



ROTARY BRINGS HISTORY TO LIFE

Members of the Rotary Club of Busselton-Geographe Bay, WA, along with local history enthusiasts, came together to create a heritage trail through their local city precinct.

The Rotary club's aim was to provide an easy-to-follow, walkable trail for all abilities, covering properties that give a glimpse into the town's early history and day-to-day life.

After a great deal of research by the Historical Society, followed by in-depth discussion, 20 sites were selected for inclusion. Each was fitted with a marine-grade, stainless-steel plaque detailing each location's historical

significance. These were fixed to jarrah posts made by the Busselton Men's Shed.

A 40-page book was written and designed with more information. A first run of 1000 copies was printed for distribution to tourist hotspots and local book retailers.

Finally, an audio component was produced to enable visitors to listen to short memories of each site, narrated by lifetime residents of the Busselton region, recorded by the Busselton Oral History Group. These are available

through an app downloadable on smartphones from the Apple App Store or Google Play.

"We tried to use amusing stories where we could; some of them are very funny and you think 'oh my goodness me'," Heritage Trail committee member Sandra Johnston said. "There was a small scandal attached to St Mary's and lots of interesting stories about prisoners escaping from the Court House."

The Rotary Club of Busselton-Geographe Bay contributed \$20,000



ABOVE: Completed in 1865, the Busselton Jetty is culturally significant as an early Western Australian timber structure and a valuable relic of the city's early past and its connections with the timber industry. (Photo: The Historical Society)



LEFT: The Busselton Heritage Trail covers properties that give a glimpse into the town's early history and day-to-day life.
BELOW: 'The Vasse' town site, later to become Busselton, was originally surveyed in 1839.

to fund the project and a further \$7000 was granted by the City of Busselton. The tour takes around two hours to complete at a leisurely pace.

Much to the club's delight, the project has recently been nominated for a Heritage Award with the WA Heritage Council. The club's next community project is envisioned to become a local attraction and a feature of the Heritage Trail – a replica of the original lighthouse designed by notary Charles Donat Keyser, who happens to be the great, great grandfather of one of the club's members, Peter Turner. There are also plans to expand the Heritage Trail to further sites in the future. •

