



## FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY

Established 1994

The Secretary, 24 Fothergill Street,  
FREMANTLE WA 6160

Winter Edition  
1999



One of the amusing illustrations that accompany Alec Smith's memories of growing up in Fremantle to be found in the Society's soon to be released Journal.

### Launch of Fremantle History Society Journal

There is great excitement in the air.

Five years after the founding of the Fremantle History Society we are finally ready to launch the first issue of the Society's official journal, *Fremantle Studies*. It will be the first journal ever published to focus its attention wholly on Fremantle.

The first issue will feature the papers given at the 1996 Fremantle Studies Day (Tony Fletcher, 'Fremantle 1939 to 1945: Extraordinary Events at the Port'; Ann Delroy and Phyl Brown, 'Sugar and Spice? Changing Patterns of Women's Work in a Western Australian Cake and Biscuit Factory' and Patricia Brown, 'She Eateth Not the Bread of Idleness: Women and Work in Fremantle 1900 -1940') and the 1997 Fremantle Studies Day (David Hutchison, 'Shedding Light on Sheds in Transit', Sally May, 'The Italian Fishermen of Fremantle: from Blue Collar Businessmen to 'Lords of the Sea' and Geoff Harcourt, 'The Purple Circle'). It will also include two outstanding talks given at the Society's general meetings by Eric Silbert on the Jewish community in Fremantle and Alec Smith on the Fremantle of his childhood in the 1930s and 1940s.

It has been possible for us to produce this journal through the generous assistance of the WA History Foundation, which contributed \$2000 to the project, and of the Fremantle City Council which provided the services of its printing and design staff free of charge.

MEMBERSHIP FEES NOW DUE - SEND YOUR RENEWAL IN TODAY

*Fremantle Studies* will be formally launched by the Mayor of Fremantle, Richard Utting, at the conclusion of the next Fremantle Studies Day on Sunday 21 November. Be sure to put this date in your diary so as not to miss this historic occasion!

We hope that this issue will be the first of a continuing series.



### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The following were elected as members of the committee of the FHS at the last annual general meeting.

#### **Executive:**

Elaine Berry (President)	9336 1906
Bob Woollett (Vice President)	9335 7451
Dianne Davidson (Secretary)	9430 6096
Phyl Brown (wk) (Treasurer)	9430 7449

#### **Committee:**

Anne Brake (wk)	9335 9473
Ron Davidson	9430 6096
Alan Kelsall	9336 4573
Kath Jordan	9335 8974
Alison Gregg	9432 9739
Geoff Warren Smith	9388 6959
Len Vickridge	9335 1954

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 at the numbers shown above.

General meetings of the Society are generally held on the 4th Tuesday of the month. Details of these meetings are found in your newsletter and reminders are placed in the local press. As we have started to have

Sunday afternoon meetings occasionally, please be sure to check details.



### COMING EVENTS

#### **Back to School!**

What was schooling like in Fremantle earlier in the century? Tullio Rubinich has recently published a history of the East Fremantle High School as part of the celebration of its centenary. He will entertain and educate members in the library of the East Fremantle School, corner of Marmion and East Streets at 7pm on 24 August. Meet at main school gate in Marmion Street.

Refreshments afterwards!

#### **O'Reilly and O'Connor**

Tony Evans, author of *Fanatic Heart*, which tells the story of Irish Fenian John Boyle O'Reilly, will talk to Society members and friends at our September General Meeting. He is currently working on a biography of C Y O'Connor and may have some interesting information to share with us.

The meeting will take place in the Local History Collection at the Fremantle Library at 7pm on Tuesday 28 September, and will be followed by refreshments.

#### **Explore the Fremantle Port Authority**

The FPA Public Affairs Officer, Ainslie de Vos, will take members on a tour of the current FPA exhibition and give us a talk on the history of the Authority and its personalities. Refreshments available for purchase afterwards in Connors Café at the rear of the FPA.

Please note that this meeting will be at **4.30pm** on Tuesday, 26 October. We will meet in the main foyer of the Port Authority building.

## MEETING REPORTS

### The Fremantle Naval Reserve in WW2

Captain Len Vickridge told the audience at the Local History Section of the Fremantle library how young Fremantle Naval Reservists rapidly found themselves at the sharp edge of battle. Many were placed on armed merchantmen at the start of World War II. Here they could be the sole RAN man on board, in charge of the single gun. Len was one such person. He described how many, like himself, moved up to command corvettes which played such an important role in naval operations.

### Carousing at Rosie O'Grady's

The Society's annual pub lunch was once again a huge success, with more than fifty members enjoying hearty Irish fare and refreshments.

Before the lunch the manager of the hotel, Sharon Shaw, took members on a tour of the building, pointing out features of special interest. Members noted particularly the authentically restored accommodation available, some of it quite luxurious.

Pub lunches are clearly here to stay! Any suggestions for next year's venue will be much appreciated.

### Annual General Meeting: Army Museum

The AGM was well attended this year. After a welcome by museum manager

Captain Mick Malone, Society president Elaine Berry reported on activities during 1998/99, and announced the forthcoming launch of the Society's journal in November.

After conclusion of official business, members were provided with refreshments and then taken on an extensive tour of the museum and its exhibits by the Mick Malone and Bill Haskell, a voluntary guide and ex-prisoner-of-war. Bill brought the POW tableaux vividly to life with accounts of his own harrowing experiences on the Burma railway and in Japanese POW camps.

Special thanks to Mick for organising the social part of the evening.



### NEW MEMBERS

Len Vickridge  
Kerry King  
W & R Bell  
Fremantle Herald

### Oral History Unit - Battye Library

We have now received a response to our submission to LISWA on the future of the Oral History Unit.

Ronda Jamieson, Director of the J S Battye Library of WA History, advises us that a report has now been prepared and has gone to the Library Board for discussion at its August meeting. She gives no indication of what recommendations have been made to the Board, but has promised us a copy of the final document which will presumably emerge after the meeting.

MEMBERSHIP FEES NOW DUE - SEND YOUR RENEWAL IN TODAY

### Can You Help?

Richard Ferguson, grandson of wealthy pearler and pastoralist Captain Frank Biddles, is searching for information about his grandfather's life at 'Ivanhoe', the grand mansion built in 1890 by James Lilly on the corner of High and Ord Streets, Fremantle. Captain Biddles bought the house in 1914 and lived there until his death in 1932.

'Ivanhoe' was demolished in 1966 to make way for a block of flats and a service station. Do you remember anything about Frank Biddles or the house? If so, please contact Richard Ferguson on 9364 4734.

### Post Haste the Millenium: Opportunities and Challenges in Local Studies - National Conference of the Local Studies Section of the Australian Library and Information Association, 12-13 November 1999

This conference will be held at the Rose & Crown Hotel, Guildford, with Dr Alan Bundy, University Librarian from the University of South Australia, giving the keynote address on 'Realities and Potential: Local Studies in Australian Public Libraries at the Century's End'.

Other speakers include Phillip Pental MLA, Sheila McHale MLA, Dr Patrick Bertola, Wendy Birman, Dr John Yiannakis, Sr Anne Carter, Dr Cora Baldock, Tom Perrigo, Trish Kotai-Ewers, and Dr Alison Gregg.

Topics deal with diverse issues: the centenary of the Perth Mint, Aboriginal perspectives on heritage issues, the Midland Westrail workshops, the early history of Perth's private schools for girls, local history sites on the web,

electronic records, oral history, a celebration of viticulture in the Swan Valley, migrant histories, relocating Tom Collins' house, and access to records.

The fees, which include morning and afternoon teas and lunch on both days, are \$190 for ALIA members, \$230 non-ALIA, \$140 unwaged. Day registrations are \$100 ALIA, \$120 non-ALIA, \$90 unwaged.

The Garrick Theatre will present a special performance, 'Tales of Old Guildford', on Friday 12 November.

For more information, contact Jenni Woodroffe, phone/fax 9367 4759, or email [jenni@omen.com.au](mailto:jenni@omen.com.au).



### For Your Diary

#### Tuesday 24 August - Back to School!

Be instructed and entertained by Tullio Rubinich's account of Fremantle education earlier in the century. 7pm in the library at the East Fremantle School at the corner of Marmion and East Streets. Members to meet at the main school gate in Marmion Street. Light refreshments provided.

**Tuesday 28 September - Tony Evans on O'Reilly or O'Connor.** Tony will share the fruits of his research with us at the Local History Collection, Fremantle Library, at 7pm, with refreshments afterwards.

**Tuesday 26 October - Fremantle Port Authority.** Join Ainslie De Vos on a tour of the current exhibition and learn more about the history of the Authority. Refreshments in Connors Café after tour. **Note: Meet in Main Foyer of FPA building at 4.30 pm.**

## Memories of the Birth of City of Fremantle

On 5 June the *Fremantle Herald* published Constance Herbert's recollections of the day Fremantle became a city. Our member was then four years old, and she describes the things she remembered best -

'We were all taken out into the playground. There was music and clapping, then an old man stood up on something to speak to us.

I remember the lovely young teacher, Miss Irene, who picked me up so that I could see over the heads of the bigger children. Not only was I young, I was very small.

The old man finished speaking and we clapped again. Then we were given squat, earthenware bottles of ginger beer; these were familiar to us, but the other soft drinks in small glass bottles - lemonade, kola beer and strawberry creaming soda - were something new...We must have been given something substantial to eat, but all I can recall is yellow cake with pink icing covered in hundreds and thousands. There was also liquorice allsorts, coconut ice and honeycomb, and we were each given a bag of boiled lollies to take home...I suppose we sang *God Save the King* for George V, but I can't remember doing so.

No, 70 years after the birth of the City of Fremantle, although I was there at the time, the memories which come most readily to mind are of Miss Irene, pink icing, ginger beer and boiled lollies.'

An interesting development from Connie's article was a relative of Miss Irene getting in touch - Miss Irene is

still alive, and was delighted to renew her acquaintance with Connie at afternoon tea.



## Jigsaw Column

### *Humour from the Nineteenth Century*

Obviously advertisements seeking compatible partners are not a modern phenomenon!

'WANTED:

By a respectable man, age 35, a young and well-educated female for a wife. He temper gentle, his person prepossessing, and his means independent.

His only object in thus making his desires publicly known is to find a female of a similar disposition to enlighten the remainder of those years which he may be doomed to pass by an allwise Providence in this world's wilderness.

Apply, if by letter, post-paid to Mr William Skippon, Carpenter/Builder, and Undertaker, York.

NB-No objection to property.'

(From *Western Australian Chronicle: A Survey into the Events Occurring in Our Young Colony to 1832*)

### *And Some 1930s Sour Grapes*

Here is a complaint addressed to the Fremantle City Council by the Fremantle Central Methodist Mission:

'13<sup>th</sup> February 1934

Dear Sirs - I am writing to call your attention to an incident which occurred at South Beach last Sunday. A picture theatre company utilised the opportunity of the gathering at South Beach on

Sunday afternoon to advertise one of its screen attractions by means of a 'treasure hunt' at the Beach. This was fairly widely advertised in the paper, and by dodgers in letter boxes. I understand no application was made to the Council for approval; but unfortunately the Mayor was present, and that has given the impression that the Council approved of the 'stunt' (for that is what it was). At least one Sunday School was seriously affected in attendance, and in the attention of those who did attend; but who wished to be out as soon as possible to join the hunt.

In the Sunday School we are trying to raise the standards of citizenship by our teaching - we have one hour a week when parents send their children to the Sunday Schools. The picture shows are purely commercial ventures - their educational work is quite incidental, and not their real business - and they have every day and evening, including Saturdays. They are not allowed to open on Sunday afternoons. It seems quite wrong that they should be permitted to use time when their shows are legally closed to plan and carry out 'stunts' of the kind seen at South Beach last Sunday afternoon, on the ratepayers' property. I hope that instructions will be given preventing a recurrence of such an incident.

Yours faithfully

Eric H O Nye'

(From Local History Collection: Methodist Church Papers)

What would the correspondent say to these Godless Sundays when movie theatres are open all day? Shocking!



**More Fremantle Street Names!**

**CADD:** Frank Cadd, of F Cadd Ltd (forwarding agents) was Mayor of Fremantle 1904-1905.

**CANNING:** This road leads to the Canning River and district, which were explored by Captain Stirling and party in 1827, being named in honour of the great English statesman, Canning, who was Foreign Secretary at the time.

**CANTONMENT:** This street appears on Surveyor-General Roe's very earliest map, Cantonment-road being a continuation thereof and leading to the base of what was at first called Cantonment Hill. Owing to confusion, the name of Cantonment-road was changed to Queen Victoria street. Letters are extant written from the Cantonment, Fremantle, but apparently nobody at present alive knows of the exact situation of the Cantonment. As the streets were surveyed before 1833 right out to the present junction of the Canning-road, it would seem to have been somewhere in that locality.

**CARNAC:** This street is on an elevation from which Carnac can be seen, and not the other islands. This may account for the name. Carnac Island (or Berthollet of the French) was named after Lieutenant John Ruett Carnac of HM Frigate *Success*.

**CARRINGTON:** Possibly after Earl Carrington, a one-time Governor of New South Wales.

**CENTRAL:** This is the central street of what was known as Chester Park, but which is now Hilton Park. When the land was subdivided and put up for sale, a competition was held for a suitable name for the district, and this name was decided on as being most appropriate. The location would originally appear to have been granted to one McDermott. About 30 years later it came into the

possession of Richard Davis, who after his arrival from England in 1853 had carried on the Half-way House at Point Walter. With the advent of steam, the boats were not using the canal, and it became silted up and the toll-house fell into disuse. He therefore removed to Bicton, and later to the Chester Park property, which he in turn sold to Chester. At the time of the sub-division it was owned by Simpson.

**CHESTER:** This street is not in Chester Park, but in the district originally called Chesterfield bounded by Douro road, but it is named after the same family, who were very early settlers. At one time one of the sons carried on a butchering business in the town.

**CHUDLEIGH:** A town in Devonshire, the birthplace of ex-Councillor R B Carter, draper, of Fremantle.

**CHURCH:** The old cemetery in Alma street used to be bounded on the west and south by Church street, so called because the cemetery was vested in the Church of England for the public benefit. The Wesley Church also owned land therein, adjoining the Scots Church grant in Little Howard street. Within the last few years, however, the north to south portion of the street has been altered to Brennan, in honour of Joseph Brennan, who was a Councillor for many years. The short section running downhill to Attfield street still retains its original name.

**CLARK:** John McHenry Clark, a well-known draper of Fremantle, who lately retired to Kojonup, where he died. He was Mayor in 1899.

**CLIFF:** This street was built beside the face of Arthur Head cliff,

which was afterwards much broken down by convict labour. One conjecture is that Arthur Head was probably named after Arthur Trimmer, a friend and fellow traveller with Sir James Stirling. The Governor granted himself five acres on the head, but the Home Authorities promptly cancelled the grant and returned the land to the Crown. In the old maps a stone jetty appears at the river end of Cliff street. Within living memory the only jetty that existed at that spot was the usual wooden structure with protecting railings, a tank being erected at the shore approach. On this tank a man was employed all day pumping water from the river (apparently windmills were non-existent). This salt water was afterwards distributed by carts on the streets. In the early days of the Colony, Phillimore street, which runs from Cliff to Market streets, was well below the high water mark of the river, but land was afterwards reclaimed by convict labour and the old railway station was built where the present Customs House stands, at the Cliff street corner. It would, therefore, seem that this old stone jetty was existent in pre-convict days, and was a jetty in the literal meaning of the word, stones being thrown into the water, and a roadway made on the top. Nowadays, no doubt, we would call it a mole. This jetty was the point from which goods were shipped by way of the canal to Perth. Overseas vessels would land their cargoes by lighter at the sea jetties, and the Perth merchandise would be carted across to the river, where it would be put aboard boats built something like naval cutters, which were sailed or rowed when necessity demanded. To obviate a long, circuitous route round Freshwater Bay, a passage was cut through the spit at Point Walter, and a toll-house erected on the beach on the Fremantle side of the point. General goods were, of course, carried, but it would appear that the carriage of casks of beer is all that some of the early residents seem to remember. The

method of transport was decidedly primitive. The boats were sunk to the gunwales, and the full casks were rolled into place. They would no doubt float until baling was completed, when the boats would be deemed to be well and truly loaded, if the crews were compelled to row these boats, they must surely have been galley slaves. In Cliff street between the property of Lionel Samson & Son and Marine Terrace was a grant of one Richard Maxworthy. He was a retired naval pensioner, having fought under Nelson at Trafalgar. Although he lost an arm in the service, he built a house on this land from salvage from the *Lotus*, on which he and his family arrived in October 1829, and also from wreckage of other vessels such as the *Marquis of Anglesea* (from which the two points - Marquis and Anglesea - on Arthur Head take their names). This house was afterwards blown down in a gale. In the early days there was a chain of pools connecting the promontory with the mainland, and in very rough weather it is said that the waves of the sea and river used to wash down Cliff street. Maxworthy then moved to Leake street, where he built an organ. He was a churchwarden of St John's Church at the time of his departure for New South Wales in the 'fifties. About 1845, at the age of 16, his daughter married a man named Entwistle. In 1830, when a boy, this man had been sleeping with his father in the upper bunk of a hut at Melville when natives killed the father, overlooking the boy. He had only been married a short length of time when one Sunday morning he went down with others aboard an American boat, as was the custom for the townfolk to do in those days. This boat set sail without warning, and the Fremantle men were never heard of in town again.

COLLIE: Dr Alexander Collie RN, Surgeon of HMS *Sulphur*, who, with Lieutenant Preston explored the Collie and Preston Rivers. The *Sulphur* was careened at Garden Island, and Sulphurtown, near Careening Bay, is a reminder of this. Dr Collie was afterwards Government Resident at Albany and Colonial Surgeon. He died in the Colony in 1835.

CONGDON: D K Congdon was one time Mayor of Fremantle. Congdon street has now been altered to Chudleigh.

COODE: Sir John Coode reported on Fremantle Harbour.

CORAL: With Gold and Silver streets this street was surveyed on the subdivision of a large block of land, the property of the late Sir Henry Briggs, President of the Legislative Council, who died in 1919. The names are apparently merely fancy, as the land was called Briggs's Paddock, and was pure white sand covered with rushes. It certainly did not possess any mineral wealth.

CROKE: Captain Croke RN was Harbour Master in the '70s. Croke Lane used to be called Dalgety street. The warehouse of Dalgety & Co was at one time in that street, but owing to confusion with Dalgety street in East Fremantle (a subdivision of the 'Woodside' estate of William Dalgety Moore) the name was altered to Croke Lane.

CUREDAL: The land on which this street and the Grosvenor Hospital were built originally belonged to the Curedale family, but was lost by foreclosure to the Davies family, George Davies the founder being born in 1776 and dying in 1853. Davies street adjoins Curedale street. (From K Caldwell, 'Fremantle Street Names' in *WA Historical Society Journal & Proceedings* Vol 1 Part IX, 1931, 45-57)





### Heritage Listing for Leighton Battery

Members who visited the Leighton Battery on Buckland Hill some years ago will be pleased to learn that the army defence complex has been put on WA's Register of Heritage Places.

Those members who were not able to visit the Battery may be interested to know that it was built in 1942-43, and consists of some 400m of underground tunnels, rooms, an observation post, a semi-buried command post, two six-inch gun emplacements, two 5 ¼ inch gun emplacements, and a radar hut.

It was constructed as part of the coastal defence system, which included batteries at Rottnest and Garden Islands, Arthur Head, Fremantle Harbour, South Beach and Point Heron. Most of these were dismantled in the 1960s.

The remaining complex at Buckland Hill is a fascinating reminder of World War II and is open to the public on the first Sunday of every month from 10am to 3pm at a cost of \$3 for adults and \$1 for children under 15.

(From *Mosman-Cottesloe Post* 3-4 July 1999)



### First steamship service - from J K Hitchcock's *The History of Fremantle* (1929)

In 1878 James Lilly established the first regular steamship service on the coast by placing the SS *Rob Roy*, in the charge of Captain Craig, on the run between Geraldton and Albany, with Fremantle as her headquarters. Lilly may be regarded as the pioneer of steamship services in this State. The

*Rob Roy* was followed by the *Otway*, and in 1882 the Adelaide Steamship Company purchased those vessels and placed the *South Australian*, in charge of Captain Laurie, and the *Victorian*, in charge of Captain Lockyer, on a regular run from Fremantle to the eastern colonies.

### More from Hitchcock: Campaigning for a railway

The railway from Fremantle to Guildford was formerly opened by Governor Robinson on March 1, 1881. The name of an old Fremantle resident, the late F. B. S. Findell, must be honourably associated with that railway, for had it not been for his efforts, the undertaking may not have been entered upon until many years later, as vested interests in the river trade strongly opposed it and they were backed by the conservative element in the community who urged that the time was not yet ripe. (Hitchcock liked long sentences -Ed) To combat those objections Flindell spent many months on the roads between Fremantle and the eastern districts collecting data of the traffic that passed over them. That he did at his own expense and without hope of personal benefit, as he was then 70 years of age. In the end his untiring advocacy had the desired result.



Membership Fees for July 1999-2000 are due now. For those who haven't yet paid, please send your remittance to:

The Secretary  
Fremantle History Society  
24 Fothergill Street  
FREMANTLE 6160

Ordinary:	\$10	Family:	\$15
Organisational:	\$20	Conc:	\$5

MEMBERSHIP FEES NOW DUE - SEND YOUR RENEWAL IN TODAY

