

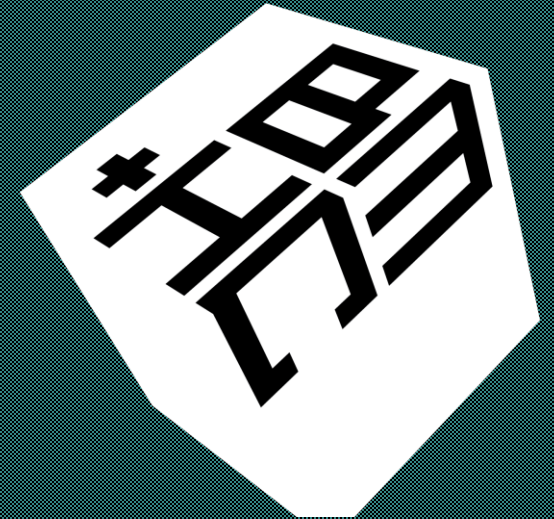
House of Many Stories

2025

HISTORY'S MYSTERIES

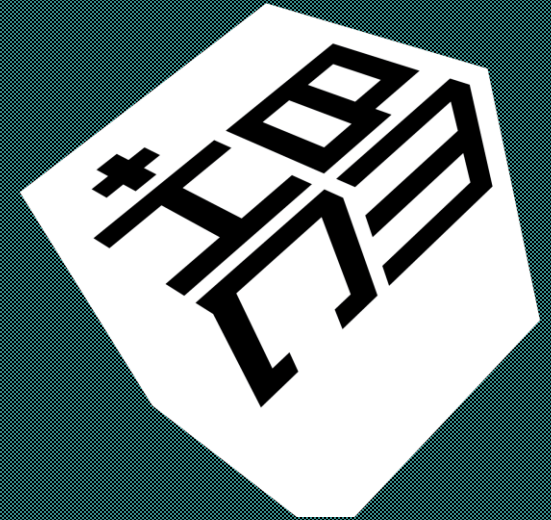
YOUNG WRITER'S COMPETITION

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Every museum
object has a story.
Some of these stories
may never be told.

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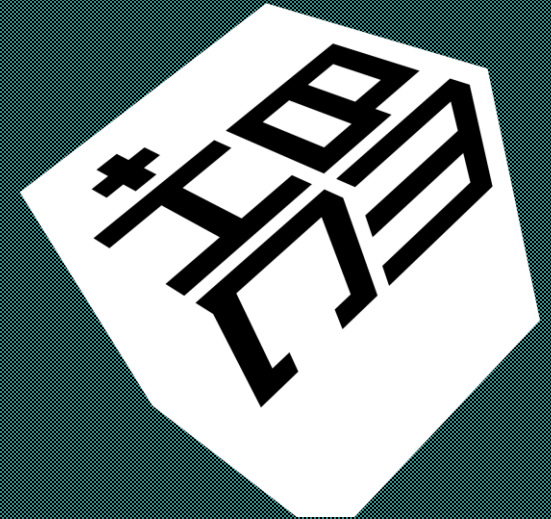
Museums are full of mysteries.

Objects find their way to museums in different ways.

Some arrive with a detailed narrative about how they were created, where they came from, and the role they played in the lives of their owners.

Others are found in dusty attics or sheds, bought out of curiosity at charity shops, or discovered buried in the ground. Historical research may be able to find the ages of the objects, and sometimes their manufacturer or geographical origin. Their stories, however – their owners, their uses, their importance to people of the past – often remain a mystery.

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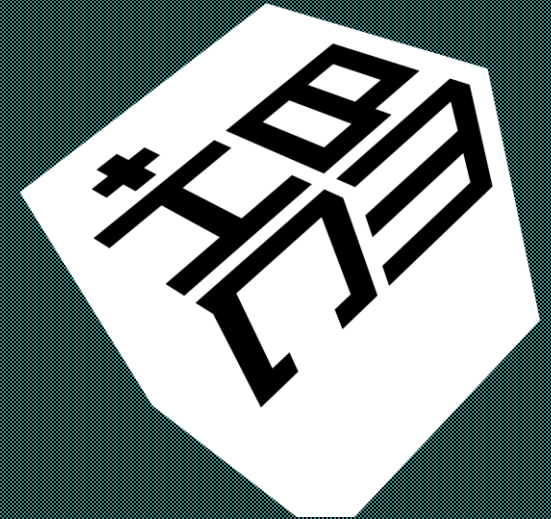
History's Mysteries invites you to create new stories for old things.

History's Mysteries Young Writer's Competition showcases objects from our collection whose past is not completely known.

It asks Bunbury's young authors to use their imaginations to fill the gaps in the story.

The competition is an opportunity to engage with local history in a unique and creative way.

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History's Mysteries Theme for 2025

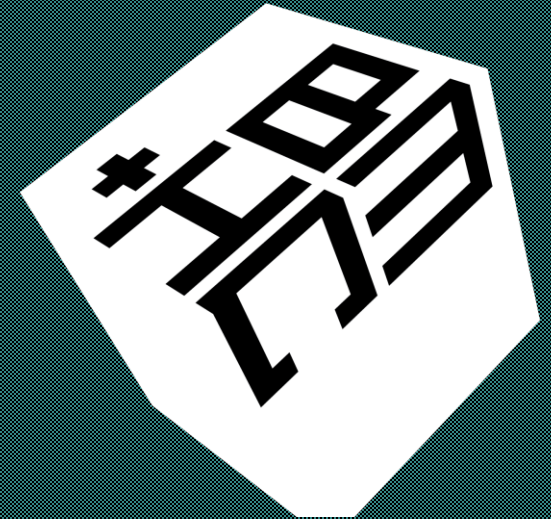
This year's travelling exhibition includes objects which were an integral part of a popular visitor's boarding house in Bunbury for over 150 years.

For many years Bunbury was recognised as one of the best holiday destinations in Western Australia – with beautiful beaches, excellent fishing and fresh sea air.

Scott's Boarding House, later replaced by Koombana House, in Victoria Street has welcomed people to Bunbury since the 1830s.

The building was demolished in 1987 and Koombana Court, a commercial complex now stands in its place.

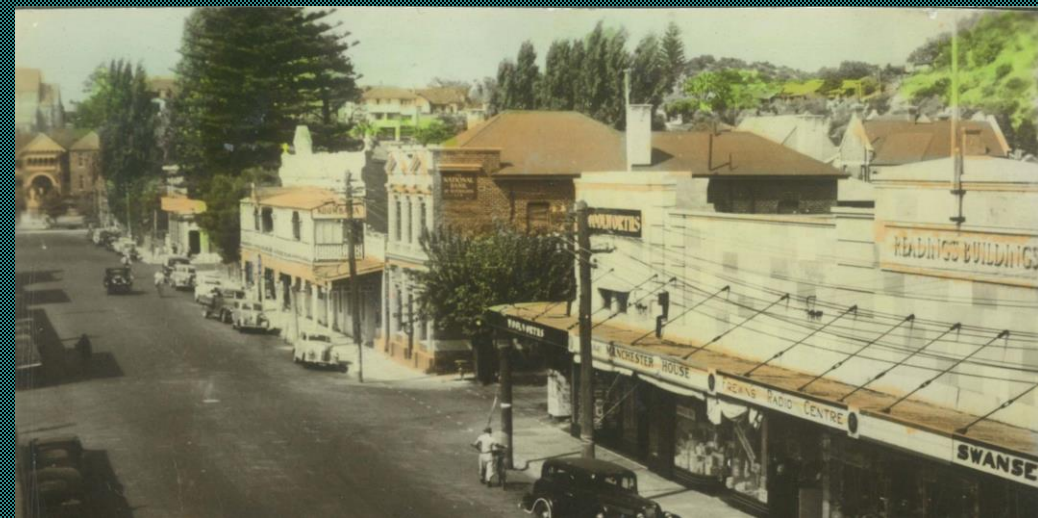
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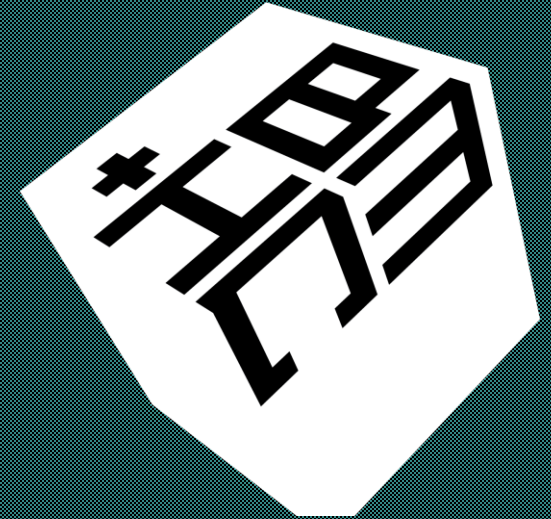
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THE ARTEFACTS



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Feature one or more of
the following artefacts in
your History's Mysteries
story





On Tour: Glockenspiel & Hammer

How does a glockenspiel end up in a hotel in Bunbury?

Glockenspiel is a German word meaning 'bell play' and is classed as a percussion instrument.

The instrument is played by striking the metal bars with a small mallet.

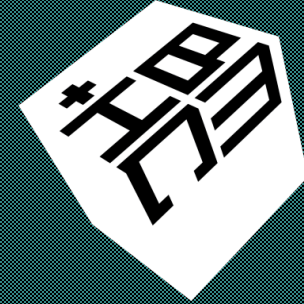
Because they produce a clear bell-like tone, the sound of a glockenspiel carries over other lower sounds. They were often used on trains in the dining car to summon people into their meals.

This one was used for many years at Koombana House to let guests know that the dining room was open.



On Tour: Room Numbers & Signs

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These are a set of original door numbers for guest rooms at Koombana House.

Combinations of these can be used to make many different room numbers – even rooms which might never have existed.

Koombana House, like most boarding houses, had shared bathroom facilities and possibly shared lavatories as well.

A clue to the age of these objects is the wear and tear on their paintwork.

MUS.2023.258



At the museum: small wooden chair

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This small wooden child's chair was salvaged from the Koombana House dining room before the building was demolished in 1987.

The brown paintwork is worn and scratched.
The leather cushion has faded into patches of different colours.

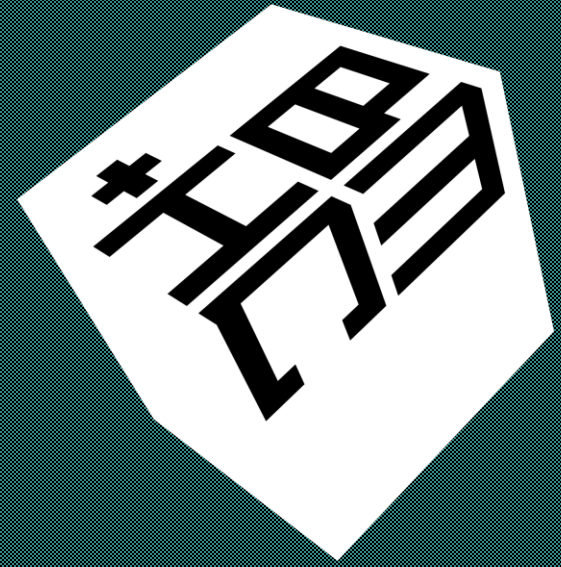
How many children have sat on this seat?
How many secrets and stories did they hear?

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

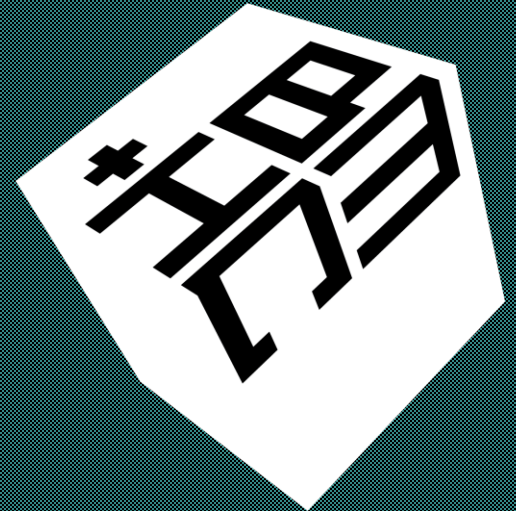
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Including historical details helps
your writing come to life.



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A short history of accommodation

People have always required accommodation when away from home.

In ancient Rome these were called *hospitia*.

Later, during the Middle Ages in Europe, religious monasteries offered the traveller room and a meal.

Inns later became popular- these were privately owned and provided the landlord with an income.

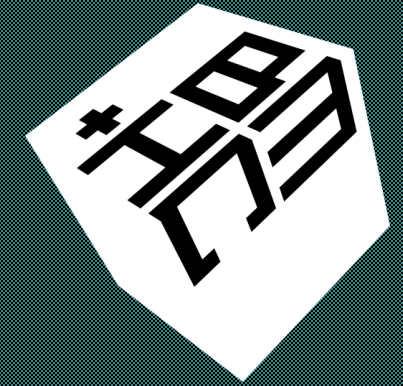
People did not travel a lot - those who did were mostly merchants and pilgrims.

The Industrial Revolution of the 1800s saw innovations in transport which allowed more people to travel.

As the need for temporary accommodation grew, so did the options available.

The first luxury hotels, like the Ritz Hotel in Paris, were built in the mid 1800s but only very wealthy people could stay in them.

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What is a boarding House?

A boarding house falls somewhere in between a hotel and a private home for accommodation.

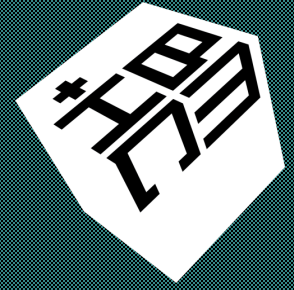
Historically staying in a 'hotel' in Australia meant staying in a public House, or pub.

The boarding House offered safe family accommodation away from the noise and disruption at a typical hotel.

The modern idea of a hotel, as we understand it – with perhaps a pool and room service - only originated in recent times.

For most people travelling or taking a holiday, a good boarding house was the best and safest option.

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Koombana House – Scott's Boarding House

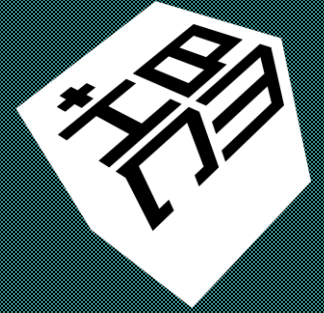
The origin of The site as a boarding house began in the 1850s when one of the first European families to come to this area, John and Helen Scott, built a two-storey building on the corner of Prinsep and Victoria Street.

Their son Robert and his wife, Catherine, later used the upper floor to provide boarding accommodation for visitors.

By 1899, Robert owned the building outright.

In 1903, most of that building was demolished and extensive renovations done

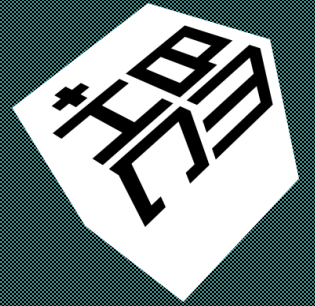
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Koombana House – Toronto Coffee Palace.

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In October 1903, the Bunbury Herald reported the opening of a new coffee palace on the site of the old Scott's Boarding House.

Built by Mr. John Nuttall, the premises were initially leased by Mr Drury Stephenson who moved his popular Toronto Coffee Palace to the building.

Coffee houses (or palaces) were seen as an alternative meeting place to hotels where liquor was served and became hugely popular in the 1900s.

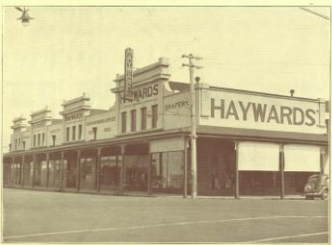


Toronto House c1900

Photo from Phyllis Barnes – Bunbury Images. P.95

Koombana Boarding House

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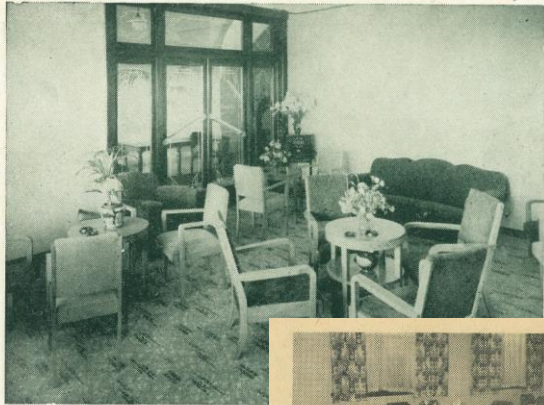
At "**Koombana House**" Mr. Scale,
of Qantas Airways, Darwin, is
spending a few days here, together
with Mrs. Scale.

* * *


Also staying at "**Koombana House**"
is Miss G. C. Fotheringham, of May-
lands, who is spending part of her
holiday in Bunbury.

* * *

"SOUTH WESTERN TIMES" ANNUAL



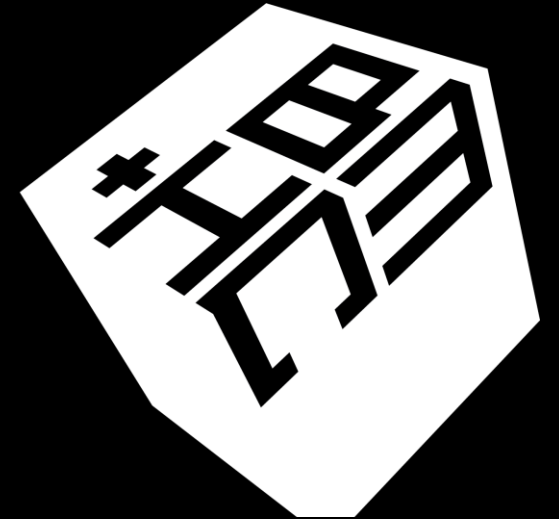
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THE COMPETITION

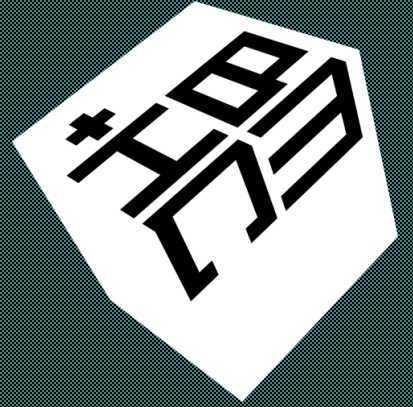
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Your Story

- Entries must be in **short story** form and be a maximum of 1000 words long. They may be written in **any genre**.
- Stories may be written independently or at school.
- The story must mention **one or more of the featured objects** in the touring collection or at the Museum. Some objects will be displayed at the Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre during the April school holidays, and they will be touring local schools during Term 2.
- The story must be **set in Bunbury**.
- All entries must be **original work** written by the named author for the competition.

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What you could win

This year, we have three prize divisions:

Years 5 - 6, Years 7 - 8, and Years 9 - 12

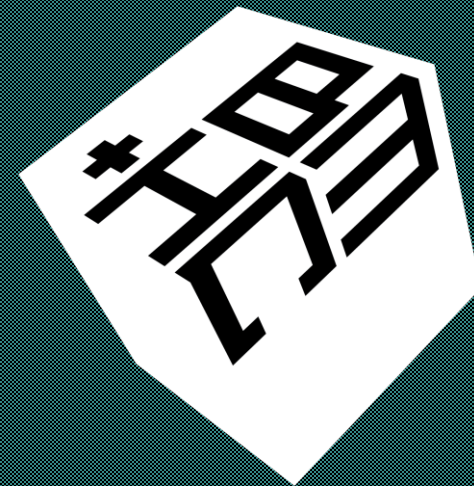
In each division, there will be three prizes:

First Place	\$150
Second Place	\$100
Third Place	\$50

Prizes are presented in the form of VISA gift cards at our **Awards Night** on Thursday, September 5, 2025.

Winning stories will be read aloud by guest readers and then **displayed at the Museum.**

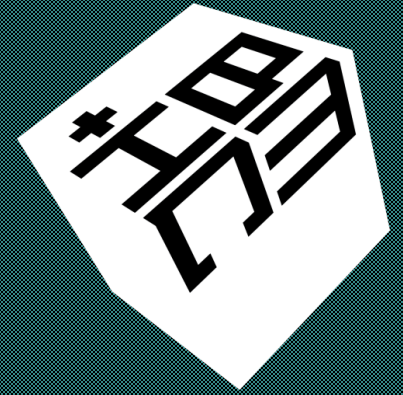
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How to Enter

- Entries should be submitted using the **form on our website** on or before **27 July 2025**.
- Submissions must be in **PDF or Word Document format** and may be a maximum of 10MB in size.

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Entry Conditions

- Entrants must be aged **9 - 18** years in November 2025 and must live or go to school in the Greater Bunbury area.
- While the Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre will retain the **right to display the stories** publicise them online, and add them to the Museum's collections, copyright for the work will remain with the author.

What the Judges are Looking For

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Judges score the entries according to the following criteria:

Use of Theme

Creatively uses one or more of the mystery objects as a key part of the story. The setting is historically appropriate to the theme.

Plot Structure

The plot is clear and engaging. It has a distinct beginning, middle and end.

Characterisation

Characters are vivid, individual, and feel believable as real people.

Writing Quality

Tense and point of view are consistent throughout the story. It is logically structured, and the language used is smooth and grammatically correct.

Impact

The story is memorable and told with a distinctive voice. It evokes emotion and suspends disbelief.

Now it is your turn. You have the artefacts. You have the imagination. Find a story in the house which holds many.

Now it is your turn.
You have the artefacts.
You have the
imagination.
Find your own story in
the house which holds
many.



References

Barnes, P. (2004). *Bunbury Images: People and Places*. Express Print, Bunbury . WA.