Carrying the Fire

Social story for parents and carers of children.
Saturday 7 November 2026 | Emu Point to Binalup (Middleton Beach), Kinjarling (Albany).

Hello Parents and Carers,

This is a social story to help you plan and prepare your visit to *Carrying the Fire,* a community-led celebration for Albany 2026 created in collaboration with local Artistic Director Annette Carmichael and Southern Edge Arts. On Saturday 7 November 2026, an estimated 2,000 people carry handmade lanterns along almost 4 kilometres of beach, from Emu Point to Binalup (Middleton Beach). Together, we create one moving river of light on Menang Country.

We've included a simple story and event descriptions for children and young adults to read, so they know what to expect.

Warm clothes and good walking shoes are necessary. It can get quite cold and windy at night in spring so please plan accordingly to make the most of this event.

Parking near the event will be limited. A shuttle bus will operate from the Albany Leisure and Aquatic Centre to Emu Point (Zone E) and the Albany Golf Course (Zones C and D). If you are heading to Zone A or B, plan to carpool or walk from your parking spot. Overflow parking will be available at Eyre Park, and at the southern end of the Albany Golf Course, accessed from Wollaston Road. Please note there is limited designated parking at all zones. We encourage you to carpool or arrive on foot!

This story follows a visit to Zone A at Ellen Cove and Middleton Beach. Zone A is our most accessible zone and sits closest to the main stage. You can fill in the blanks to match your own plans.

Carrying the Fire is a community event where participants will join along the beach to create a giant chain of lights from Emu Point to Binalup (Middleton Beach). Aim to arrive at your zone before the Welcome to Country at 6:30pm. Food, lawn games and a live DJ start from 4pm at Ellen Cove and Firth Street Park, Emu Point. Arriving early gives your child time to settle in before the crowds build.

Attendees will gather and, guided by a series of instructions, directions and cues, will become part of an enormous artwork that exists only in the moment. A drone films the performance from above, capturing breathtaking footage to share with the world. This project will transform the landscape into a flowing river of lights, illuminating the night and embodying the spirit of the community.

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What your child might see, hear and feel

- **Crowds:** An estimated 2,000 people gather along the beach, paths and boardwalk.
- **Food and markets:** From 4pm, food trucks run at Ellen Cove and Firth Street Park, Emu Point, and Ellen Cove also has market stalls. These areas can be busy, with queues and the smell of cooking.
- **Lawn games and music:** From 4pm, Ellen Cove and Firth Street Park at Emu Point have lawn games and a live DJ.
- **Free food at Albany Golf Course:** From 4pm to 6:30pm, there is a free sausage sizzle or free ice cream, one per person, while stocks last. Pick up a ticket from our info marquee to redeem at your vendor of choice.
- **Light and dark:** The performance moves from twilight into night. An app switches the lanterns on and off, sometimes all at once. Some beaches go dark for a few moments, then light up again.
- **Pulsing lights:** Lanterns lift, turn and pulse brighter and softer in time with the music.
- **Sound:** A soundtrack plays through speakers along the beach for the whole performance. Some sounds are deep and strong. Near a speaker, you may feel them through your body and the sand. Ear defenders or headphones can help sensitive ears.
- **Quiet moments:** Everyone stands still during the Acknowledgement of Country. The sound falls quiet when every lantern lights up at once.
- **Fire:** Fire performers create pictures with flame on the main stage at Ellen Cove, and a campfire burns on stage.
- **A drone:** A drone films the performance from above. Your child may see it in the sky.
- **After party:** From 7:45pm, a DJ plays at Ellen Cove and Firth Street Park, Emu Point. The music may be loud, with a strong beat you can feel.

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Access and support

- Zone A at Ellen Cove and Middleton Beach is our most accessible zone. It has footpaths, beach matting and accessible (ACROD) parking bays for ACROD permit holders next to the Albany Surf Life Saving Club.
- When you register at southernedge.org.au/carryingthefire, select “smooth path”. We will direct you to Zone A and the concrete path along the Ellen Cove foreshore.
- For a clear view of the main stage, watch from Ellen Cove, between the Albany Surf Life Saving Club and the Middleton Beach Amphitheatre.
- Toilets are at the Albany Surf Life Saving Club.
- Guide dogs, hearing dogs and other assistance animals are welcome.
- Lantern Leaders wear white jumpers with an orange and yellow flower on the back. At the start of the night, let your Lantern Leader know about any support your child needs.
- Phone-lit lanterns switch on and off by themselves through an app. Register to receive the download link by email 10 days before the event.
- Hundreds of children carry sea star lanterns lit by handheld torches. These lights stay on for the whole performance.
- In an emergency, follow the directions of Lantern Leaders and event staff.
- We also have a written visual description for deaf and hard of hearing visitors and a written audio description for blind and low vision visitors at: form.net.au/carrying-the-fire.

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Key times

- **4pm:** Food, live DJ and lawn games at Ellen Cove and Firth Street Park, Emu Point
- **4pm to 6:30pm:** Free sausage sizzle or ice cream at Albany Golf Course, while stocks last
- **6:30pm:** Welcome to Country and speeches at the main stage, Ellen Cove
- **7pm:** The performance begins and runs for about 37 minutes
- **7:45pm:** DJ and after party at Ellen Cove and Firth Street Park, Emu Point
- **9pm:** Event ends

Contact

- Email mail@form.net.au or phone 08 9385 2200 for access questions or to request this social story in another format.
- Visit form.net.au/carryingthefire

FORM

Our Visit to Carrying the Fire

On ..... we will visit *Carrying the Fire*.

We will travel by ..... and it will take ..... to travel there.

When we arrive get out of/off the .....

We will walk across the ..... and look at the food trucks and crowds of people along Middleton Beach grass and sand.



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Our Visit to Carrying the Fire

Walking along Middleton Beach foreshore towards Ellen Cove, there will be food trucks and night market stalls, with a variety of food and beverage options available for us to choose from. We might wait in a line for our food.



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Our Visit to Carrying the Fire

Then we will walk down to the beach. Friendly volunteers called Lantern Leaders will be all along the beach if we need help finding our way. They wear white jumpers with an orange and yellow flower on the back.

Once at the beach, we will find a spot we like that has a good view. Then we wait for the performance to begin.



FORM

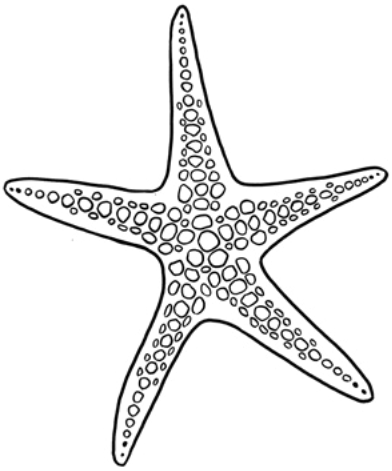
Our Visit to Carrying the Fire

We will watch the sun slowly fade, as the different locations around Binalup Middleton Beach begin to come to life. The main choreographed part of the evening will commence with one of the largest, performative gatherings yet staged in Western Australia.

Deeply rooted in place, this community-led project has been developed in consultation with the Albany 2026 Cultural Advice Sub-Committee, co-ordinated by Wagyl Kaip Southern Noongar Aboriginal Corporation, with Menang cultural consultant and artist Penny Williams central to the creative team from the outset. Lantern designs by local artists draw on the five symbols of Menang Country: the resilient biyarra/banksia, the sheltering kwornt, the regenerative sea star, the spiritual moodjar/WA Christmas Tree and tidelines, which hold moments in time.

Circle your Favourite Symbol Below

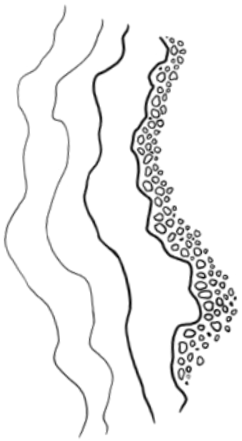
Across Seas
– Sea Stars



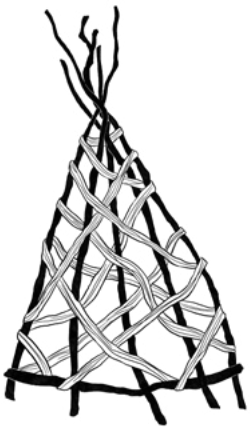
With Spirit
– Moodjar/Christmas Tree



Beyond Time
– Tidelines



Into Our Homes
– Kwornt/Koornt



Through Country
– Biyarra/Banksia



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Our Visit to Carrying the Fire

Things to talk about together

Each symbol asks a question. We can talk about them before the night.

- **Sea star:** What keeps you strong when things change?
- **Moodjar:** Who are you remembering as you carry your lantern?
- **Tidelines:** Can your lantern capture a special moment in your life?
- **Kwornt:** What creates a sense of home?
- **Biyarra:** How do you care for Country and the natural world?

Our lantern

We can make a lantern at a free workshop with Southern Edge Arts, or make one at home with the instructions on their website.

If we carry a lantern with a phone inside, an app switches the light on and off by itself. Sea star lanterns with a torch stay on the whole time.



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Our Visit to Carrying the Fire

What happens on the night

6:30pm. There is a Welcome to Country and speeches at the main stage at Ellen Cove.

7pm. The performance begins. Everyone stands still and quiet while people share an Acknowledgement of Country in many different languages.

Music starts. It begins softly and slowly gets bigger. Some sounds are deep and strong. If I am near a speaker, I might feel the sound in my body and in the sand.

The Lantern Leaders walk onto the sand. Their lights turn on one at a time, until lots of lights glow along the beach.

The Lantern Leaders dance. Their Moodjar Flower lanterns glow like small fires.

The Lantern Bearers walk down to the water's edge and make one long line, facing the ocean. Lanterns blink on here and there.

The Lantern Bearers hold their lanterns straight out in front with two hands.

About 7:11pm. Every lantern lights up at once. The beach looks like one long ribbon of light. The music goes quiet.

The Lantern Bearers lift their lanterns up fast and lower them slowly, six times. Then they turn slowly on the spot. They do this three times. The lights pulse brighter and softer.

If I am carrying a lantern, I can watch my Lantern Leader and copy their moves.

The Lantern Bearers follow the Lantern Leaders across the sand to make circles and squiggly lines. A drone in the sky films the shapes. When the drums start, a wave of light runs down the beach.

Everyone walks along the beach towards Binalup (Middleton Beach). Sometimes the lanterns go dark for a moment, then light up again.

On the main stage at Ellen Cove, a dancer moves, leaps and spins.

Fire performers make pictures with flames on the stage. A Menang girl named Djorna and her grandmother are part of the story. Twice, the lanterns near the stage go dark, so the fire on stage shines brightly.

An Elder lifts the Biyarra, a special sculpture made to carry fire. More Elders, the Mayor and other leaders walk to the stage. The music is calm and quiet.

People carry the Biyarra away from the stage. The Lantern Leaders' lights go out one by one. One group of lanterns keeps glowing at the jetty.

Our Visit to Carrying the Fire

About 7:37pm. The performance ends. All the lanterns glow again to light our way along the sand.

From 7:45pm. A DJ plays music at Ellen Cove and Emu Point. The music may be loud. We can stay and dance, or we can head home.

9pm. The event ends.

If I need help or a break

- It is okay to feel excited, nervous or both.
- If the sound is too loud, I can cover my ears or wear my headphones.
- If it feels too busy, I can tell my grown-up. We can move somewhere with more space.
- I can join in with the movements, or I can watch. Both are okay.
- I will stay close to my grown-up.
- If I need help, I can find a Lantern Leader. They wear white jumpers with an orange and yellow flower on the back.

Tonight, we carry the fire forward, together.

Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Menang Noongar people as the Traditional Custodians of Kinjarling (Albany), the land and waters on which Carrying the Fire takes place. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and honour their enduring connection to Country, culture and community.

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