Beat: Lifestyle

Australiana Perfect for World Fashion

Harwoods Cottage breathing new life

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USPA NEWS - Norma Andrews has carefully restored every vestiges of the once thriving Quindalup timber town from a near ruinous condition into a popular café, short term accommodation stay and tourism attraction. An inspiration to others restoring homes, Harwood's Cottage and Café is a photographers dream.

Harwood's Cottage and Café is a cluster settlement of buildings of the former Quindalup town site, a satellite settlement for Busselton just 22 minutes South along the Bussleton Highway and Caves Road. From the mid to late 1800s, Quindalup was the hub of a thriving timber industry peaking in the early 1820's . Behind the original Cottage was the Government Building , now restored. The limestone structures were built in two stages initially thought to be a lockup for early convict workers and a customs house it stands restored next to the Government Post Office which would have been the center point at the time for Stage coaches and travelers on foot. Meeting Norma was an amazing experience who reached high into a wild Fig Tree to lower a succulent fruit offering me my first fresh fig picked from a tree. Her talents extend to a must take home 'Fig Jam' to 'Home Baked Specialty Cakes' where locals are lining up for her Special Occasion baking skills for local Birthdays , Weddings and Christenings.

When Norma Andrews inherited the property in 1998, buildings was in a derelict state and in desperate need of repair. It took two years of planning and work to restore and adapt the cottage into a café and to turn the paddock into gardens. She was assisted with a Heritage Council grant for a conservation plan to guide the restoration work. The café was a success and helped her fund the remaining restoration work.“¨“¨“¨Over the next few five years she restored the outdoor kitchen and government buildings, and adapted the barn into short term accommodation. The government buildings house a collection of memorabilia which has proven popular with locals and tourists.“¨“¨“¨Through her tireless, conscientious and dedicated approach, Ms Andrews has given these significant buildings a new lease of life.

I asked Norma what life was like living in such serenity with so many photographers and camera clubs wanting to visit? " Look at how beautiful this place is and I love that you found my flowers and appreciated the mood of lighting as you walked through the settlement while you were taking photographs. People are respectful of the natural surroundings and as your model Olivia said It has an amazing feel of time standing still." Said Norma who then took me for a tour through the restored kitchen where she explained , " I always had a shared dream with Dorothy Harwood Martin to turn this cottage into an eating establishment and with dedication we did it". CeeLo Green once said ,"Antique things have an appreciation and worth. Something can be old, but it can be timeless; therefore, it becomes an antique. If this antique is preserved and deemed precious, it could be passed down as a family heirloom". Spending the afternoon at Harwood's Cottage will make anyone appreciate the preservation of time, the efforts many have made to create an amazing 'Hollywood' style settlement I'm sure we will soon see on the big screen with Australian Film and Television Association always looking for the next 'Dressmaker' set. I loved my time here and I know many others will when cameras start snapping at Harwood's but remember to take home a half a dozen jars of Fig Jam as I did, you will love it. ... Namaste.

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