



MEDIA RELEASE

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BLACKSMITH ART RETURNS TO MANNUM

Mannum built its reputation as the centre for engineering and machinery production with the talents of Blacksmith brothers John and David Shearer who established their farm machinery factory where they created a string of inventions. In fact in 1897, David Shearer produced one of the first cars in Australia, which featured a differential gear in an enclosed case.

To recreate those days of manufacturing and historic boat building, the Mannum Dock Museum has created a fully operational Black Smith Shop for visitors to enjoy.

Blacksmithing is not just about horseshoes these days and is now a recognized art form with many blacksmith artists in operation around the world.

Blacksmithing is an ancient trade that, like other crafts, saw a downturn during the Industrial Revolution, when machines took over jobs. Now, blacksmithing is having a revival at the Mannum Dock Museum building new ways of connecting with visitors.

The SA Blacksmith Association volunteers will collaboratively work with the Mannum Dock Museum to operate the Black Smith Shop on a regular basis in conjunction with the PS Marion Cruise days.

Chris Carter, President, Artist Blacksmiths Association SA said, "*The Artist Blacksmiths Association is looking forward to working in the Blacksmith Shop. It opens up a venue which allows for the demonstration of a craft which has stood the test of time and one which has great historical significance*".

Many pieces created by the visiting black smiths will be on sale in the Mannum Visitor Information Centre and special workshops will be introduced next year to teach both locals and school groups as to the age old tradition.

"*To bring this age old craft back to Mannum for the public to enjoy will be a major draw card at the Museum*", said Mid Murray Council Mayor Dave Burgess.

"*Not only will the Black Smith Shop be a new attraction for Mannum, it will teach our youth as to the history of manufacturing and the hardships associated with metal production from years ago*".

If you are looking for something to do in the holidays with the children, make your way to Mannum only 70 minutes from Adelaide and visit the Mannum Dock Museum Black Smith Shop on the banks of the Murray River operating Wednesdays throughout the school holidays or visit the website www.psmarion.com for special days of operation in conjunction with the Randell Steam Shed.

For further information contact Jenny Callander at the Mannum Dock Museum on 85692733 or museum@psmarion.com. Visit our website www.psmarion.com *Photograph courteously of Natasha Adams, Charmane (Black Smith), Veronica (background, Volunteer)*