

❖ Fremantle History Society ❖

Established 1994

The Secretary

Fremantle Prison, The Terrace, Fremantle 6160, Ph: 335 9473

Summer Edition, 1995



Children's Victory celebrations, Fremantle Oval, 14 September, 1945. Print No 414, Fremantle City Library

Fremantle History Society Goes To War!

The Fremantle History Society is gearing up for a big year in 1995 and to make it a success, it is important that as many members as possible participate in the planned activities.

THIS MEANS YOU.

All over Australia, a myriad of activities have been planned to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of World War 11. Under the umbrella of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the program has been titled *Australia Remembers 1945-1995*. The main objectives of the years activities are to

- commemorate Australia's war dead
- give recognition to the surviving service men and women and also to those who kept Australia running through the war years
- to heighten people's, especially school children's, awareness of and to reflect on the impact of the end of the war
- to reflect Australia's lifestyle in 1945 and the mood of the people when peace was announced

With the influx of Australian and American military personnel and the loss of men to the war effort, the general lifestyle of Fremantle changed dramatically over the war years. It is these social aspects of this time that the Society is hoping to target for its activities.

At a General meeting on 15 November, 1994 the scope of involvement the Society could realistically achieve in the *Australia Remembers* activities was discussed. Many suggestions were made, but the following seemed to offer the most potential within our resources. A steering committee was established which refined the ideas from the meeting and appointed co-ordinators for the various projects as listed below:-

- an oral history program that will link in with work already being undertaken by the Local History librarian (co-ordinator - Lorraine Stevens)
- pictorial research including sourcing material from public and private collections (co-ordinator - Dianne Davidson)
- a heritage walk which will identify buildings and sites that were of significance during the war (co-ordinator - David Tessler)

The work of these groups will culminate in a special day that will include an exhibition of the photographs located using information from the oral histories to provide captions and information panels, and a Fremantle Studies Day which will include papers given by a variety of speakers on various aspects of Fremantle during the war years. The heritage walk will also be launched on this day.

The Society has put in an application for seed funding for these projects through the *Australia Remembers 1945-95* scheme. \$20 000 is available for community based projects in each electorate throughout Australia. We will also be looking for sponsorship, so any ideas in this area would be appreciated.

Each of the co-ordinators have provided more detailed information below, including their contact numbers.

Please call them NOW and become involved.

Oral History

Convenor: Lorraine Stevens - ph 430 2239

As part of the *Australia Remembers* project we will conduct an oral history project. Of particular interest is the effect of the war on the community. Did families evacuate? How did they cope with rationing, air raids, visiting servicemen, loss of loved ones etc? If anyone would like to share their memories, or assist in the interviewing project, could they please phone Lorraine or Loretta at the Library on 430 2239.

Photographic Exhibition

Convenor: Dianne Davidson - ph 430 6096

Do you have any photographs from the war years, especially ones showing aspects of social life, emergency measures or celebrations? We would like to put on an exhibition towards the end of the year of photographs and war memorabilia such as ration cards, badges, letters and any other items of interest. If you have anything you could contribute, or if you are interested in helping to organise the exhibition, please ring Dianne Davidson on 430 6096.

Heritage Trail

Convenor: David Tessler - ph 387 4772

The heritage trail sub committee will identify those buildings and sites within Fremantle with historical connections and to develop a trail, complete with map and written information, that will be available to locals and tourists in the form of an enjoyable walk around the streets of Fremantle. Plaques that can be attached to buildings and perhaps a recorded cassette which will co-ordinate the written and visual information may also be developed. Anybody, member or not, who wishes to contribute to the development of this trail is most welcome to contact David on 387 4772.

Committee Members

The following are members of the interim committee of the FHS

Dianne Davidson	430 6096
Anne Brake	335 9473 (wk)
Suzan Miles	339 3145
Bob Reece	360 2392 (wk)
	335 7892
Margaret McPherson	337 2668
Margaret Anderson	427 2726 (wk)
Lorraine Stevens	430 2266 (wk)
David Tessler	446 8990 (wk)
	387 4772

Fremantle History Society's committee meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month. If you have something you would like discussed at a meeting, please contact one of the members on the numbers indicated.

New members

PM Brown
Vivian Dufour
Charity Haynes
David Hutchinson
Jim McGinty
Laura Reece
Michael Sturma
Neil Alexander Wilson

Coming Events:

As promised in the last newsletter, John Carpenter will be presenting a talk about the Long Jetty and the 'treasures' that have been recovered during archaeological dives at the site. This will be our first general meeting for the year and will be held on Tuesday 28 February. We will start at the original site of the Long Jetty near Joan Campbell's Pottery Shed at 6.00 pm and then move to the meeting room at the Maritime Museum in Cliff St.

Deena Garrett, currently on a dive on the *Pandora* may also attend the talk.

Did you know that Fremantle has a Customs Museum?

Although there had been a customs museum 'of sorts' for some time, the Western Australian Customs Museum was formally established in 1988 as part of an Australia wide project to research, record and make available the history of this fascinating aspect of Australia's past. The project involved the preparation of a scholarly history of the Customs Department in Australia, an oral history project with Customs officers throughout Australia and the establishment of a museum in each state.

Written by Dr David Day, Volume 1 of the commissioned history, *Smugglers and Sailors*, has already been published, with Volume 2, *Controversy and Contraband*, due to be released in August this year. The very successful oral history project culminated in a series of 6 segments on ABC Radio in late 1992.

The WA Customs Museum in Customs House, cnr Henry & Phillimore Sts, is open 9.00am - 5.00pm, Monday-Friday. However, for our meeting on Tuesday 28 March, the displays in the atrium will be available for History Society members to view until 5.45pm. Alex Shaw, the museum's honorary curator, will be available for questions from 5.00pm. We will then make our way to the meeting room at the Maritime Museum in Cliff St where Alex will present an informative and interesting talk on the history of Customs in Australia. For those who can't make Customs House, please meet at the Maritime Museum by 6.00pm.



Welcome to ex-Fremantle History Group-ies!

This edition is going out to the previous recipients of the Fremantle History Group newsletter which has now been discontinued. In future contributions from members of the Group will appear in this publication.

To the ex-Groupies: We hope you are enjoying our second edition of the FHS newsletter! Our Treasurer, Margaret McPherson, is eagerly awaiting the flood of new membership application forms which will ensure that you continue to receive our highly sought after publication - so reach for your cheque books NOW.

For Your Diary

Tuesday, 28 February - *The Mysteries of the Long Jetty* - meet outside Joan Campbell's Pottery Shed at 6.00pm. We will later adjourn to the meeting room at the Maritime Museum, Cliff St, Fremantle.

Tuesday, 28 March - *Australia's Coastal Watchers* - the displays in the atrium of Customs House, 2 Henry St, Fremantle will be available for inspection until 5.45pm. The FHS meeting will follow at the meeting room, Maritime Museum, Cliff St, Fremantle at approximately 6.00pm.

Wednesday, 26 April - *Inside the walls* - a special look inside Fremantle's notorious prison, WA's major place of incarceration for over 130 years - 6.00pm at the Gatehouse, Fremantle Prison.

Plant the Town Red: Tomato Time in Fremantle

The fragrance of fresh tomatoes and basil cooking together is wafting over the back streets of Fremantle. A year's supply of tomato sauce is being put down in cellars, under houses, in kitchen cupboards.

On Saturday 25 February in St John's Square, the secrets of some sauce makers will be revealed as groups of men and women gather to demonstrate their skills. Recipes will be available and cooks will offer hints on the versatility of the tomato and offering tastes of some special dishes.

For those who would like to know how to grow tomatoes, there will be information on permaculture and advice from the Home gardeners of the WA Dept of Agriculture.

The Fremantle City Library will be hosting a display of photographs of some of Fremantle's most productive back yards and an exhibition on the history of the tomato in WA will be on view at the Fremantle Museum, Finnerty St.



1995 Fremantle Heritage Day Planning Committee

The Fremantle History Society has been invited to be part of the 1995 Fremantle Heritage Day Planning Committee. Fremantle Heritage Day was initiated by the Fremantle City Council as the City's contribution to the National Trust Heritage Week, April 2-9, 1995.

It was first organised in 1994 and proved to be a very successful and entertaining community event.

The main purpose of the day is to invite visitors to step inside the many Fremantle historic buildings which are not normally accessible to the general public. The aim is to build an interest in the cultural roots and care of heritage buildings by making the public aware of the architectural diversity of Fremantle. Heritage Day is intended to reveal to the public the cultural richness and different influences that have shaped our state.

The Fremantle Heritage Day Planning Committee consists of two Councillors, Council staff and four representatives of the community including Suzan Miles, an archival researcher, of the FHS interim committee. The Committee's first meeting was held on 22 December, 1994.

The theme of Fremantle Heritage Day is : "Fremantle Remembers". This year the committee is selecting buildings representing two very influential events in the development of Fremantle : "50th anniversary of the end of WWII". "100th anniversary of North Fremantle". Fremantle History Society members will be asked to volunteer to help supervise the heritage buildings chosen for Heritage Day Sunday 9 April, 1995. If you would like to help, please contact Linda Elson ph 430 2243.



Letters to the editor:

Dear Ed

The Royal Western Australian Historical Society (Inc) are planning a walk 'Between the Bridges' in Fremantle on the morning of 25 February and would like to invite your members to join in at our RWAH members price of \$15.00 (\$17.00 - non members). Ron Bodycoat, conservation architect will be the tour guide for the walk which will highlight many notable sites in the area between the Stirling Bridge and the older Fremantle Traffic Bridge.

The tour will commence at 8.30 am at the Swan Hotel, 201 Queen Victoria St, North Fremantle and will finish with coffee on return to the Swan Hotel at approximately 11.00 am.

Those who would like to attend could contact the ticket secretary of the RWAHS on 386 3841. Don't forget a hat and comfortable shoes!

Val Hutch, RWAHS



From the Local History Desk

Fremantle City Library
Lorraine Stevens

Work will begin shortly at the Fremantle City Library to catalogue the material held in the Local History Collection onto a database. This will contribute to the production of a bibliography on the area. To date a bibliography has not been compiled that lists the variety of material (books, pamphlets, journal articles, oral history, films etc) available. In the future it is hoped that the holdings of other libraries and institutions will be incorporated onto the database. It is an exciting project, and one which will lead the Library to be a central point for anyone conducting research into Fremantle and East Fremantle.

What's New

The following is a list of works that have been recently added to our collection and may be viewed in the Local History area.

- Burton, Craig (1994) *North Fremantle Heritage Study*
Identifies and analyses the environmental heritage of the area and makes broad recommendations for its conservation and management.
- Fremantle Regional Strategy: Final Report (1994)
- Interstate Passenger Arrivals, Fremantle 1885-1908 (12 microfiche).
Includes name, date of arrival, ship, port of embarkation and remarks in one alphabetical sequence.
- James, Shelley (1994) *Fremantle Stories* - short stories and poetry

• Western Australian Cemeteries - Series 10 Fremantle Monumental Inscriptions (1988) (13 microfiche)

• Western Australian Photographics 1893-1970 (1 microfiche)

A list of photographers, photographic studios and associated businesses, their addresses and the years they were in business. Assists the dating of photographs.

Current Research

Notes on Mick Donnes
W S Latter

The 1914 State electoral rolls show Michael and Isabella Donnes residing at 75a Richardson Street, Boulder. His occupation is shown as Miner.

According to the 1920 rolls they were living at 89 Alexandra Road (Wray Avenue), South Fremantle, and he was employed as a labourer.

My attention was first drawn to Mick Donnes when researching the first world war Military Intelligence records. The notes I then took are as follows: File No 4/7/556 Driver M Donnes, previously a member of the AIF, in addressing a meeting called by the Australian Labour Federation, defended the action of the Lumpers who refused to load flour because it was finding its way into the hands of the Germans through Java. He said there were fifteen German ships tied up in the Dutch Colony. Donnes was interviewed by MI who, whilst expressing some doubts about his allegations, conceded he was an alert, experienced and observant person. He had recently been through the area and had spent six months working on the tin mines in Malaya. Dated 5.7.1918.

When researching the role of the returned servicemen in the events on the wharf on 'Bloody Sunday' I came across a newspaper article, under the heading of

"RSA Meetings". The West Australian 6.5.1919 reported *An official meeting of the RSA was convened by Aberdeen and Sadlier (two officers) at the Palais de Danse in Hay St at the same time a meeting had been organised by the East Perth branch at the Shaftsbury Theatre. (It appears that the Executive had decided to call their meeting only after the East Perth had called its meeting). T Gorman, the president of the East Perth branch, decided to abandon their meeting in order to attend the other meeting. Three hundred men with a Piper at their head marched to the meeting at the Palais de Danse, but by the time they arrived their numbers had grown to six hundred. Over a thousand were present at the meeting. Colonel Pope was elected as Chairman unopposed. J R Butler moved, seconded by W J Henderson, that the meeting support the Government's efforts to restore law and order. Corboy moved an amendment that the meeting support the Lumpers, C R Heppingstone was the cause of disorder when he said it was a question of law and order or Bolshevism. Colonel Pope could not restore order and closed the meeting. He left with most of the members of the executive. Mick Donnes was then elected to the Chair, the lights were turned off, but the meeting continued. After further argument the amendment was carried. The meeting closed with three cheers for the Lumpers.*

Having read most of the police files dealing with the lumpers dispute I have been aware for a long time that returned servicemen played a very significant role on Sunday May 4 and in the days preceding. For example, Inspector Sellenger, the officer in charge of the Fremantle District, reported to the Commissioner that a march of Lumpers had taken place on April 23 and they were led by one hundred returned soldiers, all of whom were armed with revolvers. He requested that rifles and ammunition be sent to Fremantle so that the police could be armed in the event of a violent uprising.

Another file contains a report that amplifies police statements about the throwing of the barricades into the river:

After the incidents on the wharf the lumpers and their supporters retired to a meeting on the Esplanade. At the close of the meeting a procession with several hundred returned soldiers at its head, including two files of men in uniform leading the march, proceeded to the wharf, where to a cry of "Come on" the leaders rushed straight to the heavy barricades and with a dozen or so to each of the heavy structures carried them to the edge of the wharf and tumbled them into the river. As each went over the crowd raised a cheer. In a few minutes there was not a barricade left on that part of the wharf.

The records show that Mick Donnes joined the Army as a Driver in the 16th Battalion Australian Army Service Corps in the early months of 1915 embarking for overseas service in April. He returned to Australia in October 1916 and was discharged as medically unfit because of deafness and defective vision in January 1917.

He was an active unionist and a member of the Australian Labour Federation. Upon his return from overseas service he represented the Goldfields District Council on the State Executive and was a member of the South Fremantle branch of the Federation. Donnes was also the Secretary of the Fremantle Returned Soldiers Association. Unfortunately, no records of that organisation are in existence so it is not possible to trace his activities in that body. It may be possible that local newspaper reports refer to the meetings of the RSA.

The ALF branch minutes show that Mick Donnes attended most of the monthly meetings of the organisation, reporting and moving resolutions primarily about industrial issues. He reported on his attendance at the RSA conference and how the decisions made by that

organisation affected the industrial movement. He also made a report on the events of May 4, 1919 (Bloody Sunday) during the morning and in the afternoon, thus proving that he was present during the two major confrontations on that day.

In May of 1919 the State Executive of the ALF was concerned about the anti-labour propaganda being spread by some members of the RSA in Kalgoorlie. It was moved that an effort be made to send Returned Soldier speakers to Kalgoorlie to counteract propaganda now going on in Kalgoorlie amongst Returned Soldiers directed against the Labour Movement. It was further resolved that Panton and Donnes be asked to go to Kalgoorlie.

My research leads to the conclusion that the Government and Military Intelligence deliberately fomented the agitation in Kalgoorlie. A strike of wood-cutters on the Lake View Woodline was in contemplation, the Commissioner of Police received information that trouble similar to that which had occurred on the Wharf would take place in Kalgoorlie. Detective Inspector Mann went to the Goldfields together with Lieutenant Browne to counter the alleged agitators who would aim to create a riot. The two officers actively sought the assistance of the RSA to enrol members of the organisation as special constables in support of police action against the strikers.

Unfortunately there is no record of the results of their trip. However, it must have failed because later in the year returned servicemen, enrolled as special constables, defended scabs attempting to break picket lines of striking miners.

At a meeting of the State Executive on December 5 1919, Mr Donnes made a report on his trip to the Nor-West on the "Bambra". He gave details on the state of the ALP branches at Port Hedland, Roebourne, Onslow and Broome. I gathered from the report that he had

signed on as a crew member of the "Bambra" and as an incidental task checked out the ALP branches for the officers of the Party.

Prior to sailing for Britain, as a crew member on the "SS Araluen" in 1920, he obtained a letter of introduction from the Secretary of the ALP, Alex McCallum, which was addressed to "The Laborites of England".

The Returned Soldiers organisations, in the troubled times that followed the Armistice, generally supported the establishment. They played a role as strike-breakers, broke up demonstrations of workers, joined with the police in violence against migrants and formed vigilante groups against left wing organisations.

Whilst returned soldiers were supporting the Lumpers in Fremantle, in Brisbane they were breaking the heads of militant workers. The Governments, State and Federal, together with the owners of capital, had a real fear of a Bolshevik uprising. Not without some good reason. Troops in Europe had revolted against their officers. In Russia the 1917 revolution had been led by sailors from the Black Sea and Northern Fleets, the soldiers in the front line had turned upon their aristocratic officers and elected their own leaders.

In Australia, unemployment was rife, the turnover to war production had reduced traditional areas of manufacturing employment. Returned soldiers became confused, often blaming the militant workers and their unions for the state of the country. This was a reflection of the propaganda emanating from the Government and employers to divert attention from their own responsibility for the state of the Nation.

In the circumstances of the time it is quite remarkable that the Fremantle and East Perth branches of the RSA went against the trend. My research leads me to a conclusion that it was largely due to the leadership of those two branches, particularly Donnes and O'Neill, that the returned men supported the Lumpers.



FHS Incorporated

At the last general meeting it was moved to apply for incorporation of the Society. As part of this process, a constitution has been drafted in accordance with the Ministry of Fair Trading's specifications. Anyone who would like to peruse this document can contact Anne Brake, Fremantle Prison, 335 9473.

FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY
The Secretary
Fremantle Prison, The Terrace,
Fremantle WA 6160

The Fremantle History Society aims to

- encourage community involvement in the study of Fremantle history and cultural diversity through research oral history, and writing.
- disseminate information about Fremantle in a variety of ways in particular through public forums and liaison with other history and heritage groups and schools in the area
- promote the identification and preservation of historical evidence relating to Fremantle
- encourage the commemoration of important events, places and people in appropriate ways
- arrange social gatherings for its members

Membership fee of \$..... paid to the Fremantle History Society on/...../.....

NOTE: The Association's financial year begins on 1 July each year.

PLEASE RETAIN THIS SECTION AS A RECEIPT AND FOR YOUR OWN RECORD

✕.....

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME:

ADDRESS:

.....POSTCODE.....

TELEPHONE: (BH)..... (AH).....

OCCUPATION:.....

SIGNATURE/S.....

DATE :

Please circle the appropriate category:

Ordinary membership	\$10	Organisational membership	\$20
Family membership	\$15	Student/pensioner/unemployed	\$5

