

FESA centre big drawcard for heritage festival



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Darlington Bush Fire Brigade Volunteer Jim Boyd helps a young visitor deliver water.

People got the chance to step into the past, learn from the present and plan for the future when they flocked to the recent Perth Heritage Days Festival.

FESA's historic 111 year old Perth Fire Station in Murray Street was open for visitors on the weekend of 12-13 November and drew in more than 1,000 people of all ages.

FESA Education and Heritage Centre (FEHC) Manager Su Ferreira said a lot of hard work went into ensuring that all the experiences on offer appealed to a family friendly audience.

“We lined up a fun and exciting program at the centre which revolved around emergency services and community safety activities presented in a way that appealed to children as well as mums and dads,” Su said.

“Visitors had their pick of vintage fire engine rides and dress ups in Fire and

Rescue Service, Bush Fire Service and State Emergency Service gear.

“There were also opportunities to colour in, work out puzzles, play games and read books highlighting some aspect of community safety.

“The colourful and informative all hazards interactive gallery also attracted a big audience.

“It was fantastic to see interest from so many different age groups, particularly as the activities promoting safety might well lead to positive family action.”

Su said the iconic fire station and its historical collection provided a connection to the past, and people were keen to learn about the history of the service and admire the artefacts.

“What really captured the imagination of visitors was the FESA vintage fleet of restored fire appliances,” she said.

“People were fascinated to see the power of the old heavy pumpers, especially as they got to play firefighter

by holding the delivery hose and squirting water.

“It was much appreciated that the Darlington Bush Fire Brigade was on hand to provide the collar tank for pumping demonstrations and interacting with the crowd.

“The volunteer firefighters were also happy to answer questions about bushfire safety in the Perth Hills as an addition to all the latest FESA safety information on display for people to take home.”

The Salvation Army's Emergency Services Catering Unit was a welcome presence providing a sausage sizzle and refreshments, with many people interested to know how the service supports emergency responders.

A total of 15 volunteers and three staff provided tremendous enthusiasm and support for visitors, and Su is already planning to add more interactive events to the festival next year.