



Homestead helpers enjoying fun of fair

It's all hands on deck with Friends of Greenmount busy preparing for the fashionable, family-friendly and free Heritage Fair to be held Sunday, May 29

THE Friends of Greenmount are hard at work preparing for the upcoming Heritage Fair.

However, the non-profit group isn't simply weeding gardens and sprucing up the homestead.

They are also embarking on a funding and membership drive to assist with an exciting oral history project which is currently under way.

"We (the Friends) will have a stand at the fair with items

for sale and a raffle to help raise funds for training, extra equipment and research materials to supplement the project," said committee member Chris Vaughan.

"The oral history project is very exciting in that it will help our members to record the memories and experiences of people like Gloria Arrow, the Cook family's live-in housekeeper and friend, and resident of Greenmount for over 50 years," she said.

"We need to ensure this

knowledge from the past is preserved for future generations."

Ms Vaughan, who is a self-confessed vintage clothing enthusiast, has also been chosen as one of the judges of this year's Fashions at the Fair and was able to provide some insight into what the judging panel will be looking for.

"We will be looking for costumes that stand out in our theme, which is sport through the decades going



Friends of Greenmount committee member and Fashions of the Fair judge Chris Vaughan steps out at last year's Heritage Fair.

back to the missed 1916 Olympics," she said. "A perfect example is the ankle-length, white tennis dresses with stockings and large shade hats that graced the

courts in the early part of the century. Another would be the long, woollen, neck-to-knee swimming costumes.

"Other aspects we will

be looking for include historical representation and authenticity; time and effort put in and, most importantly, how much fun they are having."



Artspace Mackay volunteers learn about the MECC during a backstage tour.

Secret to MECC's success

LAST year the Mackay Friends of the Theatre volunteers contributed to the success of the MECC by working a show-stopping 6797 hours at well over 500 shows and events.

Community Engagement Committee chair Cr Kevin Casey said the friends had been part of the fabric of the facility since its opening day in 1988.

"They contribute to the centre in more ways than people realise," Cr Casey said.

"They're not just the striking people you see as you walk into a show – they also provide ushering and ticket services, bar services and contribute to the safety of all of those who attend shows."

>> For more details visit mackayecc.com.au/friends_of_mecc



Helping is sweet

A DEDICATED team of 14 volunteers is behind the sweet success of council's Sarina Sugar Shed.

On average, these volunteers contribute between 90 and 120 hours a week towards operation of the seven-day-a-week tourist facility. This equates to in-kind wages of more than \$200,000 a year.

One of the volunteers Kathy Taylor (above right) has been volunteering in the Sugar Shed's kitchen for nearly four years. She, along with other volunteers, produces the



facility's Chef's Gusto range of sauces, cooking in the kitchen two to three times a week to keep up with demand for products sold at the Sugar Shed and 55 retail outlets around the Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday regions.

Tour guide Lyn Thompson (above left) has been volunteering there for more than three years.

Living on a cane farm in Sarina, she takes tours every Wednesday, sharing her knowledge with visitors from all over the world.

>> For more information visit sarinasugarshed.com.au

Friends of Gardens dig in to help

WE all need the help of our friends sometimes and the Botanic Gardens is no different.

Fortunately, a number of local groups assist in developing and maintaining the facility.

Groups involved include The Friends of the Gardens, the Society for Growing Australian Plants (SGAP) and Birdlife Mackay.

These groups and individuals assist with projects, including planting-bees, information

events and guided walks.

Economic Development and Planning Committee member Cr Fran Fordham said volunteers were essential to the success of the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens.

"The number of people who are involved in supporting our gardens is amazing," she said.

"Volunteers help plant new plants, remove countless weeds and give valuable hours of their own time.

"The Meadowlands area development will benefit from the invaluable support of the community who have passion for all things botanical."

The Botanic Gardens will host an Open Day on Sunday, May 29, from 7am to 4pm.

The Open Day will be run by volunteers, conducting guided walks, palm weaving, bird watching, children's activities and a fun run.

Come along and support our volunteers.



Gardens volunteers (from left) John Melville, Christine Carlisle, Jan Sampson and Kevin Jackson.

>> Visit mackayregionalbotanicgardens.com.au for more details, including how you can become a volunteer for the facility



A recent guided Heritage Tour of the City Centre.

Historian loves to step back in time

MACKAY woman Berenice Wright (right) never hesitates to volunteer, especially when there is history involved.

The Mackay historian guided two Heritage Tours of the City Centre, hosted by council recently.

About 80 people attended the tours, which coincided with the National Trust's Heritage Festival 2016.

Mrs Wright's volunteer work with council began 36 years ago with the then Mackay City Council in 1980.

She was one of the founders of the Friends of the Library back in the early 1980s.

During that time, she has also done some major history projects for council.



Mrs Wright finds sharing her knowledge of Mackay history with interested people rewarding.

"I have enjoyed it and have got a lot out of it myself," she said. "I've learnt a lot."

Mrs Wright's popular cemetery tours will also resume later this year, sometime after July.



A revegetation project on Jane Creek for National Tree Day last year.

Helping sow the volunteering seed

FROM little things, big things grow.

This is an apt saying for volunteers who help out at council's Mackay Natural Environment Centre.

They help grow seedlings for council initiatives, ranging from a tree giveaway at the upcoming Mackay Show in June to revegetation projects, including National Tree Day in July.

Economic Development and Planning Committee chair Cr

Amanda Camm said about eight volunteers helped out at the Natural Environment Centre in Swayne Street about twice a week.

"They help sow the seeds and as the plants grow they help maintain them. Each tree has to be potted," she said.

"At last year's Mackay Show we gave away about 1500 trees. We're anticipating giving away more this year, including Mackay Cedar and Mt Blackwood Holly."

Cr Camm said volunteers were also currently helping with plants for a coastal ground cover planting project at Seaforth.

She said the next stage of a revegetation project on a riverbank on Jane Creek near the new junior soccer fields at Glenella would be the focus of National Tree Day.

"We have a plan of what trees we need and how many. Last year we planted about 1600 trees at that site in the first stage."

>> For more information visit mackay.qld.gov.au and look under "environment"

COUNCIL - in brief -

Time to thank our volunteers

THIS week is National Volunteer Week. Being held from May 9 to 15, the week is an annual celebration to acknowledge the generous contribution of our nation's volunteers. The week was first established in 1989. Last year the theme, Give Happy Live Happy, was introduced and continues this year. Research shows that volunteers live happier and healthier lives. So, make sure you thank a volunteer this week, or get involved in volunteering yourself.

Friends fund library robots

THE Friends of Mackay Libraries recently donated \$5500 towards purchasing Lego robotics kits for an exciting young adults' program. Lego EV3 Mindstorm Robotics workshops have been a hit over the school holidays. These sessions, targeted at 12 to 17-year-olds, teach programming and problem-solving skills. The Friends also often host regular free author talks. For more details, ask at your local library.

Help out for festival fun

COUNCIL'S Festivals and Events team organises four major events each year, attended by more than 50,000 people. So, they're always keen for volunteers to pitch in and help with events, including the upcoming Festival of Arts in July. Details on the Friends of the Festival program can be found at mackayecc.com.au/festivals/festival_volunteer, which includes a link to some of the volunteer job descriptions and an application form.

Lending a hand bloomin' good

A SMALL team of volunteers provide valuable ongoing support at council's Orchid House at Queens Park. They assist with general nursery and orchid work. Without this extra help, council's Orchid House staff wouldn't be able to maintain and re-pot the orchids or grow thousands of outdoor plants which are planted in garden beds across the region.

