

MEDIA RELEASE

HANDCRAFTED MURALS CAPTURE MORGAN'S HISTORY THROUGH "WINDOWS OF TIME"

The fifth and final artwork in a series of stunning quilted murals capturing Morgan's history was unveiled this month.

The unique five-panel mural has been painstakingly hand-crafted for the Landseer Morgan Museum by a dedicated team of volunteers over the past six years.

Named '*Windows of Time*', the four existing works depict Morgan's rich heritage, from the area's traditional custodians, to the arrival of white settlers, the construction of the steam railway, the bustling riverboat era and the growth of the horticulture industry. The area's stunning natural environment and significant connection to the Murray River are also captured.

The mural's creators – Rose Craig, Kerry Thomson and Diana Angel – worked closely together over six years to design and sew the artworks. The trio were approached by Morgan Museum curator Bruce Perrot back in 2015 to ask if their sewing group could create a mural to replace a former woollen exhibit.

"We were courageous – or crazy – enough to say yes," Ms Craig said.

"I have always loved the history of Morgan. The concept was to create a colourful and fun history mural, including local flora and fauna, to fit a large wall area in the lovely big old warehouse, Landseer Building.

"So with a cupboard full of fabric and a head full of ideas, the six-year commitment began. The three of us have worked together for those six years without an argument or cross word.

"I could never guess how many different fabrics were used or how many miles of thread were stitched. The number of hours to produce one panel was approximately 650 hours – so the total for five panels is 3,250 hours.

"This last panel - number five - completes the set, telling the story of Morgan's history looking through the '*Windows of Time*'. It is our honour to create this living memory."

The five panels not only chart the history of Morgan, but also its strong connection to the local environment. A kangaroo appears in each panel as the 'narrator' of the story, and every panel has a seasonal connection, with a summer sunrise, scenes for autumn, winter and spring, and lastly a summer sunset. Each panel measures 3.75m high by 1.5m wide. The murals take the form of windows in honour of the Morgan Methodist Church (now the Morgan Uniting Church), which was the first built in the Riverland.

The fifth and final Morgan Mural was launched at the Landseer Morgan Museum on Friday, 7 May by Member for Chaffey, the Hon. Tim Whetstone.

"The *Windows of Time* are a remarkable achievement, capturing the unique history of the Morgan community and the area's beauty, industry and environmental significance," Mr Whetstone said.

"Despite some delays due to COVID-19, the fifth panel was finished earlier this year, completing this impressive project after six years of work.

"I congratulate everyone who has been involved, especially the artists, on this achievement and I have no doubt the installation will be admired by visitors to Morgan for years to come."

Mid Murray Mayor Dave Burgess praised the efforts of the artistic team in their production of the murals.

"The creation of these murals has been an exceptional labour of love for these incredibly talented artists," Mayor Burgess said.

"They have skilfully captured Morgan's story and its attractions in an artform that will be treasured by the Morgan community for generations to come."

The first mural was hung in October 2016 – and was so heavy it needed a team of strong men to position in place. The same group of men – dubbed Twitchy and his Merry Men by the artists – have helped hang each of the murals. Each mural panel is hung from individually crafted brackets hand-forged by Matthew Seton that match the theme of the panel they are designed to hold.

The project has had community support, with funding support from the Mid Murray Council, as well as assistance from the Morgan Railway Museum volunteers, the SA Quilters guild and Morgan Tourist Office staff.

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L to R Kerry Thomson , Diana Angel, Rose Craig & Tim Whetstone MP, Member for Chaffey