendation 6 (p.12)

The Claremont Museum pursue occupation of the Railway Station complex for 2006 and develop a plan for the installation of an exhibition at the Claremont Railway Station to celebrate the three anniversaries of Claremont's railway heritage. Support for this initiative should be sought from the Town of Claremont, the Public Transport Authority, Lotterywest and Healthways.

Cost: \$14,000

**Recommendation 7 (p.13)**

The Town of Claremont adopt the standard policy of ensuring that any significant redeveloped space or building incorporates imaginative and effective interpretation that reflects its past uses and its importance to the residents of Claremont.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 8 (p.12)**

The Town of Claremont ensure that negotiations take place with the developers of the new Town Centre that lead to an agreement for the incorporation of suitable spaces for small exhibitions and other methods of interpretation reflecting Claremont's social and cultural heritage be built in to any redevelopment that takes place.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 9 (p.32)**

The Claremont Museum, together with the Town of Claremont, implement the recommended actions for interpretation of each of the following: Claremont Museum; Claremont Railway Station and Signal Cabin; Mrs Herbert's Park/Foreshore; Lake Claremont; new Claremont town centre; Bay View Terrace; Royal Agricultural Society showgrounds; heritage trails; Lakeway drive-in.

Cost: \$160,000 over 5 years

**(b) Marketing**

**Recommendation 10 (p.19)**

The Claremont Museum review its contribution to visitor attraction to Claremont and consider the introduction of new initiatives / improvements related to promotions and activities.

Cost: \$40,000 over 3 years

**Recommendation 11 (p.21)**

The Claremont Museum invest in actions and advertising that enhance visibility, welcome and positive first impressions.

\$40,000 over 3 years

**Recommendation 12 (p.17)**

The Claremont Museum continually and systematically seek feedback from specific Museum user target groups.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 13 (p.21)**

The Town of Claremont eliminate any entry fee to the Museum.

Cost: \$1,200

**Recommendation 14 (p.18)**

The Town of Claremont to expand on its current new resident 'welcome' strategy and kit with an event held at Mrs Herbert's Park and the Claremont Museum.

Cost: \$2,000

**(c) Resourcing**

**Recommendation 15 (p.13)**

The Town of Claremont explore current staff arrangements and responsibilities in the culture and heritage areas, seeking more effective linkages, synergies and outcomes.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 16 (p.43)**

Museum staff collectively examine current staff responsibilities and Museum functions, and examine options for change.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 17 (p.18)**

The Claremont Museum examine ways to restructure and increase staffing and budget to coordinate a series of new initiatives aimed at improving local awareness and usage of the Museum site and services.

Cost: Strategy development is cost neutral

**Recommendation 18 (p.46)**

That one member of Claremont Museum / Town of Claremont staff be given the specific responsibility to maintain a continuous monitoring role of all relevant funding processes.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 19 (p.43)**

Council review its policy of all generated income being absorbed into consolidated revenue.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 20 (p.46)**

The Town of Claremont provide maximum budget flexibility to the managers of the Claremont Museum to ensure the design and implementation of special initiatives.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 21 (p.43)**

The Claremont Museum be proactive in exploring collaborative arrangements with other Council and community groups.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 22 (p.44)**

The Town of Claremont provide the leadership for the instigation of a Freshwater Bay Community Foundation.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 23 (p.13)**

The Town of Claremont explore the concept of widening the catchment area of the Claremont Museum, and undertake discussion with neighbouring Councils for support.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 24 (p.46)**

The Western Suburbs Regional Group of Councils investigate the employment of a sponsorship and funding officer to work across the six participating councils.

Cost: \$60,000 per annum to be absorbed between participating councils.

**(d) Collection Storage**

**Recommendation 25 (p.39)**

The Claremont Museum increase its on-site storage space by expanding the current storage area into the cart shed and removing the current entrance to one from within the cart shed.

Cost: \$50,000

**Recommendation 26 (p.40)**

The Town of Claremont to assist the Claremont Museum to, at a minimum upgrade the off-site storage shed to provide a solid concrete floor, doors sealed to prevent the ingress of insects and vermin and more shelving to remove objects from sitting on the floor.

Cost: \$30,000

The Town of Claremont to instruct works depot to ensure that the space around the entry to both off-site storage areas be kept clear at all times.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 27 (p.40)**

The Claremont Museum seek funding to undertake a needs analysis for the current and future storage requirements of its three collections and give consideration to doing this in partnership with the Subiaco Museum.

Cost: Neutral

**(e) Volunteer Development**

**Recommendation 28 (p.46)**

The Claremont Museum staff annually review the level of volunteer appreciation.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 29 (p.47)**

The Town of Claremont instigate a 'Skills and Passion' Audit of its local residents and Claremont Museum utilise this resource for direct approaches to residents to contribute to specific tasks / programs.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 30 (p.47)**

That the Claremont Museum explore the use of Task Teams with a defined purpose and timeframe to instigate new initiatives and special events.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 31 (p.48)**

The Claremont Museum apply for the National Volunteer Awards in 2006.

Cost: Neutral

**(f) Youth Involvement**

**Recommendation 32 (p.20)**

The Claremont Museum focus on the challenge of the lack of youth interest and, in collaboration with the Youth Advisory Committee, implement a range of activities designed to improve the participation and visitation of young people.

Cost: Neutral

**Recommendation 33 (p.47)**

The Town of Claremont provide a budget to the Youth Advisory Committee to undertake museum related projects involving young people at the Claremont Museum. Projects should be developed in consultation with Museum staff.

Cost: \$7,500

## 1.0 Introduction

The stone and weatherboard building at 66 Victoria Avenue, now a part of the Claremont Museum complex has variously functioned, since its building in 1862, as a school for the sons and daughters of some of the district's first settlers, a place of religious worship, a boarding house, police station, residence for police personnel and a museum. This one small building contains within it connections to some of the most enduring historical threads that have shaped contemporary Claremont.

Since opening in 1975, the Claremont Museum has grown to include a cart shed (completed in 1978), administration building (opened 1983), a collection store (completed in 1987), dedicated education centre (completed in 1993) and the relocated, intact Mews boat shed, housed in a larger purpose built galvanised iron shed (opened 1996).<sup>1</sup> In addition the site contains a traditional post and rail fence built in 1983 to show visitors the historical method of construction.<sup>2</sup>

There is no question that the Claremont Museum is one of the valued icons of the Town of Claremont, and the complex and its range of functions are highly regarded by many Claremont residents. Its value and uniqueness includes the following -

- it contains one of Western Australia's oldest school buildings (Freshwater Bay School, built 1862);
- it is a significant local government achievement, being the first Council initiated museum in WA and the first metropolitan Council owned museum;
- the professionalism and achievements of Claremont Museum staff are recognised at state and national levels;
- it has an significant collection of over 9,000 objects related specifically to Claremont history;
- the collection has been built and managed by professionally trained staff so there is recorded information about the former use and ownership of the artefacts;
- it contributes to greatly enhancing the village character of the area through providing a comprehensive range of services to the local community such as:
  - providing a public museum that celebrates Claremont's heritage,
  - ensuring that significant local history artefacts remain in Claremont and that the family stories and histories that are associated with these objects are also collected,
  - providing an extensive local history collection and research facility,
  - developing and running school education programs,
  - identifying and supporting local heritage initiatives, and
  - organising special events and exhibitions that expand and promote Claremont's history.
- It is located at a prominent site by the river and adjoining a popular family park;
- it enjoys strong volunteer support;
- it has an active Friends of the Museum group;
- it provides input to other community heritage initiatives.

The Museum has always functioned as more than just a traditional museum site for visitors. In fulfilling its stated goal of - '*Servicing the community through the provision of a professional museum of social history*', it has pursued such objectives as -

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<sup>1</sup> Bodycoat, Ron, Denise Cook & Gaye Nayton, *Claremont Museum Conservation Plan*, 2005

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

- *'to undertake appropriate research on the collections and of the local area;*
- *to produce educational materials that reflect the origin and social history of the area;*
- *to produce public programmes that enrich the lives and knowledge of residents; and*
- *to encourage community participation, including involvement in heritage issues and preservation'.*

The Friends of the Claremont Museum Group has sought to - *'stimulate, sustain interest in, support and promote the Claremont Museum and to enhance its cultural significance'*, but has also pursued wider and higher level objectives such as -

- *'to develop the historical character of the district of Claremont'* and
- *'to develop a sense of identity within the district of Claremont through an appreciation of its history'.*

### **Recommendation**

**The significance of the Claremont Museum and its value and contribution to the community be recognised and the Town of Claremont continue to support the Museum, at a minimum, at its current level of funding.**

## **2.0 Town of Claremont Community Cultural Plan**

The Town of Claremont's Community Cultural Plan has as its principle aim *'to inform Council and the community of cultural development initiatives and to foster the unique cultural qualities that are represented within, and are of great importance to the Town of Claremont'*.

As one reflects on the nine key elements that provide the basis for the plan, it is obvious that the Claremont Museum is the key Council resource to implement its plan. All nine element themes - *'Cultural Choices', 'Learning About Our Culture', 'Venues', 'Local Identity', 'Preservation of Our Cultural Heritage', 'Cultural Diversity', 'Culture and the Local Economy', 'Participation in Local Activities' and 'Public Involvement'*, can all be explored through the Museum and its resources and activities. It is important that the Cultural Plan does not remain just another document on a shelf, but rather one that informs strategic directions for continued community cultural development in Claremont.

## **3.0 New Directions**

In 2005, as the Claremont Museum celebrated its thirtieth year of operation, the occasion provides an excellent opportunity to re-evaluate its current roles and contribution and examine the potential for new directions.

In regard to this substantial asset to the Town of Claremont, the challenge for the Council for the future is threefold -

1. How to utilise this unique Council owned resource more effectively within its core business, assisting Council to achieve its mission, vision and key result areas?
2. How to build upon the reputation and outcomes achieved over the last thirty years to enhance public awareness and usage of the Museum resource?
3. How to respond to a number of *'windows of opportunity'*, several of which require immediate attention or the opportunity will be lost forever?

Firstly, there is no doubt that the Claremont Museum is an essential resource for the Town of Claremont in achieving its stated mission, vision and key result areas. The Mission of the town is simply -

*'To develop a vibrant, harmonious and safe village. Embracing the future, respecting the past'.*

The concept of maintaining a village like atmosphere is prominent in the Claremont mindset. The Council Vision Statement includes the statement - *'we will strive to create a community around a village concept'.*

The Council's Strategic Plan (2000) reinforces this focus with Council committed to - *'preserving our heritage for the enjoyment of the community', and 'to manage growth and development that will enhance the Town's village atmosphere and respect its heritage and streetscape'.*

Local heritage appreciation and promotion are acknowledged internationally as a powerful tool in building a sense of village, a sense of community and community pride.

The resources of the Claremont Museum and the expertise of its staff provide the Town of Claremont with an exceptional tool to achieve their stated goals. Simply, the Claremont Museum needs to be viewed and utilised as a significant resource for the achievement of Council core business.

Secondly, there is no question that there is a need to expand public awareness and usage of the Museum's resources and activities. More effective and relevant ways to market the Museum need to be adopted and resourced. Approaches that target three specific groups, namely Claremont residents, visitors to the district of Claremont and students/young people need specific attention. Suggestions for discussion are the subject of the next chapter of this Report.

Thirdly, a range of *'windows of opportunity'* currently exist for enhancing the heritage contribution to the quality of life for Claremont residents, and to the promotion of Claremont as a business and tourism destination. Many of these *'windows of opportunity'* are interrelated and have implications for the budgeting and staffing priorities of Council. In summary, the following six *'windows of opportunity'* require a response by the leadership of the Town of Claremont:

### **3.1 Recognition and greater promotion of Claremont's unique heritage assets**

Recognition of the uniqueness of Claremont as a heritage location within metropolitan Perth: a destination with many storylines that should be promoted both as a source of community pride and as an appealing tourism product. Claremont district can rightly claim a high level of Western Australian historical significance in regard to such themes as -

- **Nyungar history -**
  - heritage sites and names
  - connections to Freshwater Bay
  - connections to Lake Claremont
  
- **Convict history -**
  - Convict Depot
  - connection to the construction of the Perth to Fremantle road
  - buildings and relics (e.g. the Freshwater Bay School)
  
- **Military heritage-**
  - Enrolled Pensioner Guards were the first residents
  - World War 1 training site for the 10<sup>th</sup> Light Horse regiment and other units (e.g. 16<sup>th</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> Battalions)
  - World War 2 training site and Volunteer Defence Corps
  
- **Educational heritage -**
  - first school between Perth and Fremantle
  - greatest concentration of private education institutions in Western Australia

- home of teacher education in Western Australia (Claremont Teachers College, Graylands Teachers College)
- **Agricultural heritage -**
  - 9.5 acre lots at Lake Claremont were allocated to Enrolled Pensioner Guards for cultivation
- **Royal Agricultural Show history -**
  - largest attended event in Western Australia's calendar of special events
  - over 100 years of operation
- **Transport heritage -**
  - the Perth - Fremantle road
  - 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fremantle - Guildford Eastern Railway line (2006)
  - 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Claremont Railway Station (2006)
  - 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Claremont Railway Signal Cabin (2006)
  - only complete collection of original railway buildings in metropolitan area
- **Architectural heritage -**
  - 98 nineteenth century buildings
  - Art Deco examples
  - distinctive housing estates
  - home and contribution of George Temple-Poole
  - contribution of Edwin and Reginald Summerhayes
- **Retail heritage -**
  - prominence of Bay View Terrace as a shopping destination
  - famous businesses - Drabble's Hardware, Claremont Drapers, Bovell's Pies, Jacobson's Pharmacy, Furniss Bicycles
- **Sport / Recreation heritage -**
  - Freshwater Bay - yachting, swimming
  - Claremont Baths
  - Claremont Football Club
  - Claremont Raceway
  - Lakeway Drive - In
- **Mental Health history -**
  - Claremont Hospital for the Insane
- **Crime history -**
  - Eric Edgar Cooke, the last person hanged in Western Australia
  - Claremont murders
- **Personalities -**
  - famous families (e.g. Butler, Sandovers, Haslucks etc)
  - famous characters (e.g. the annual wandering duck with her ducklings that stops traffic, Mrs Bovell selling pies from her pram during the Depression etc.).

Each of the above themes provides exciting opportunities for interpretation, promotion and heritage tourism. Each theme is a strand of Claremont's culture and has potential to contribute to building community pride and a strong sense of "the village". Implications for the Town of Claremont relate to the facilitation role of the museum staff in developing the opportunities, and the financial commitment for the expression of those opportunities through developing exhibitions, staging events, installing interpretative signage, commissioning public art and creating heritage walk and drive trails.

### **Recommendation**

**The significance of Claremont's heritage storylines be acknowledged and resources secured for their appropriate interpretation and promotion.**

### 3.2 The 'Museum Without Walls' Concept

Currently, the Claremont Museum is viewed by most residents as a site at 66 Victoria Avenue. Given the diversity of the physical heritage product spread throughout the Claremont district, as summarised in the themes above, and the range of off-site activities that museum staff have instigated (e.g. street histories, walking trail, Railway Signal Cabin Project, etc.), the Town of Claremont needs to consider broadening the vision of the museum as being more than one geographic site.

While 66 Victoria Avenue provides an ideal administration, education and research base and excellent venue to portray local history related to themes associated with the buildings (e.g. education, police, religion, boat building, etc.), greater resident and visitor appreciation of Claremont's heritage could be achieved by developing a much more diverse range of sites. This could vary from the use of other buildings (e.g. Claremont Railway Station) to discrete exhibition spaces (e.g. retail exhibitions within the proposed new shopping centre development, foyer of Claremont Teachers College, etc.) to public art (e.g. sculptures capturing retail personalities and other Claremont "histories" in Bay View Terrace and within the proposed new shopping centre development) to interpretive displays and/or signage providing information on important Claremont history storylines (e.g. Nyungar connections with various sites through the district, agricultural display at Lake Claremont, interpretation reflecting the history of the Claremont drive-in theatre etc.). A plan that provides guidelines for exhibitions, interpretation, signage and related publications to ensure that there is integration and linkages made between each of the diverse sites and interpretive methods will create a 'museum without walls' in Claremont.

A 'museum without walls' can also include temporary or mobile displays. Claremont's rich mosaic of organisations lends itself to special celebrations or events exhibitions.

Such a conceptual change implies a mindset shift and change to staff roles together with the securing of additional financial resources (not necessarily from within the Town of Claremont budget!).

#### **Recommendation**

**The Town of Claremont adopt the concept of 'A Museum without Walls' and develop an action plan for its implementation.**

### 3.3 Claremont Railway Station

The Claremont Railway Station buildings and infrastructure have immense heritage value as they are the only complete collection of original railway buildings in Perth. 2006 represents a series of milestones for the Railway precinct area. It is the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Fremantle - Guildford Railway Line, the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Claremont Railway Station building and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Claremont Railway Station Signal Cabin. These events provide an opportunity for an approach to the Public Transport Authority (under whom the former Westrail now operates) to utilise the buildings for a year for the installation of exhibitions. However, the long term objective should be the transfer of ownership of the railway station buildings and infrastructure to the Town of Claremont for inclusion in extended museum initiatives.

#### **Recommendation**

**Given the heritage value of the Claremont railway station buildings and infrastructure, the Town of Claremont pursue the acquisition of the Claremont Railway Station buildings.**

### **Recommendation**

**The Claremont Museum pursue occupation of the Railway Station complex for 2006 and develop a plan for the installation of an exhibition at the Claremont Railway Station to celebrate the three anniversaries of Claremont's railway heritage. Support for this initiative should be sought from the Town of Claremont, the Public Transport Authority, Lotterywest and Healthways.**

### **3.4 Town Centre Redevelopment**

The proposed redevelopment of the heart of Claremont's retail centre provides a wonderful '*window of opportunity*' to develop an attractive and people centred '*Town Heart*'. Central to the achievement of a '*Town Heart*' is the inclusion of expressions of what the Claremont community values. Personalities and moments of pride, significance or interest from the town's history should be a key focus.

Currently, there are a number of excellent objects and exhibitions held by the Claremont Museum that could be incorporated into pedestrian spaces in both the new town centre and Bay View Terrace in creative ways that would also provide appropriate levels of protection for the exhibitions. Examples of such exhibitions include the barber's shop, the "square man - square deal" figure, the bootmaker's shop and the butcher's cart.

It is vital that negotiations with developers include agreement on the creation of a number of appropriate exhibition spaces. It is recommended that these spaces be around 3m<sup>2</sup> and are fitted out to ensure that any objects from the Claremont Museum collection are able to be provided with a professional level of care and protection. Historical objects have specific requirements while on display to ensure that they remain in the best possible condition. These include an environment that has the temperature controlled to between 18°C-22°C and a relative humidity level at between 47.5%-52.5%; protection from UV radiation; protection from dust, air-borne pollutants and insect infestation; protection from handling by the public, protection from theft and good ventilation.

Exhibition spaces should also be lit with museum standard lights such that the light and radiation levels can be controlled or with fibre optic lights. Paper, photographs and textiles should not be subjected to light greater than 50 lux and other objects to light greater than 200 lux. It may be that exhibition spaces in a retail centre would not be suitable for the display of paper based objects, photographic material or textiles. Final decisions on these matters would be made by the Claremont Museum's professional museum staff.

In addition, redevelopment of the retail centre could provide an opportunity for the commissioning of public art works that relate to Claremont's heritage.

### **Recommendation:**

**The Town of Claremont ensure that negotiations take place with the developers of the new Town Centre that lead to an agreement for the incorporation of suitable spaces for small exhibitions and other methods of interpretation reflecting Claremont's social and cultural heritage be built in to any redevelopment that takes place.**

### **3.5 Redevelopment Sites**

Besides the central business area, a number of other Claremont sites will undergo change and redevelopment over the next 18 months. These include:

- Claremont Teacher's College
- the Lakeway Drive-In site
- the Claremont Football Ground

- Swanbourne Primary School.

Such redevelopment provides a '*window of opportunity*' for imaginative interpretations of previous uses. It is vital that the Town of Claremont ensure such interpretation occurs, and contributes to its 'museum without walls' concept.

**Recommendation:**

**The Town of Claremont adopt the standard policy of ensuring that any significant redeveloped space or building incorporates imaginative and effective interpretation that reflects its past uses and its importance to the residents of Claremont.**

### 3.6 Evolution of the Claremont Museum into a Freshwater Bay Museum

Given the current state focus and interest in local government restructuring and resource sharing, the Town of Claremont considers the opportunity for the Claremont Museum to enlarge its catchment area to reflect the history of the Freshwater Bay area and the western suburbs. Obviously, such a step would require financial contributions from other participating Councils.

**Recommendation:**

**The Town of Claremont explore the concept of widening the catchment area of the Claremont Museum, and undertake discussion with neighbouring Councils for support.**

### 4.0 Staff Re-organisation

All of the above '*windows of opportunity*' have implications for current staffing levels and responsibilities. Change always involves the question '*Is there a smarter or more effective way to function?*'. With all of the above '*windows of opportunity*', there also exists the opportunity to explore whether there are possibilities for more effective staff arrangements, at a variety of levels, for example,

- possibilities for rearrangement of duties within the museum staff team - e.g. creation of an exhibitions/special events coordinator, less involvement with supervising visitors through modifications and changes to exhibitions,
- possibilities for rearrangement of staff and responsibilities within the Town of Claremont - e.g. the creation of a Culture and Heritage Team involving museum staff, the heritage officer and cultural development staff, better synergies between museum and library responsibilities etc,
- possibilities for regional staff resource sharing (especially if the museum expanded its catchment focus to include Freshwater Bay/western suburbs).

**Recommendation:**

**The Town of Claremont explore current staff arrangements and responsibilities in the culture and heritage areas, seeking more effective linkages, synergies and outcomes.**

After 30 years of operation, the Claremont Museum can feel incredibly proud of its vision and achievements. It represents a significant resource to the Town Council of Claremont and its ratepayers. However, like all dynamic organisations, it and the Town of Claremont need to continuously reflect upon current '*windows of opportunity*' and whether there are smarter and more effective ways to function. It truly is a crossroads occasion, a time for decision making about opportunities, priorities and directions.

## 5.0 The Claremont Museum - Situation Analysis

### 5.1 Background

Claremont Museum is situated on Freshwater Bay on the edge of the Swan River in Claremont. Its nucleus is the Freshwater Bay School built in 1862. The Museum buildings are adjacent to a well utilised park that has recreational facilities including children's playground equipment, barbeques and picnic tables (see Appendix 2 for a site map).

In 1850 the first contingent of convicts arrived in Western Australia, accompanied by Enrolled Pensioner Guards. Land on Freshwater Bay was allocated to Pensioner Guards: blocks of nine and a half acres around Butler's Swamp and half an acre along the Swan River. It was on one of these half-acre blocks that the Freshwater Bay School was built using stone quarried by convicts who were stationed in the district building and repairing the Perth-Fremantle Road. The school building was also used for occasional church services.

By the 1880s the school and church had moved closer to the centre of Claremont and the building was being used as a boarding house for young men. Around 1900 it became a police residence and this continued until the early 1970s.

In 1975 the site was established as a museum and craft centre. The original stone building with weatherboard extensions was renovated to house the Museum, focusing on the history of the local Claremont area.

Within the Museum, the schoolroom has been recreated, as has the washhouse from the time the building was used as a police residence. Another room houses vignette recreations of shops that once existed on Bay View Terrace. The former teacher's room (and later kitchen in the police residence) houses a temporary display on youth in Claremont.

The Museum also has one room dedicated to local history research. It contains an extensive collection of newspaper clippings, oral history transcripts, research notes, Council rate books and minutes (on microfilm), post office directories and books on local history. A good collection of photographs is accessible via the museum Mosaic database.

The Museum has a separate office which was built when the Museum and craft centre were established in the 1970s.

In the complex, a weatherboard shed houses the Cordins butcher's cart from Bay View Terrace in Claremont as well as storage cupboards and other stored items. Adjoining the cartshed is an Education Room set up as a kitchen but also including the display of many objects held in the museum's education collection. Behind the cartshed is a small dedicated storage space for objects held in the museum collection.

In 1996 the Mews boatshed, from 8 Victoria Avenue, was relocated to the edge of the river next to the Museum and housed within a purpose-built galvanised iron shed. The contents of the shed are set up as they were in the boatshed with some background sound as well as audio on demand.

The Town of Claremont has employed paid Museum staff since the late 1980s. There are currently four part-time staff: the Museum Manager and Curator, Education Officer, and two Museum Officers. There are also around twenty volunteers who are involved in tasks as varied as education activities for school groups, digitally photographing the collection, conservation work, accessioning, clipping local newspapers for the local studies research collection, and repairing education items.

## 5.2 Education

The Claremont Museum has been diligent in developing and providing an educational experience for primary age children. A hands-on education programme attracts large numbers of school students to the Museum. Some of the important infrastructure that the museum has put in place includes:

- Dedicated areas where groups of children can participate in activities that are connected with organised school visits (i.e. the school room and the kitchen activity area). Activities offered include the Schoolroom, Food Preservation, Games of the Past, Wash Day, Butter Making, Scones, Paper Cutting, Rag Mats, Lemon Cordial, Sewing and Darning, Candle Making and Museum Walk through/Tour.
- School programs that are based on the learning outcomes for the Western Australian Curriculum Framework.
- An “education collection” that consists of objects that can be used and touched by visiting school groups.
- Information resources for teachers that are provided to interested teachers to assist them with pre and post visit activities.
- A trained education officer and volunteers who run the education activities, interact with the students and answer questions.

Without doubt, the Claremont Museum is both an excellent metropolitan educational visitor destination, as well as the source of a valuable range of services for the residents of the Claremont district.

## 5.3 Current Visitors

The Claremont Museum attracts three broad target groups, namely -

- Claremont district residents;
- Visitors to the Claremont district; and
- School groups.

During 2004, general museum visitors numbered 410, research visitors numbered 40, research requests numbered 124, and 1726 students from 23 schools participated in the education program. Generally speaking these numbers are relatively low. It should be noted that visitor numbers at the Claremont Museum have been higher in years gone by however an analysis of what factors influenced visitor numbers in past years is beyond the scope of this report which deals instead with current visitation and recommendations for improvement in the current socio-economic climate within which the Claremont Museum operates.

## 5.4 Challenges facing the Claremont Museum

There are a number of challenges now facing the Claremont Museum. One of the biggest issues facing the museum is that it has outgrown the space and the buildings that it occupies. There are competing requirements for adequate space to carry out all of the activities of a good museum including

- the interpretation of the history of the museum site,
- the interpretation of the history of the district,
- education activities for children and students,
- public programs for adults,
- collection management including quarantining recently acquired objects, accessioning objects,
- carrying out preservation and conservation work,
- storage,
- new exhibition preparation,

- managing and storing a growing local studies research collection and
- managing and storing a growing education collection.

These issues need to be addressed in a variety of ways including using the grounds of the museum site to interpret some of the history of the site and by enabling the history of the site and of the district to co-exist alongside the important education activities that take place at the site. The museum's storage requirements will continue to grow as the three collections it currently houses continue to grow. A specific storage needs analysis study should be undertaken to assess future needs and possible solutions to the problem of inadequate museum collection storage spaces.

A second challenge is to significantly raise awareness of the museum and its services and increase usage. Throughout the consultation process, many current users or contributors to the museum lamented that the museum was *'one of those best kept secrets'* and its greatest challenge is simply *'getting people through the door'*.

Consultation within the broader community, and outside of the regular current users or contributors, was even more revealing. A group of mothers gathering in Mrs Herbert's Park shared a range of common agreed reactions regarding their perceptions of the Claremont Museum. In their words -

- *'does not look like it's open'*;
- *'not sure if it welcomes kids'*;
- *'unsure of entry point'*; and
- *'toilets in the park are always gross'*.

For any museum the challenge of getting return visitation is very real. For example, recently opened major museums in Australia have experienced a decline of 23% - 35% in their visitor numbers from year one to year two of operation. Recent research undertaken has shown that there are certain critical success factors that ensure museums maintain high visitation. These include:<sup>3</sup>

- being guided by a thorough understanding of who the visitors are likely to be, including those who currently visit and those who do not but may well do given the right circumstances;
- delivering high standards of visitor service across every facet of the museum including the car park, reception, exhibitions, interaction with museum staff, rest rooms and on-site amenities;
- being open, transparent and accessible to ensure community engagement and involvement with correspondingly high levels of trust, pride and loyalty;
- adopting creative, targeted and convincing marketing and communication strategies;
- being acknowledged as an iconic site, experience and destination that captures the imagination and loyalty of visitors;
- delivering interactive experiences that are engaging and meaningful and foster understanding, pride, creativity and inspiration for visitors;
- developing an empathy with visitors that provides the basis for creating a meaningful and lasting relationship that fosters in the visitor, a unique sense of belonging to the museum;
- offering a facility that invites people to meet, stay, explore and enjoy for minutes, hours or a full day in a gathering place that entertains, informs and inspires and

<sup>3</sup> Sourced from several references including:

*A Manifesto for Museums: Building Outstanding Museums for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. UK Museum Association. May 2004.  
*Energised, Engaged, Everywhere: Older Australians and Museums - Recommendations*. A joint publication by the Australian Museum and the National Museum of Australia, Canberra. December 2003.  
 Ferguson L., *Segmentation for Success*. Australian War Memorial, Canberra.  
 Fewster, K, *What's new? Demands, Demographics and Distractions: The changing relationship with museum audiences*. Powerhouse Museum  
 Kelly, L., *Who Visits Museums?* Australian Museum, June 2002.  
 Scott, C. and Kelly L., *Audiences to Regional, Local and Specialist Museums*. Powerhouse Museum and Australian Museum.  
*Understanding the Future: Museums and 21st Century Life the Value of Museums*. Department for Culture, Media and Sport Museums and Cultural Property Division. UK. January 2005.

- stimulating community engagement that draws people, activity and life that, in turn, attracts others in, creating an enriching and uplifting experience.

## 6.0 Marketing the Claremont Museum

A popular technical definition of marketing is:

*'a business function that monitors customer needs and wants, determines which target markets the organisation can serve best, and designs appropriate products, services and programs to create attraction and value on an ongoing basis for those customers'.*

This definition provides a useful framework for identifying possible actions to improve the marketing of the Claremont Museum and its services. Simply a critical challenge for the Museum is how *'to get more people through the door'*. A marketing strategy involving feedback from customers, improved visibility and perceived relevance, creation of improved WOW factor and special interest attraction activities needs to be implemented. Obviously, any additional activities have staffing and budgeting implications.

### 6.1 Customer Targeting and Feedback

It is important that the Claremont Museum examine its current marketing activities and product services in relation to the target audiences it is already serves; namely Claremont district residents, visitors to the Claremont district and school groups, and instigates initiatives that ensure continuous assessment of relevance. The following are suggestions for consideration -

- the systematic recording of basic visitor information upon entry (home postcode, how did you hear about the Museum etc);
- the use of a one page feedback sheet to gather visitor reactions and suggestions at the conclusion of their visit;
- an annual random telephone survey of 100 Claremont residents to gather information about awareness of the museum, museum appreciation and suggestions for improvement;
- annual facilitated focus feedback group sessions with both volunteers and 'Friends of the Claremont Museum';
- an annual teacher 'business after hours' wine and cheese/afternoon tea to inform teachers of museum developments and initiatives and gain feedback through a facilitated session; and
- the inclusion of specific museum feedback questions in an annual survey of rate payers.

#### **Recommendation:**

**The Claremont Museum continually and systematically seek feedback from specific Museum user target groups.**

### 6.2 Local Resident Awareness and Visitation

It is vital that the Claremont Museum instigate a marketing campaign to raise awareness amongst local residents about the museum and its services. The following suggestions are offered for consideration as elements of that campaign:

- The organisation of one major annual 'Claremont Heritage and Museum Open Day'. Key features of this event should include:
  - free entrance (family passes are mailed out with rate notices)
  - creation of a range of 'participation stations' throughout the museum complex and Mrs Herbert's Park which enable 'hands on', experiential opportunities and discovery
  - incorporation of heritage food stalls and merchandise sales as fund raising initiatives

- use of the occasion to recruit volunteers and 'Friends of the Claremont Museum'.

While the Day would incorporate all the features of a heritage festival, the intention of the day is to *'get residents through the door'* and *'to discover and taste'* their local Museum.

- Updating the interpretive and exhibition material in the Claremont Museum to more closely reflect contemporary visitor interests and align with strategies presented in this report.
- The expansion of the Town of Claremont's 'welcome' strategy for new residents to include:
  - a kit of useful information that incorporates information about the museum, how to find it, opening times, calendar of events for the year and free entry tickets
  - organisation of an annual 'welcome breakfast' at Mrs Herbert's Park for new residents that includes a free guided tour of the museum.
- Promotion of the expertise of Museum staff to organizations in Claremont that may have an interest in developing exhibitions.
- Coordination, with local groups, of special history projects that culminate in a public exhibition and a permanent archival record (e.g. History of Guiding and Scouting in the Claremont district; 100 years of Claremont Teachers' College; History of the Claremont Speedway, etc). Such initiatives will also get new people involved in museum activities.
- Creation of regular *'Did You Know?'* and *'Life in the Past Lane'* columns in the *Subiaco Post* and *Town Talk* that focus on local heritage and the museum's interesting stories, exhibits and photographic collection.
- Remodelling of the museum website to elicit more 'WOW factor' in consultation with the Claremont Youth Advisory Council.
- Expand the popular 'Street Histories' project.
- Organisation of a monthly 'Toddlers Hour' at the museum that targets mothers and nannies of young children. This could be promoted through day care centres and to users of Mrs Herbert's Park.

**Recommendation:**

**The Claremont Museum examine ways to restructure and increase staffing and budget to coordinate a series of new initiatives aimed at improving local awareness and usage of the Museum site and services.**

**Recommendation:**

**The Town of Claremont to expand on its current new resident 'welcome' strategy and kit with an event held at Mrs Herbert's Park and the Claremont Museum.**

### 6.3 Non Resident Visitor Attraction

The attraction of visitors from outside the Claremont area to the Claremont Museum could be increased through a variety of means. The following suggestions are offered for consideration:

- The design and printing of an attractive poster advertising the museum that is strategically placed at critical locations e.g. school and hospital reception areas, shopping destinations, the Railway Station, community notice boards, the Library, the Claremont Hotel, etc.
- The design and printing of a novel place mat advertising the museum that is given to local coffee shops to utilise for a set period of one month as a means of promotion in different venues throughout the year.
- General improvement in quality of Town of Claremont tourism marketing materials. The *'Historic Guildford'* brochure is a good example of recently produced, quality product. The Town of Claremont should expand their use of professional graphic designers.

- The development of a 'Calendar of Special Events' that highlight Claremont's heritage assets, e.g. Art Deco architecture tour; photographic and postcard exhibition on recreation on the Swan River; book launches; talks on famous Claremont personalities and events, etc. One exhibition likely to generate widespread interest would be 'Memories of the Drive - In Theatre'. It is important that these events are organised and promoted with a strong museum connection; reorganizing the museum space and programs for special events, commencing heritage or other related tours from the museum and using clear advertising messages that promote the museum. Where possible these events should be promoted to talkback and community interest radio programs.
- Of particular significance is the 2006 celebrations for the Claremont Railway Station and Railway Signal Cabin. As mentioned previously, 2006 is a fantastic '*window of opportunity*' for the Railway complex and one that should be seized and developed immediately. A priority for the Claremont Museum is securing occupation of the railway buildings for 2006, and utilizing them for a series of exhibitions related to Claremont's railway heritage. Funding should be sought from the Town of Claremont, the Public Transport Authority and Lotterywest to support the research, design, installation and coordination of exhibitions celebrating the anniversaries of this rich history.
- Focus on the Indigenous heritage of Claremont. Claremont was a significant area for Indigenous people prior to European occupation. Working with the traditional owners and others, the story of the Nyungar from pre-European settlement to contemporary times should be located at a number of important sites including the Freshwater Bay foreshore in front of the museum, the museum, Lake Claremont and other significant sites throughout the district would provide a unique metropolitan area visitor attraction.

**Recommendation:**

**The Claremont Museum review its contribution to visitor attraction to Claremont and consider the introduction of new initiatives / improvements related to promotions and activities.**

#### 6.4 Secondary School / Youth Attraction

The Claremont Museum's education programs have been very successful in attracting primary school groups. The strong focus on 'hands on' activities is very appealing for this age group. However, there are two issues relating to marketing to the education sector that require attention.

Firstly, all teachers consulted in the consultation commented on the general low level of awareness of the museum amongst teachers and the need for the museum to improve its type and level of communication. Secondly, the museum has limited appeal for secondary students and the 14 - 25 year age group generally. A review of other heritage education providers shows that this is a very common challenge in metropolitan Perth. The following suggestions are offered for consideration in responding to these two challenges:

- Communication with teachers could be enhanced through
  - a regular emailed newsletter
  - advertising in *Education Matters*
  - posters advertising the museum being placed in teachers' staff rooms
  - an annual teachers' afternoon tea or after hours wine and cheese meeting to update them on the museum, its exhibitions, education program and new initiatives
  - promotion of the connections between the museum's exhibitions, programs and initiatives and the curriculum framework and specific learning outcomes for secondary students (see below).

▪ Development of programs and activities that specifically target components of the curriculum and learning outcomes that have a high level of interest, such as:

- building on the excellent *Dan -Joo Together* resource materials relating to early Nyungar / colonist contact and supporting teachers of Australian studies (Year 11) with achievement of outcome related to 'understanding relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians Since European Settlement'
- providing specific assistance to teachers in terms of the 'Time, Continuity and Change' component of society and environment
- providing sessions related to Estelle's Blackburn's book, 'Broken Lives' given its popularity in the Year 12 English curriculum, and the connection to Daryl Beamish, Edgar Cooke and the Claremont District
- providing opportunities for students to explore the *Active Citizen* and enquiry elements of 'Society and Environment' curriculum by engaging in 'Appreciative Inquiry' exercises that enable Claremont residents to share 'moments of pride'. Similarly, supporting students to undertake oral histories and house histories.

It is important to be aware, however, when considering the development of programs and activities for this target audience sector that between 2005 and 2009 a new Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) will be introduced for Years 11 and 12 students. The new WACE will have up to 50 new courses that will replace all of the current subjects in Years 11 and 12. Two new subjects are History Ancient and Modern (commencing 2006) and Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies (commencing 2007).

For more details on History Ancient and Modern go to  
[http://newwace.curriculum.wa.edu.au/docs/COS\\_docs/152785\\_1.pdf](http://newwace.curriculum.wa.edu.au/docs/COS_docs/152785_1.pdf)

For more details on Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies go to  
[http://newwace.curriculum.wa.edu.au/docs/COS\\_docs/147311\\_2.pdf](http://newwace.curriculum.wa.edu.au/docs/COS_docs/147311_2.pdf)

- Instigation of specific youth holiday programs with a focus on activities that appeal to youth, such as archaeology digs, photography competitions, historic boating, video production, etc.
- Targeting of specific youth organisations to utilise the museum and Mrs Herbert's Park, e.g. Sea Scouts groups undertaking activities related to the boat shed and historic boating and boat building.
- Involvement of the Claremont Youth Advisory Group as a reference group for developing initiatives that will attract young people to the museum.
- Creation and promotion of specific youth projects to enhance youth involvement e.g.
  - mural projects, one using the exterior walls of the shed that houses the boat shed capturing the heritage of boat building and another on the external walls of toilet block. It may be possible to seek funding from the Community Arts Network of WA for such projects. The development and implementation of the mural projects should have the active participation of the Town of Claremont Youth Advisory Council and/or local school visual art departments.
  - remodelling of the website,
  - community service opportunities for Duke of Edinburgh Award,
  - school based apprenticeship opportunities

**Recommendation:**

**The Claremont Museum focus on the challenge of the lack of youth interest and, in collaboration with the Youth Advisory Committee, implement a range of activities designed to improve the participation and visitation of young people.**

## 6.5 Signage

Good, clear, easy-to-read, attractive signage is necessary to attract visitors, assist them to find the Claremont museum, inform them of the museums opening hours and attractions and make them feel welcome. The following are offered as suggestions for consideration -

- The placement of attractive, colourful signage focusing on awareness of the museum, its location and opening hours at critical destinations such as
  - on Stirling Highway
  - on Victoria Avenue
  - in the car park adjacent to the museum and Mrs Herbert's Park
  - in Mrs Herbert's Park
- creation of more linkages between Mrs Herbert's Park, the foreshore and the museum using pathways with fun symbols either painted on or embedded into the path, that lead people to the museum
- creation of a welcoming sign (perhaps a bright sandwich board) on Victoria Avenue and a more clearly defined and welcoming entrance at the Museum
- the development of a distinctive, attractive and fun "logo" for the museum that can be used in publications, on signage, in off-site exhibitions or on pathways

**Recommendation:**

**The Claremont Museum invest in actions and advertising that enhance visibility, welcome and positive first impressions.**

## 6.6 Other

Other strategies that could be undertaken by the town of Claremont to improve the number of visitors to the Claremont Museum include the following:

- improvement of the overall internal appearance of the toilet block associated with Mrs Herbert's Park and improvement in the cleaning service provided for the toilet block.
- greater usage of the Park as an extension space of the Museum
- removing the minimal entry charge. The amount of money generated by the entrance fee is small and provides a potential barrier to visitors entering the museum. Visitors can become embarrassed if they do not wish to pay the fee and may decline to visit. In addition, staff time is taken up with requesting fees from visitors. Free entry is a great word-of-mouth marketing strategy.

**Recommendation:**

**The Town of Claremont eliminate any entry fee to the Museum.**

## 7.0 Implementation of Marketing Initiatives

Initiative	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
<b>Customer targeting and feedback</b>	<p>Museum feedback questions to be included in a regular survey of rate payers.</p> <p>Conduct one page survey to gather visitor feedback at the conclusion of their visit.</p> <p>Begin recording basic visitor information upon entry (home postcode, how did you hear about the Museum etc.).</p>	<p>Conduct regular random telephone survey of 100 Claremont residents to gather information about awareness of the museum, museum appreciation and suggestions for improvement.</p> <p>Conduct regular facilitated focus feedback group sessions with both volunteers and 'Friends of the Claremont Museum'.</p>		
<b>Local resident awareness and visitation</b>	<p>Begin updating the interpretive and exhibition material in the Claremont Museum</p> <p>Organise major annual 'Claremont Heritage and Museum Open Day'.</p> <p>Town of Claremont to expand 'welcome' strategy for new residents.</p> <p>Begin regular '<i>Did You Know?</i>' and '<i>Life in the Past Lane</i>' columns in the <i>Subiaco Post</i> and <i>Town Talk</i> focusing on local heritage and the museum.</p>	<p>Develop school holiday programs.</p>	<p>Organise regular 'Toddlers Hour' at the museum targeting mothers and nannies of young children, promoted through day care centres and to users of Mrs Herbert's Park.</p> <p>Coordination, with a local group, of a special history project that culminates in a public exhibition and a permanent archival record.</p>	<p>Expand the popular 'Street Histories' project.</p> <p>Promote awareness of the expertise of Museum staff to organizations in Claremont that may have an interest in developing an exhibition.</p>

Initiative	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
<p><b>Non resident visitor attraction</b></p>	<p>Secure use of the Claremont Railway Station buildings and research and develop an exhibition celebrating the anniversaries associated with the railway in 2006.</p> <p>Develop interpretation material focusing on the Indigenous heritage of Claremont.</p> <p>Review and upgrade tourism marketing materials, using services of a professional graphic designer.</p>	<p>Design and production of poster advertising the museum for placement at placed at strategic locations.</p> <p>Design and production of novel placemats for use in local coffee shops.</p>	<p>Develop Calendar of Special Events, centred on the museum but highlighting Claremont's heritage assets.</p>	
<p><b>Secondary school/Youth</b></p>		<p>Involve Claremont Youth Advisory Group (YAC) as a reference group for developing initiatives to attract young people to the museum.</p> <p>Plan and undertake Mural Project 1 - exterior walls of the shed housing the Mews boat shed.</p> <p>Remodel museum website in consultation with the Claremont Youth Advisory Council.</p>	<p>Develop education program focusing on new Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) subject, History Ancient and Modern.</p> <p>Plan and undertake Mural Project 2 - external walls of toilet block.</p> <p>Target specific youth organizations, undertaking related activities to utilise the museum and Mrs Herbert's Park.</p> <p>Investigate community service opportunities for Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme.</p>	<p>Develop education program focusing on new Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) subject, Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies.</p> <p>Investigate museum involvement with school based apprenticeship opportunities.</p>

Initiative	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Education sector	Introduce annual teacher 'business after hours' wine and cheese/afternoon tea to inform teachers of museum developments and initiatives and gain feedback through a facilitated session.			
Signage		<p>Development of a distinctive, attractive and fun "logo" for the Claremont Museum.</p> <p>Design and production of signage focusing on awareness of the museum, its location and opening hours at critical traffic flow points in Claremont.</p> <p>Creation of a more clearly defined and welcoming entrance to the Claremont Museum.</p> <p>Design and production of welcoming sign for placement on Victoria Avenue.</p>	Creation of more linkages between Mrs Herbert's Park, the foreshore and the museum using pathways with fun symbols either painted on or embedded into the path, that lead people to the museum	
Other	<p>Remove entrance fee to museum.</p> <p>Improve internal appearance and cleanliness of the toilet block associated with Mrs Herbert's Park.</p>	Creation of events/programs that make greater use of the Park as an extension of the museum.		

## 8.0 Interpretation in Claremont - the "Museum Without Walls"

### 8.1 Interpretation - what is it?

Interpretation is "meaning making".<sup>4</sup> Interpretation refers to the process of providing visitors to a place with timely and appropriate information to allow them to have a greatly enriched experience of that place.

Interpretation can be conveyed to audiences through a number of methods including:

- signage - information boards/shelters, site specific interpretive boards, banners, flags
- publications - books, brochures, posters, flyers and illustrations.
- photography and video material
- artworks
- interactive mechanisms - audio-visual, multi-media, computer, physical
- exhibitions - small or large; using a combination of signage, publications, photography and video, artworks, artefacts and interactives.

The challenge of interpretation is to provide fascinating, factual accounts that also tell compelling individual stories of human endeavour and adversity.

The most profound experiences at cultural sites occur when a visitor's mind and emotions are engaged in what they are seeing and doing and when they develop empathy for what occurred there, a feeling of how it really was, a connection to the place and the people who lived or died there.<sup>5</sup>

### 8.2 Interpretation - why do it?

Meaningful places and experiences matter to us. If we give visitors the right information, in the right way, and at the right time, they will have a deeper, richer experience of the place they are visiting.<sup>6</sup> And this in turn determines the visitor's degree of satisfaction and their willingness to say positive things about your museum, your town, your region and you.<sup>7</sup>

Most visitors to a heritage site or museum need and actually WANT help to make meaning of what they are seeing and to attach meaning to the place they are visiting. Without interpretation that is purposefully designed and delivered to assist visitors to "make meaning", the significance and emotional impact of your place and the stories of the people associated with it will never manifest in their minds in any compelling way.

### 8.3 Interpretation - when is it good?

Good interpretation is stimulating - it makes the visitor wonder and ponder and opens doorways for them to consider new ways of thinking, feeling or behaving. Good interpretation creates knowing, feeling and doing outcomes in the people who interact with it. It implants new beliefs or changes existing beliefs and it produces feelings and behaviours that are consistent with the new or modified beliefs.<sup>8</sup>

Some key points to good interpretation are:

- Make sure you relate to your visitors and that they can connect to what you are saying
- Communicate a single, clear message or idea
- Have layers of interpretation so that everyone gets the message from what they choose to read/watch/listen to/do
- Don't preach - allow visitors to think for themselves and reach their own conclusions.

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<sup>4</sup> Ham, Sam H., *Meaning Making - The Premise and Promise of Interpretation*

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Ham, Sam H. & Betty Weiler, "Interpretation is Persuasive When Themes are Compelling" in *Interpret Scotland*, Issue 8, Autumn 2003

Recent research by Chicago based museum consultant Beverly Serrell has revealed some definitions for judging what a good exhibition is from the visitor's perspective.<sup>9</sup> The following is a summary of the findings of her research.

The Excellent Exhibition		
Criteria	Definition	Aspects
Comfortable	An excellent exhibition helps the visitor feel comfortable, both physically and psychologically. Good comfort opens the door to other positive experiences. Lack of comfort prevents them.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Physical and conceptual orientation devices are present.</li> <li>2. There are convenient places to rest.</li> <li>3. The lighting, temperature, and sound levels are appropriate.</li> <li>4. Everything is well-kept, functioning, and in good repair.</li> <li>5. Exhibition elements can be read, viewed and used with ease.</li> <li>6. Choices and options for things to do are clear. Visitors are encouraged to feel in control of their own experiences.</li> <li>7. Authorship, biases, intent, and perspectives of the exhibition are revealed, identified, or attributed. The exhibition reveals fact from fiction or opinion and the real from the not real.</li> <li>8. The exhibition welcomes people of diverse cultural backgrounds, economic classes, educational levels, and physical abilities.</li> </ol>
Engaging	An excellent exhibition is engaging for visitors. It entices them to pay attention.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The physical environment looks interesting and invites exploration.</li> <li>2. Exhibits catch the visitor's attention and encourage them to slow down, to look, interact, and spend time.</li> <li>3. Exhibits are fun-pleasurable/ challenging/ amusing/ intriguing/ intellectually or physically stimulating.</li> <li>4. Exhibition components encourage and promote social behaviours. Exhibits encourage visitors to call one another over, read out loud, point at, and converse about the exhibit material.</li> <li>5. Experiences come in a variety of formats (e.g., graphics, text, objects, AV, computers, living things, models, phenomena) and a variety of sensual modalities -sight, sound, motion, touch, etc.</li> <li>6. There are interesting things to do.</li> </ol>
Reinforcing	In an excellent exhibition, the exhibits provide visitors with abundant opportunities to be successful and to feel intellectually competent. In addition, the exhibits reinforce each other, providing multiple means of accessing similar bits of information that are all part of a cohesive whole.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The exhibition is not overwhelming. There are "just enough" things to do.</li> <li>2. Challenging or complex exhibit experiences are structured so that visitors who try to figure them out are likely to "get it" and feel confident and motivated to do more.</li> <li>3. The presentation has logic. It holds together intellectually in a way that is easily followed and understood.</li> <li>4. The information and ideas in different parts of the exhibition are complementary and reinforce each other.</li> <li>5. The exhibition builds on itself.</li> </ol>
Meaningful	An excellent exhibition provides personally relevant experiences for visitors. Beyond being engaged and feeling competent, visitors find that they had an experience that has changed them in some way, either cognitively or emotionally.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ideas and objects in the exhibition (natural specimens, living collections, cultural artefacts, demonstrations, and activities) are made relevant to and easily integrated into the visitors' experience, regardless of their level of prior knowledge.</li> <li>2. The exhibition makes a case that its content has value. The material is important and resonates with the visitors' values.</li> <li>3. The exhibition content touches on universal human concerns and doesn't shy away from difficult or controversial issues.</li> <li>4. The exhibition experience promotes change in people's thinking and feeling. Exhibits give visitors the means to make generalizations, change beliefs and attitudes, and/or take action.</li> </ol>

<sup>9</sup> Serrell, Beverly, *Assessing Excellence in Exhibitions from a Visitor-experience Perspective*, Museums Australia National Conference, Melbourne, Australia, 16-21 May 2004

## 9.0 Interpretation themes for Claremont

The unique and rich heritage of Claremont and the intention to interpret it using the “museum without walls” concept means that it is useful to use themes for interpretation that are broad enough to encompass the development of the many storylines that are available within the heritage of the district.

The following four themes are suggested:

- **Family** - Family has always been a fundamental part of Claremont life. Storylines may include:
  - Nyungars as traditional owners and their continued ties to the area,
  - the varied fortunes of the Butler family who tried unsuccessfully to gain land in the Claremont area and operated an inn for some time,
  - Enrolled Pensioner Guard families who settled in Claremont,
  - police force families lived in the converted Freshwater Bay School,
  - predominantly upwardly mobile middle class families chose to live in Claremont subdivisions for “health, peace and pleasure”,
  - well-to-do families
  - considerable stability in population with generations of families living in Claremont,
  - family operated businesses,
  - notable Claremont residents e.g. Edwin Summerhayes, George Temple Poole,
  - military training and service.
  
- **Work/Education** - Claremont has always had a diverse range of small businesses and an important role in education. Storylines may include:
  - Nyungar use of the land pre European settlement and activities post European settlement including women working as domestics,
  - convict work building infrastructure in the area,
  - allotment of land at Butlers Swamp (Lake Claremont) to Enrolled Pensioner Guards for cultivation,
  - education from Mrs Herbert’s school through to the first teacher training colleges,
  - agriculture, orchards and dairying at Butler’s Swamp (Lake Claremont),
  - railway station opening attracted a variety of other businesses to open,
  - Bay View Terrace and the businesses that grew up along it became the heart of the Claremont community,
  - service industries for residents such as local corner stores, grocers with horses and carts, bakers, icemen, etc.,
  - small industries scattered through residential streets such as Naylor & Currie Bakery, Drabbles building supplies, Westralian Knitting Mills, Claremont Furniture Factory, etc.
  - Claremont Hospital for the Insane.
  
- **Recreation** - Claremont has always had some of the best loved places for recreation. Storylines may include:
  - Dreaming stories of the Nyungar related to the area and use of the area for social and cultural purposes,
  - for many local Claremont children, the Swan River at Freshwater Bay was their playground,
  - Claremont Baths and the Swimming Club,
  - Claremont Football Club,
  - Royal Agricultural Show,
  - Claremont Speedway,
  - yachting,
  - Lakeway Drive-in.
  
- **Environment** - Claremont’s beautiful environment has always attracted people to it. Storylines may include:
  - Pre European settlement landscape, flora and fauna,
  - Freshwater Bay,
  - Lake Claremont,
  - changes to the original landscape as a result of development,
  - impacts of industry and housing estates.

**Recommendation:**

**The Claremont Museum adopt the four broad interpretation themes of Family, Work/Education, Recreation and Environment.**

## 10.0 Recommendations for Interpretation for Claremont sites

### 10.1 Claremont Museum

The Claremont Museum site at 66 Victoria Avenue has constraints in terms of the types of exhibitions that can be installed there due to its small size and the need for certain areas to have exhibitions and equipment that are necessary to run the well established and successful education program. In addition the large and growing collection of local studies materials and photographs requires a suitable space for its housing and operation. However there is also a need for the site and its former uses to be better interpreted along with the need for the Claremont Museum to tell the “stories” of Claremont in such a way that they are engaging and staged over a number of years to retain community interest, loyalty and support and ensure return visitation to the site. Taking these issues into consideration the following are offered as new or improved interpretation within that space:

- Develop an exhibition on the history and use of the former school building. Include Nyungar, Enrolled Pensioner Guards, Freshwater Bay School, The ‘Appy ‘Ome for bachelors, Police Residence, Police Station and Claremont Museum. Use robust exterior signage to provide some information in and around the grounds. Locate main text and supporting objects in the school room. Retain the school room set-up for education purposes and ensure that the design of text and exhibition showcases is such that they will provide little distraction for students who are taking part in the “ 1860s schoolroom” education activity.
- Develop one updated text panel with photographs to contextualize the three “shop” exhibitions. Further interest could be added by the inclusion of audio-visual components to provide some oral history and/or film footage that contextualises the displays.
- Develop an exhibition that provides an overview of the history of Claremont from pre-settlement to the present day using the interpretation themes of Family, Work/Education, Environment and Recreation. Use the initial research to install some interpretation to replace the diorama in room 1. The full exhibition should be placed in the area where the Youth in Claremont exhibition is currently. Significant dates in the history of Claremont should be used to develop a timeline for insertion into a pathway leading from the street into the museum.
- Develop changing exhibitions that cover, in depth, the four interpretation themes of Family, Work/Education, Recreation and Environment. These will be developed one-by-one and installed in room 1 over a number of stages and years, one replacing the other as they are developed and installed. The use of the larger room allows for a larger exhibition to be created for each of the four themes as they are broad and should have the greatest amount of community involvement and be able to tell the largest number of stories possible.
- Develop refreshed interpretation for the Mews boat shed using the themes of Family, Work/Education, Recreation and Environment. This could include:
  - Updated audio-visual productions taking a “then and now” look at boat building.
  - Explanation of tools and objects in the shed and what they were used for. This could be done as a push-button console that lights up an LED in the shed indicating the object and gives an explanation using text and/or audio.
  - Install safety glass, or similar, to create a barrier to public entry into the Mews boat shed display. This would enable the boat shed to be open during museum opening hours.

## 10.2 Claremont Railway Station and Signal Cabin

The Claremont Railway Station is an important heritage building and site within the Town of Claremont. As previously recommended in this Plan, the Claremont Council should act to gain ownership of the building in the long term. In the short term, access to the building should be gained for 2006 for the development of an exhibition that celebrates the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Fremantle - Guildford Eastern Railway Line, the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Claremont Railway Station building and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Claremont Railway Station Signal Cabin.

The Claremont Signal Cabin was saved from demolition in 1990 and since then has been part of the management responsibilities of the Claremont Museum. As the last remaining traditional lever signal cabin still located in its original place in metropolitan Perth, the Claremont Signal Cabin occupies a unique position in Western Australian railway heritage.

Since 1994 volunteers from the Signalling Interest Group of Western Australia have been actively working on recreating the interior of the cabin, restoring signalling apparatus and demonstrating the working life of a signalman. This enthusiastic and knowledgeable group of volunteers continues to do a remarkable job in preserving, caring for and interpreting the signal cabin. Nonetheless it is important that the Claremont Museum continue to fulfil their management role with regard to the signal cabin. Indeed the artefacts that are in the signal cabin are a part of the Claremont Museum collection and therefore responsibility for their care falls squarely with the museum. Consequently the museum should develop processes to ensure that the volunteers that work at the signal cabin are appropriately trained and informed on professional museum standard collection management and object care as well as practices in conservation of objects and heritage buildings. The Museum Manager should also work closely with the Signalling Interest Group to ensure that their planned activities are in keeping with the museum's strategic directions and goals. Support in the form of a small budget and ongoing professional assistance should also be provided to the signal cabin volunteers.

The following interpretation and actions are recommended:

- Develop an exhibition celebrating the history of rail in Claremont and the various anniversaries of the railway using the interpretation themes of Work/Education, Family, Environment and Recreation. This would be in place from late 2006.
- Continue to oversee and assist the Signalling Interest Group of Western Australia with their plans for celebratory activities in the Signal Cabin in 2006.
- Provide a small budget for the signal cabin volunteers to help with the costs of their activities.
- Develop an annual workshop or seminar for the signal cabin volunteers to discuss activities in the signal cabin.
- Work with the signal cabin volunteers to develop a kit on best practice in museum collection care and management and object handling and conservation practices for objects and heritage buildings, particularly as it relates to railway heritage, which can be provided to all signal cabin volunteers.
- If the Claremont Railway Station becomes available for long term usage then the development of a suitable exhibition for the space should be considered.

## 10.3 Mrs Herbert's Park/Foreshore

Previous recommendations in this report have indicated that stronger links should be made between the Claremont Museum site and the adjacent, and well utilised, Mrs Herbert's Park and the associated foreshore. Recommendations for the interpretation of this area are:

- Develop an exhibition that tells stories, using text and images, focusing on the history of Freshwater Bay from pre-settlement to contemporary time using the interpretation themes of Family, Work/Education, Environment and Recreation.

- Engage artist or designer to create one or more supports, that may include interactive components or be something that children could play on or with, to carry the text and images.

#### 10.4 Lake Claremont

The Town of Claremont has a Lake Claremont Policy (revised 1998) in which a number of recommendations were made about the management of the Lake Claremont Reserve. Within that policy there were a number of recommendations about the need to educate residents and visitors about the importance of the area for the conservation flora and fauna, the significant local indigenous species, the environmental degradation caused by the use of too much fertilizer and water and the dumping of garden waste. In addition, the policy recommends that

*" the Town of Claremont, in conjunction with the Claremont Museum, undertake research on the history of the land use of the lake and its environs with a view to providing suitable interpretive material in the form of signs, brochures, etc. to enhance visitor experience and appreciation of the historical , cultural and social significance of the area."*<sup>10</sup>

Lake Claremont is central to Claremont's heritage. From pre European settlement times it was a large wetland with abundant plant and animal life and it played an important role in the life of Nyungar people up until at least the 1960s. Even today, Nyungar people understand it as a place of men and boys, where the boys were taken for initiation and the "*first scar was put on their arm*" then they walked to the river and "*swam across to Beri Point, leaving their childhood behind*".<sup>11</sup> For the Nyungar it is no coincidence that the schools built at Lake Claremont are boys' schools.<sup>12</sup>

One of the area's first settlers, John Butler, requested an official grant of land on the east side of the lake and although he may never have received official sanction, carried out farming activities there, giving rise to the name Butler's Swamp, by which the area was known well into the twentieth century. In 1850, Enrolled Pensioner Guards were allotted land there and by the turn of the century orchards and market gardens flourished there. However rising waters in the 1940s destroyed the market gardens.

In 1954, the Claremont Council agreed to a beautification plan for the area with additional recreational facilities but the plan was too costly to implement and the original proposal was modified to include the Lakeway Drive-in, from which the rent was used to meet the loan repayments for the development of the other facilities.

In 1983, the lake was included in the *Darling System, System 6* report prepared by the Department of Conservation and Environment report and this resulted in the preparation for a management plan for Lake Claremont.

Recommendations for the placement of interpretive material do not appear to have been followed and since 1998, even greater emphasis has come to bear on the protection of wetlands and their ecologies as well as the importance of educating the public about why and how wetlands and remnant indigenous vegetation should be protected.

The Lakeway Drive-in site was used as a drive-in movie theatre until 1975 when it was abandoned. It has been disused since. In February 2006 the Town of Claremont determined that the 4.3 hectare site would be subdivided into 40 housing lots.

Such a development on this site will attract new people to the area; a mix of residents including young families, couples without children and people over 55. The increased residential density adjacent to Lake Claremont will place even greater pressure on the ecology of the lake and the surrounding recreational facilities. This adds weight to the need for appropriate interpretation and education about the social, cultural and environmental importance of the Lake Claremont Reserve for local residents and the visiting public. In accordance with this, recommendations for the interpretation of the Lake Claremont area are:

<sup>10</sup> Haynes, B.T., Lantzke I.R. & P.M. Lantzke, *Lake Claremont Policy (Revised 1998)*, Town of Claremont, 1998, p.7.

<sup>11</sup> Noel Nannup, interviewed by Sinead Mangin in *Tales from the Riverbank*, radio program, ABC Radio, Perth, 10 November 2005

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

- Development of a series of interpretive signs focusing on the history of the Lake Claremont area using the themes of Family, Work/Education, Environment and Recreation. Liaison with relevant government agencies to develop educative environmental components should also be considered.
- Consideration could also be given to the development of a purpose built environment centre located at a suitable location in the Lake Claremont Reserve. The City of Melville's Piney Lakes Environmental Education Centre and the Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre are examples of the types of facilities that could be developed. A purpose built environment centre would provide an alternative area for the development of interpretation of Lake Claremont's social, cultural and environmental history and importance as well as a tourist attraction and focus for community groups concerned with caring for Claremont's natural environment.

### 10.5 New Town Centre

As mentioned previously in this report, the proposed redevelopment of the heart of Claremont's retail centre provides an important '*window of opportunity*' to develop small exhibition niches and public artworks that celebrate the Town of Claremont's history. Recommendations for interpretation in the new town centre are:

- Work with the Town of Claremont CEO, or appropriate officers, to develop small special niche exhibition areas for exhibitions related to Claremont history using interpretation themes of Work/Education, Family and Recreation. (Recommended size for exhibition niches is 3m<sup>2</sup>). Exhibition niches must be developed to provide a professional level of care and protection for the historical objects that will be placed within them. These include:
  - air conditioning to keep the temperature at between 18°C-22°C and relative humidity level at between 47.5%-52.5%;
  - protection from UV radiation;
  - protection from dust, air-borne pollutants and insect infestation;
  - protection from handling by the public,
  - protection from theft and
  - good ventilation
  - museum standard lighting or fibre optic lighting
- Work with the Town of Claremont CEO, or appropriate officers, to indicate need for spaces for the placement of public art related to Claremont history using interpretation themes of Work/Education, Family and Recreation.

### 10.6 Bay View Terrace

Bay View Terrace has long been the heart of Claremont and provided the focus for community life through work, commerce and social interaction. Interpretation recommended for Bay View Terrace is:

- Sites/stories that relate to the heritage of Claremont to be included in walk/drive trails and new signage installed.
- Public art could be commissioned for selected historical sites or stories.

### 10.7 Royal Agricultural Society Showgrounds

For over one hundred years, the Royal Agricultural Show has been held at the Claremont Show Grounds and has been an annual event that has attracted visitors from all over Western Australia to Claremont. A partnership with the Royal Agricultural Society (RAS) could be formed to undertake the development of interpretation as follows:

- Develop an exhibition on the history of the Claremont show grounds and its intersections with the history of Claremont using themes of Family, Work/Education and Recreation. This exhibition should include research that covers regional Western Australian communities and the memories and links that people who live in regional Western Australia have with Claremont through the Royal Agricultural Show. The exhibition should be installed at or near the show grounds such as in the area near the RAS headquarters at Gate 1 or further up Graylands Road at a point where views to the main arena and Ferris wheel can be accessed.

## 10.8 Heritage trails

Claremont has a large number of heritage sites that are important to the history of Western Australia as well as the heritage of the area. Interpretation of a number of sites could be usefully integrated into heritage walk/drive trails using signage, brochures and the Claremont Museum web site. Recommendations for interpretation are:

- Review, update and upgrade existing heritage walk/drive trails of important heritage sites that together tell the history of Claremont. Include, where appropriate and approved, private residences. These trails should commence at the Claremont Museum and use low profile signage.
- Develop a "trail" of the architectural heritage of Claremont. This should be developed in brochure and/or web based form and should not be supported by signage.

## 10.9 Lakeway Drive-in site

The Narla Road Drive-in site was purchased by the Town of Claremont in 1955 and operated as a drive-in movie theatre until 1975 when it was abandoned. It has been disused since. In February 2006 the Town of Claremont determined that the 4.3 hectare site would be subdivided into 40 housing lots. Interpretation of the site's former use as a drive-in movie theatre should be included in any redevelopment. The recommendation for interpretation is:

- Public art related to the history of the Lakeway Drive-in be included in redevelopment plans.

### **Recommendation:**

**The Claremont Museum, together with the Town of Claremont, implement the recommended actions for interpretation of each of the following: Claremont Museum; Claremont Railway Station and Signal Cabin; Mrs Herbert's Park/Foreshore; Lake Claremont; new Claremont town centre; Bay View Terrace; Royal Agricultural Society showgrounds; heritage trails; Lakeway drive-in.**

## 11.0 Implementation of Interpretation

Location	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
<p><b>Claremont Museum</b></p>	<p>Begin research and development of an exhibition on the history and use of the former school building. Include Nyungar, Enrolled Pensioner Guards, Freshwater Bay School, the 'Appy 'Ome for bachelors, Police Residence and Police Station. Use robust exterior signage to provide some information and locate main text and objects in school room. Retain school room set-up and use wall space to locate text/objects/stories.</p> <p>Develop and install one updated text panel with photographs to contextualize the three "shop" exhibitions.</p> <p>Research and develop an overview exhibition on the history of Claremont from pre-settlement to the present day using the interpretation themes of Family, Work/Education, Environment and Recreation. Initial interpretation of overview of Claremont's history to replace the diorama. Later, more complete exhibition will replace the current Youth in Claremont exhibition.</p> <p>Significant dates in the history of Claremont should be used to develop a timeline for insertion into a pathway leading from the street into the museum.</p>	<p>Install exhibition on history of the building.</p> <p>Develop refreshed interpretation for the Mews boat shed using the themes of Family, Work/Education, Recreation and Environment. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Updated audio-visual productions taking a "then and now" look at boat building.</li> <li>- Explanation of tools and objects in the shed and what they were used for. This could be done as a push-button console that lights up an LED in the shed indicating the object and gives an explanation using text and/or audio.</li> </ul> <p>Install safety glass, or similar, to create a barrier to public entry into the Mews boat shed display.</p> <p>Research and develop first of three exhibitions planned for the first room of the museum. Each exhibition will cover, in depth, one of the four interpretation themes of Family, Work/Education and Recreation. (Environment will be developed as part of the interpretation at Lake Claremont).</p>	<p>Manufacture and installation of exhibition dealing with first chosen interpretation theme.</p>	<p>Research and develop second of three exhibitions planned for the first room of the museum.</p> <p>One further stage will need to be undertaken to research, develop and install the third of the three exhibitions.</p>

Location	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
<b>Claremont Railway Station</b>	<p>Research, develop and install an exhibition celebrating the history of rail in Claremont and the various anniversaries of the railway using the interpretation themes of Work/Education, Family, Environment and Recreation.</p> <p>Work with and oversee the Signalling Interest Group with their planned celebratory activities in the Signal Cabin.</p>			Install the Claremont: an overview exhibition.
<b>Mrs Herbert's Park/Foreshore</b>		<p>Research and develop text and images for stories using themes of Family, Work/Education, Environment and Recreation that focuses on the history of Freshwater Bay and the Swan River from pre-settlement to contemporary times. Engage artist or designer to create one or more supports, that may include interactive components or be something that children could play on or with, to carry the text and images.</p> <p>Manufacture and install supports and text/images.</p>		
<b>Lake Claremont</b>			<p>Liaise with the Friends of Lake Claremont to research and develop interpretation using the themes of Family, Work/Education, Recreation and Environment and focusing on the history of the Lake Claremont area as well as working with relevant government agencies to develop educative environmental components.</p>	Installation of Lake Claremont interpretation.

Location	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
<b>Heritage Trails throughout Claremont</b>			Update walk/drive trails of heritage sites that tell the history of Claremont. Include, where appropriate and approved, private residences. Trails should begin at the Claremont Museum and use low profile signage.	Develop a "trail" of the architectural heritage of Claremont. This should be developed in brochure and/or web based form and should not be supported by signage.
<b>New Town Centre</b>	<p>Liaise with Town of Claremont CEO or appropriate officers to indicate need for integration of small special niche exhibition areas for exhibitions related to Claremont history using interpretation themes of Work/Education, Family and Recreation. (Recommended size for exhibition niches is 3m<sup>2</sup>).</p> <p>Liaise with Town of Claremont CEO or appropriate officers to indicate need for spaces for the placement of public art related to Claremont history using interpretation themes of Work/Education, Family and Recreation.</p>			
<b>Bay View Terrace</b>	Develop and implement a plan for the commissioning of public art that can interpret suitable historical sites and/or stories.		Sites/stories that relate to the heritage of Claremont to be included in walk/drive trails and new signage installed.	
<b>Royal Agricultural Society Show grounds</b>		Begin negotiations with the RAS to develop interpretive signage/elements that could be placed on walls of the RAS building at Gate 1 or further up Graylands Road where views of the main arena, Ferris wheel, etc can be accessed. This interpretation should include links between Claremont and Western Australian regional communities.		Research and develop exhibition on history of the Show grounds and its intersections with the history of Claremont using themes of Family, Work/Education and Recreation. Installation to take place in 2010. Research should encompass regional communities and their memories and links to Claremont.

Location	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Lakeway Drive-in site	Liaise with Town of Claremont CEO or appropriate officers to indicate need for public art related to history of the Lakeway Drive-in to be included in redevelopment plans.			

## 12.0 Caring for the Claremont Museum Collection

The Claremont Museum is the custodian of around 9,000 objects, photographs and documents that are directly related to the history of Claremont. The collection has been carefully built over a period of thirty years by trained museum professionals and this has meant that comprehensive information about each item has also been collected. This ensures that the Claremont collection is a very significant heritage asset.

The care and maintenance of historical items held in a collection requires active participation in ensuring that the items are correctly catalogued using systematic notation; are stored and displayed in a safe environment and their movement and condition monitored on a regular basis.

### 12.1 Safe Environments for the Storage of Collection objects

Historical objects have specific conservation and preservation needs to ensure that they remain in the best possible condition. A safe environment is one that has stable temperature and humidity levels, has a very low light level or darkness, and is completely free of insect pests and vermin such as rodents.

The ideal storage and display spaces have the temperature maintained at between 18°C-22°C and the relative humidity level at between 47.5%-52.5%. They have good environmental control mechanisms such as ventilation, air conditioning, central heating, insulation and dehumidification.

Paper, photographs and textiles should not be subjected to light greater than 50 lux and other objects to light greater than 200 lux.

Historical objects should not be stored with other materials such as stationery, wood, cardboard or plastics. These materials can emit fumes and other pollutant particles that can cause deterioration in the objects. Powder-coated metal shelving and metal cupboards are preferable to wooden ones for storage of heritage items as "wood" is usually some form of particle board that gives off fumes and will damage objects.

Objects held in a collection should be protected from environmental factors as much as possible. It is recommended that historical objects be wrapped or contained in archival quality storage material. Archival quality describes a product with a level of chemical stability and physical strength such that it will survive for long periods and cope with a high level of handling. Archival quality products are the safest products for the storage of historical items, especially paper, photographs and textiles. Photographs are particularly vulnerable to deterioration if stored in the wrong type of box or container.

A safe environment is also one that is dust free. Dust carries airborne pollutants that are damaging to objects. Objects can be stored under dust covers made from the pH neutral fibre Tyvek or from washed calico.

### 12.2 Current Storage for the Claremont Museum Collection

Currently there are four storage areas which hold the Claremont Museum Collection. Two of these are on-site at the museum and two are off-site at the Town of Claremont works depot.

#### On-site storage area 1

Storage area 1 is contained within the current administration building and is a small area fitted with compactus units into which archive boxes and drawers containing collection items have been placed. This area contains mainly documents, photographs and small and fragile items. This storage area has been set up well and is managed professionally however it is almost at full capacity. Consideration needs to be given to further storage space for any future expansion of the collection.



Claremont Museum on-site storage area 1, using archive boxes to protect objects.



Claremont Museum on-site storage area 1, using compactus units and archive boxes provides optimum protection for objects.

### **On-site storage area 2**

On-site storage area 2 is located at the back of the cart shed. This storage area contains textiles and domestic objects and is filled to beyond the safe working capacity. Shelving in this area is too high to safely retrieve and replace boxed objects and boxes are placed at an even higher level on top of the shelving. The retrieval and replacing of these boxes constitutes an occupational health and safety risk.

Access to this storage area is via an external door located under the mulberry tree. This situation is less than satisfactory particularly when the mulberry tree is fruiting and the fruit falls to the ground just outside the entry to the storage area. As a consequence of this the staff and volunteers have to be careful to avoid walking any of the mulberry fruit into the storage area. Quite apart from the staining nature of mulberry fruit, the fruit remnants will attract insects and vermin into the storage area.

### **Creating extra storage space**

Both the size of storage area 2 and the entrance to it are no longer adequate for the needs of the Claremont Museum collection. An expansion of on-site storage is required and the easiest and most cost effective way of achieving this would be expand into the cart shed. In order to do this, the butcher's cart will need to be removed to a safe display or storage area either on or off site and internal walls constructed with insulation between the exterior and interior walls. The large door should be removed and replaced with a smaller door and walls. The current entry to storage area 2 should be removed and replaced with a solid wall and the solid wall that now exists between the storage area and the cart shed at least partially removed. A new entrance created to the storage area would be created that would be accessed from inside the cart shed.



The current entry to Claremont Museum on-site storage area 2 is situated under a mulberry tree that drops fruit making this entry unsuitable. A more convenient entry would be through the cart shed.



Claremont Museum on-site storage area 2 is overcrowded with objects and contains items other than collection objects. These storage units are too high and present an occupational health and safety risk to the staff and volunteers who use them.

**Recommendation:**

**The Claremont Museum increase its on-site storage space by expanding the current storage area into the cart shed and removing the current entrance to one from within the cart shed.**

**Off-site storage area 1**

Off-site storage area 1 is at the Claremont works depot. It consists of a colourbond shed with a sliding entry door and has been internally insulated. This storage area has quite a number of problems associated with it. These include:

- the floor is made of concrete slabs laid over sand. This is not a suitable method of flooring for a collection store as the cracks between the slabs allow easy access for termites
- the sliding door does not provide an adequate seal when closed and the substantial gap is enough to allow dust, insects, mice and rats to enter the store
- not all objects are on metal shelves and many are sitting on the concrete slabs thus making them susceptible to termite attack
- the size of the shed is too small for the number of objects stored there - particularly large objects such as furniture. Objects are being stored on top of each other. This is obviously not in the best interests of preserving the objects.

On the day that the consultant visited the off-site storage, the entries to both were blocked with an assortment of objects and obstructions including parking signs, rubbish bins, wood and broken glass. This is clearly not a suitable arrangement for Claremont Museum staff and volunteers who need to access the storage areas and should not have to first deal with works depot detritus.

The entrance to the museum storage areas should be kept clear at all times otherwise it presents an occupational health and safety hazard to museum staff and volunteers.

#### **Off-site storage area 2**

Off-site storage area 2 is also at the Claremont works depot. It consists of a former refrigerated sea container. It is currently used to store exhibition and other material but not objects from the collection. The container provides suitable storage for such items but should not be used for historical objects as it does not provide enough ventilation and this encourages mould growth.

#### **Recommendation:**

**The Town of Claremont to assist the Claremont Museum to, at a minimum upgrade the off-site storage shed to provide a solid concrete floor, doors sealed to prevent the ingress of insects and vermin and more shelving to remove objects from sitting on the floor.**

**The Town of Claremont to instruct works depot to ensure that the space around the entry to both off-site storage areas be kept clear at all times.**

The recommendations made above should, however, only be considered as short-term solutions to a long-term problem. The museum's storage requirements will continue to grow as the three collections it currently houses continue to grow. A specific storage needs analysis study should be undertaken to assess current and future needs and examine solutions to the problem of inadequate storage spaces for the Claremont Museum collection. This study could be undertaken jointly with the Subiaco Museum, which is also facing problems with accessing appropriate museum storage. An investigation into the potential for a joint storage facility for both the Claremont Museum and Subiaco Museum collections could be undertaken as a part of the study.

#### **Recommendation:**

**The Claremont Museum seek funding to undertake a needs analysis for the current and future storage requirements of its three collections and give consideration to doing this in partnership with the Subiaco Museum.**



Claremont Museum off-site storage area 1 at the Claremont works depot. The entry to collection storage areas should be kept free of obstructions. Obstructions such as these street signs present an occupational health and safety hazard to museum staff and volunteers.



Claremont Museum off-site storage area 1. The current door arrangement is inadequate for a collection storage area. Light can be clearly seen through a gap between the closed sliding door and the wall. This gap is large enough to allow insects, mice and rats into the storage area. This should be remedied immediately.



Claremont Museum off-site storage area 1. The concrete paver flooring is not suitable for a collections storage area as it allows the entry of termites. This is particularly serious here as there are many wooden objects that are on the ground and therefore susceptible to termite attack.



Object label in off-site storage area 1 clearly indicates the presence of undesirable insect activity. Collection storage areas must be protected against insect incursions as they have the potential to damage objects and undo good professional museum practice.



Claremont Museum off-site storage area 2 at the Claremont works depot. Entry to this storage was also obstructed by carelessly placed objects and broken glass. This former refrigerated sea container is useful for storing material off-site but is not suitable as a storage area for objects in the collection.

### 13.0 Funding, Technical Support and Staffing

It is obvious that current funding and staffing levels and arrangements of the Museum restricts the introduction of new initiatives and improvements. It is important that Museum staff and the leadership of the Town of Claremont explore creative ways to enhance funding and technical support, and consider if there are smarter arrangements regarding staff responsibilities and collaboration with other organisations.

The following are a set of suggestions for consideration -

#### 13.1 Museum Functions and Staff Responsibilities

The Museum team collectively reflect on current Museum functions and staff time allocations and consider what needs to be 'dropped, retained, changed and introduced'. In particular, two issues need discussion. Firstly, whether there are time saving measures that can be introduced, especially in relation to museum visitation and opening hours. Secondly, how time and space could be created for a 'Calendar of Special Events'.

**Recommendation:**

**Museum staff collectively examine current staff responsibilities and Museum functions, and examine options for change.**

#### 13.2 Incentive Funding

Currently, no incentive exists regarding income generation activities at the Museum, as all funds are absorbed to Council's consolidated revenue. Such a policy is not conducive to encouraging enterprising actions by staff and Council needs to adopt a policy that returns any income generation back into project funding.

**Recommendation:**

**Council review its policy of all generated income being absorbed into consolidated revenue.**

#### 13.3 Partnership and Collaboration

The importance of collaboration is highly valued in community and economic development. It is important that the Claremont Museum be proactive in instigating collaborative initiatives with a host of groups throughout and beyond Claremont. As a starting point, a community mapping exercise is suggested to identify possible linkages with local service, sporting, business and community groups. This could lead to a host of connections related to improved communications and joint initiatives.

Collaboration within Council staff needs to be explored and whether there are opportunities for better linkage between the museum and staff responsible for the library, community development, special events, cultural development and heritage planning.

**Recommendation:**

**The Claremont Museum be proactive in exploring collaborative arrangements with other Council and community groups.**

#### 13.4 Freshwater Bay Community Foundation

Community Foundations are vehicles for local donors who wish to contribute their cash, trusts, bequests or property to create permanent endowments that will benefit the community in perpetuity. Community Foundations represent the fastest growing form of philanthropy giving in the world. Here in Western Australia, a Western Australia Community Foundations (WACF [www.wacf.org.au](http://www.wacf.org.au)) has been established to assist communities establish such structures. Already nine rural communities have established funds under the WACF to create perpetual legacies.

The Town of Claremont should consider providing leadership for the establishment of a Freshwater Bay Community Foundation. Such a Foundation could specifically target heritage, youth and arts and environment. Given the particular socio - economic standing and demography of this area, a significant fund could be created, providing a perpetual source of funding for targeted areas. Obviously, the activities of Claremont Museum would be a key beneficiary of such a Foundation.

The starting point for such an initiative is the identification of a small group of Claremont champions who can see the community benefits of this initiative, and meetings with the WACF regarding a fund raising strategy.

**Recommendation:**










**The Town of Claremont provide the leadership for the instigation of a Freshwater Bay Community Foundation.**

#### 13.5 Sources of Outside Funding

It is obvious that the Claremont Museum will need to continuously monitor and explore outside sources of funding to achieve additional goals. It is vital that any funding enables the museum to secure additional staffing support for design and coordination of additional projects. Most initiatives will require museum staff to be enterprising in creating 'cocktail' funding arrangements from a variety of sources.

Below is a list of the most useful funding services for Claremont museum projects -

- Lotterywest  
[www.lotterywest.wa.gov.au](http://www.lotterywest.wa.gov.au)
- Australian Tourism Development Program  
[www.ausindustry.gov.au](http://www.ausindustry.gov.au)
- Visions of Australia  
[www.dcita.gov.au](http://www.dcita.gov.au)
- Cultural Heritage Projects Program  
[www.deh.gov.au/heritage/programs](http://www.deh.gov.au/heritage/programs)
- Sharing Australia's Stories  
[www.deh.gov.au/heritage/programs](http://www.deh.gov.au/heritage/programs)
- Community Heritage Grants  
[www.nla.gov.au/chg](http://www.nla.gov.au/chg)
- Community Cultural Development Fund  
[www.ozco.gov.au](http://www.ozco.gov.au)
- Commemoration of Historic Events and Famous Persons

-  [www.ea.gov.au/heritage/programs](http://www.ea.gov.au/heritage/programs)
- Living in Harmony Community Grants Program  
 [www.immi.gov.au/multicultural/harmony](http://www.immi.gov.au/multicultural/harmony)
- Healthway  
 [www.healthway.wa.gov.au](http://www.healthway.wa.gov.au)
- Youth Grants WA  
 [www.youngpeople.communitydevelopment.wa.gov.au](http://www.youngpeople.communitydevelopment.wa.gov.au)
- Trails Funding Program  
 [www.dsr.wa.gov.au](http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au)
- Young People and the Arts  
 [www.cultureandarts.wa.gov.au](http://www.cultureandarts.wa.gov.au)
- Community Arts Investment Program  
 [www.canwa.com.au](http://www.canwa.com.au)
- Heritage Grants Program  
 [www.heritage.wa.gov.au](http://www.heritage.wa.gov.au)
- Indigenous Heritage Grants Program  
 [www.dia.wa.gov.au/DIA/Funding/Reconciliation](http://www.dia.wa.gov.au/DIA/Funding/Reconciliation)
- Reconciliation Grants Scheme  
 [www.dia.wa.gov.au/DIA/Funding/Reconciliation](http://www.dia.wa.gov.au/DIA/Funding/Reconciliation)
- Community Grants Program - Multicultural Interests  
 [www.omi.wa.gov.au/grants](http://www.omi.wa.gov.au/grants)
- Foundation for Young Australians  
 [www.youngaustralians.org](http://www.youngaustralians.org)
- Ian Potter Foundation  
 [www.ianpotter.org.au](http://www.ianpotter.org.au)
- Myer Foundation and the Sidney Myer Foundation  
 [www.myerfoundation.org.au](http://www.myerfoundation.org.au)
- Bankwest Sponsorship Fund  
 [www.bankwest.com.au](http://www.bankwest.com.au)

The above list is obviously not exclusive. Given the large number of government, community and philanthropic funding programs that do exist is suggested that Claremont Museum subscribe to the Easy Grants Newsletter, available from [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au), and secure the following resource publications -

- *WA Grants Directory - Grants and Assistance Programs for Regional and Metropolitan Communities and Local Governments (2004)* - Department of Local Government and Regional Development [www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/grantsDir/default.asp](http://www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/grantsDir/default.asp)
- *The Australian Directory of Philanthropy 2005 / 2006* (Philanthropy Australia Inc, 2005)
- *Commonwealth Regional Information Directory 2004 - 05* (Department of Transport and Regional Services, 2002)
- *Support for the Arts Handbook* (Australian Council, 2005)
- *GRANTS LINK* - whole of federal government funding website [www.grantslink.gov.au](http://www.grantslink.gov.au)
- *FundsAssist* - available from [www.fundsassist.com.au](http://www.fundsassist.com.au)

**Recommendation:**

**That one member of Claremont Museum / Town of Claremont staff be given the specific responsibility to maintain a continuous monitoring role of all relevant funding processes.**

**Recommendation:**

**The Western Suburbs Regional Group of Councils investigate the employment of a sponsorship and funding officer to work across the six participating councils.**

### 13.6 Flexible Funding

It is important that the Manager of the Claremont Museum has the capacity to manage the museum's budget in such a way as to be able to create additional technical and project development time for special projects, including creation of additional staff hours.

**Recommendation:**

**The Town of Claremont provide maximum budget flexibility to the Managers of the Claremont Museum to ensure the design and implementation of special initiatives.**

### 14.0 Volunteers

The Claremont Museum has been very successful in recruiting and maintaining volunteers. These volunteers have enabled the Museum to operate a variety of services both at the museum site and the Railway Signal Cabin.

However, the Claremont Museum is like most community organisations where volunteers are aging and the supply never equates to the available service opportunities. The following suggestions are offered for discussion -

#### 14.1 Maintaining the Interest and Commitment of Volunteers

The secret to success in this area relates mainly to the quality of recognition and appreciation given. Attached as Appendix 1 is an ideas sheet - *43 Ways to Recognise and Appreciate Volunteers*. It is suggested that staff use this as a basis for staff discussion on how to strengthen volunteer appreciation.

**Recommendation:**

**The Claremont Museum staff annually review the level of volunteer appreciation.**

#### 14.2 Skills and Passion Audit

Evidence clearly demonstrates that people best respond to volunteer opportunities when specific volunteer invitations focus tasks commitments related to interests and passions. The instigation of a Town of Claremont Skills and Passions Audit would assist in identifying the skills and interests of the asset rich community of Claremont. The Museum would be a direct beneficiary of such a Town of Claremont initiative.

**Recommendation:**

**The Town of Claremont instigate a 'Skills and Passion' Audit of its local residents, and Claremont Museum utilise this resource for direct approaches to residents to contribute to specific tasks / programs.**

#### 14.3 Task Teams

Evidence clearly demonstrates that people best respond to volunteer opportunities when specific volunteer initiatives focus on short term commitment i.e. being asked to do a specific task as opposed to joining a committee or project without a perceived 'sunset'. Especially in regard to specific exhibitions, special events and the design of new initiatives, it suggested that the Claremont Museum invite people to join a specific Task Team for a specific period of time. It is vital that the task be related to personal interests and passions.

**Recommendation:**

**That the Claremont Museum explore the use of Task Teams with a defined purpose and timeframe to instigate new initiatives and special events.**

#### 14.4 Youth Volunteerism

Museums traditionally attract the aged volunteers. The Claremont Museum has the capacity to also target young people through projects or initiatives that appeal to young men and women. Possibilities include -

- mural projects related to Boat Building Shed and toilet block
- appreciative inquiry projects involving young people carrying out appreciative interviews to ascertain 'moments of pride' in the community
- video production involving the Marvin Program
- oral histories and house histories
- opportunity for school based apprenticeship in community development
- use of the 'R U MAD?' (Are You Making a Difference?) Program ([www.rumad.org.au](http://www.rumad.org.au)) to involve young people in community service related to the environment and heritage.

The Claremont Youth Advisory Council is an excellent reference group to use in determining and developing youth interest initiatives.

**Recommendation:**

**The Town of Claremont provide a budget to the Youth Advisory Committee to undertake museum related projects involving young people at the Claremont Museum. Projects should be developed in consultation with Museum staff.**

#### 14.5 National Volunteer Awards

This is an initiative of the National Australia Bank ([www.national.com.au/community](http://www.national.com.au/community)), and recognises the outstanding performance of community organisations in terms of -

- significantly improving the quality of life in their particular communities,
- motivating and managing community volunteers, and

- promoting the value of volunteerism.

Currently an award prize amount of up to \$500,000 is available to be shared by 70 organisations. Undertaking the application process is always a useful reflective learning process and, obviously, the benefits of winning are not just in receiving the prize money.

**Recommendation:**

**The Claremont Museum apply for the National Volunteer Awards in 2006.**

## 15.0 Performance Indicators

The implementation of the Interpretation Plan for the Claremont Museum will achieve the following objectives:

1. a framework for future development of operations and interpretation
2. a higher level of visitation
3. improved access for the community
4. greater community recognition of the museum and its management as an important heritage place for the town.

Key performance indicators should therefore be tied to these objectives. The table below lists some key performance indicators for each objective.

Interpretation Plan Objective	Key Performance Indicators
Provide a framework for future development of operations and interpretation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. maintenance of professional staff for the museum</li> <li>2. implementation of interpretation plan at Claremont Museum</li> <li>3. implementation of interpretation plan at other sites</li> </ol>
Provide a higher level of tourist visitation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. number of visitors from outside of the Town of Claremont</li> <li>2. number of visitors in each target audience demographic: school children, youth, families and adults 55+</li> </ol>
Provide improved access for the community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. number of visitors living within the Town of Claremont</li> <li>2. number of activities presented for primary school groups</li> <li>3. number of school holiday programmes presented for children</li> <li>4. number of activities developed for secondary school children</li> <li>5. number of school holiday programmes presented for youth</li> </ol>
Provide greater community recognition of the site and its management as an important heritage place for the region.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. number of volunteers</li> <li>2. number of community events hosted</li> <li>3. level of visitor satisfaction</li> </ol>

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*Understanding the Future: Museums and 21st Century Life, the Value of Museum*, Department for Culture, Media and Sport - Museums and Cultural Property Division, UK, January 2005.

## Appendix 1

### 43 Ways to Recognise and Appreciate Volunteers

1. Never stop saying 'Thank You'.
2. Establish a volunteer suggestion box.
3. Acknowledge volunteers by names at public events.
4. Reimburse 'out of pocket' expenses.
5. Send a birthday card.
6. Hold an annual Volunteer Appreciation dinner.
7. Invite volunteers to staff meetings.
8. Recognise personal needs and problems.
9. Accommodate personal needs.
10. Establish a volunteer recognition board in a prominent position.
11. Organise informal morning teas.
12. Always greet by name.
13. Provide continuous training.
14. Ask for opinions and ideas.
15. Hold regular idea generation sessions.
16. Regularly organise photos in local newspaper of volunteers.
17. Take time to talk about the job.
18. Write references.
19. Organise volunteers to attend conferences.
20. Write personal 'thank you' notes.
21. Invite participation in policy formation.
22. Celebrate outstanding projects and achievements.
23. Nominate individuals for volunteer awards.
24. Carefully match volunteer with jobs.
25. Praise volunteers to their friends.
26. Plan staff and volunteer social events.
27. Plan occasional extravaganzas.
28. Send letter of appreciation to volunteer's family and employers.
29. Say 'we missed you' when absent.
30. Award special awards for extraordinary achievements.
31. Fully orientate new volunteers.
32. Send Christmas cards.
33. Organise community-wide, cooperative, inter-agency volunteer recognition events.
34. Produce and distribute an organisational T - Shirt to all volunteers.
35. Offer personal praise and recognition on the job, through the media and at public occasions.
36. Give complimentary tickets to volunteers for special events and functions.
37. Arrange discounts for volunteers at local businesses and events.
38. Award life memberships, VIP recognition certificates.
39. Hold social events in honour of volunteers.
40. Create volunteer skill development opportunities.
41. Farewell volunteers when they are retiring or moving away from the area.
42. Arrange accreditation eg. Certificate 1 in Active Volunteering.
43. Apply for a National Volunteer Award of the National Australia Bank.

**Appendix 2**  
**Claremont Museum site map**