



## FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY

Established 1994

The Secretary, 24 Fothergill St,  
FREMANTLE WA 6160

**Autumn Edition  
2000**



FREMANTLE  
LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION

Three ex- convicts, York, late 19<sup>th</sup> century. (Private collection)

### **The convicts are coming what capital sport ...**

On the first of June 1850, the *Scindian* ended its eighty-nine day journey from England to the Swan River Colony. As well as the free passengers, there were 75 convicts aboard. Just over one year before, by an Order in Council in the British Parliament, the previously free settlement on the western coast of Australia had been designated a penal colony, a place to which *felons and other offenders under sentence or order of transportation or banishment should be conveyed*. Although the change in status was known to the settlers, the arrival of the *Scindian* and her felonous cargo, was a surprise to the tiny settlement which was, in many ways, unprepared for them.

At this time, the colony's population was around 5 000 (excluding Aborigines). Fremantle itself had limited facilities. Captain Henderson, who was in charge of the convicts and their keepers, who were also aboard, had few options. He leased the warehouse of the harbour master, Daniel Scott, and converted it for use as barracks to house the convicts that had already arrived and those that would follow them. He then began the arduous task of finding a suitable site to build a prison and related quarters that would comprise the convict establishment.

Over the next eighteen years, almost 10 000 convicts were sent to Western Australia. To service the system Royal Engineers, warders and pensioner guards, many with

families, also arrived. The economic and social effect of the system was felt throughout the colony as much needed public works, private and commercial enterprises were undertaken by convict workgangs, ticket of leave men and the many others who followed in their wake.

This year marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the convicts and their keepers and the physical beginnings of a system that gave Western Australia a continuing legacy. A number of activities have been planned to celebrate. While the Fremantle Prison will provide the focus of many of these activities, they come under the umbrella of the City of Fremantle's Heritage Week celebrations which have been moved from April to the week surrounding the 1<sup>st</sup> June. A major highlight of the week's activities will be the one day seminar *Constructing a Colony: The Convict Legacy*.

To be held at the Prison on Saturday 3 June from 9.00am to 5.00pm, the seminar brings together academic, local and family historians with twelve papers, two workshops and a panel discussion. The day will be run in two concurrent sessions and will provide a fascinating overview of many aspects of the convict era. A registration brochure is included with your newsletter. For further information contact Anne Brake, Curator, Fremantle Prison on 9335 9473.

A class of year 6 / 7 students from Lake Monger will mark the actual date of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a walk, in convict workgang uniforms, from Bathers Beach to the Prison following the route that many of the convicts would have taken on their arrival in the colony. They will be met at the Prison by the Mayor of Fremantle, Richard Utting and Marli Wallace, the Chair of the Fremantle Prison Trust.

Other events planned for the weekend include a cocktail party at the Prison on the evening of 1 June at which the Minister for Works will launch the Prison's new website and several interactives which will form key elements of a new visitor's centre to be opened at the Prison in early September.

The convict group of the WA Genealogical Society will be taking walks along the route up from the old Commissariat to the Prison explaining the various convict related sites along the way. These will be held on Sunday 4 June at 1.00, 2.00, 3.00 and 4.00 pm. Those interested should meet outside the Maritime Museum on the corner of Cliff St and Marine Terrace just before the walks are scheduled to start.

For further information on other Heritage week activities look out for the brochure which will be widely distributed in the coming weeks and the wrap around in the Fremantle Herald.



## 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
David Hutchison	9335 1594
Alison Gregg	9432 9739
Geoff Warren Smith	9388 6959
Len Vickridge	9335 1954
Kristy Bizzaca	9332 7664

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.

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.



#### **New Member**

**Kenneth A Birt  
Simon Adams  
Ken Hopkins  
Andrew Gill**



#### **COMING EVENTS**

##### **Another assault on the Asylum**

Our fascination with the Fremantle Arts Centre continues! Renowned conservation architect Rob Campbell, who was responsible for the original conservation work on the old Fremantle Asylum, will give us new insights into the restoration of this magnificent building at our May general meeting. His talk will be entitled 'Conservation and

Heritage: A Fresh Look at the Fremantle Arts Centre' and will be accompanied by a dazzling slide show. The talk will be given on the premises, so **gather at the main entrance of the Fremantle Social History Museum on 23 May at 7pm**. The usual bikkies and drinks afterwards!

##### **Wend Your Way Through Notre Dame**

Last time storms and gales kept most of our members away from this fascinating venue, so it's on again! For our June meeting Terry Craig of Notre Dame University will take us on a guided tour of the university. He will describe the process of the adaptation of the wonderful old warehouses and industrial buildings of the West End to university purposes, which ensured minimum interference with their fabric. Spaces can still be identified with their past uses, and old machinery and haulage systems have been incorporated into the present interiors. This is an excellent example of imaginative and sensitive adaptation of old buildings to modern use, and the tour should not be missed by anyone interested in the preservation of Fremantle's West End. Meet at **7pm at the main entrance to the university in Moat Street at 7pm on Tuesday 27 June**.

##### **AGM and Whodunit**

This will be an AGM with a difference! The meeting will be preceded by a re-enactment of the trial of William Clarke, a Fremantle solicitor, in 1832 after he killed his opponent, Mr French Johnson, in the only duel ever known to have taken place in Western Australia. Clarke was charged with manslaughter after Johnson died from shot wounds, and the men who acted as seconds for the duellists, Thomas Yule and William Clark, were also charged. The re-enactment will be entitled *The Merchant*

of Fremantle, and will be presented under the auspices of the Francis Burt Law Education Centre. Members will be invited to take the parts of court officials and other people involved in the trial and read from prepared scripts. We are assured no expertise is required, and no one will be coerced into participating! So come to the **Old Court House, Marine Terrace, Fremantle, on Tuesday 18 July at 7pm** for the experience of a lifetime. The re-enactment will be followed by the Annual General Meeting and refreshments.



## MEETING REPORTS

### South Fremantle foreshore

David Kasehaegen took us on a fascinating walk through the recently developed area just to the north of the old South Fremantle Power Station. A very pleasant and reasonably well protected picnic ground has been put in and a bike and pedestrian path links the area to South Beach.

A short stroll along the pathway brings you to several pieces of public art. In our Autumn 1998 edition we described Ann Neil's piece which commemorated the horse trainers that used South Beach extensively. To the north of this are several pieces which mark the site of Robb's jetty and the cattle races that linked it to the abattoir.

A short sandy path takes you directly to the beach where there is an information sign for the new CY O'Connor statue which has been installed in the waves. We were there just before sunset and it was a little difficult to see. It also depends on the level of the tide as well. Although controversial, this innovative

piece certainly evokes discussion about the man.

Our thanks go to David, who stayed on to enjoy the barbeque dinner.

### West End Ramble

David Hutchison's great knowledge and love of Fremantle always shows through in the work that he does and his tour of the West End for the Society was no exception. Starting at the Round House, we meandered through the streets stopping to look at and discuss some old favourites, like the Samson Buildings, and some almost forgotten buildings, such as the old Timothy's Toys premises.

David's talk helped us to focus on the detail of the buildings often missed as we pass these remnants of a past era in our daily life. I hope we never take the West End for granted. Those who fought so hard to save it have given Fremantle a wonderful and almost unique legacy in its scale and comprehensiveness.

### Maritime mysteries remain a mystery

For the first time in our seven year history we were stood up. Sally May, who had recently had a stint in hospital, had become so engrossed in her work on the day of our tour that she forgot us.

Full of the sincerest apologies, she has written a paper on the work they are doing at the new Maritime Museum which you will find in this edition. Sally has offered to 'try again' later in the year.



## Founders and Pioneers - Crowley's View

When do the members of a new society cease being founders and begin being pioneers? I had never really stopped to think about the difference between a founder and a pioneer, happily lumping them all together. Of course, pioneers aren't always necessarily founders. Founders, on the other hand, are always, in a sense, pioneers.

The chapters of Frank W. Crowley's 1960 book *Australia's Western Third* are divided into various segments of time so that the first chapter is entitled 'Foundation 1826-1849' and the second chapter 'Pioneering 1850-1869'.

This sent me to a dictionary for the definitions of both foundation and of pioneer.

**foundation** *n.* (4) the act of founding or establishing or the state of being founded or established

**pioneer** *vt* (5) to initiate, prepare or open up

So that the founders of a colony can be seen as those who struggle mainly to secure a toehold or bridgehead and who may not be in a position to be too concerned with the hinterland (their lack of resources confining their explorations and expansions comparatively close to home).

Pioneers, on the other hand, may be seen as those who, having acquired the necessary resources, are in a position to take advantage of the work of the founders, so that they can begin to explore and develop the hinterland.

As Crowley points out in his chapter headed 'Pioneering', the effects of an increased population and increases in

the flow of capital via the introduction of convicts to the colony, contributed to the transition of society from one of contained founders to one of expansionary pioneers. With the means to do so they began to explore, exploit and develop both the south and the north of the state with greater vigour and vision than previously.

Rob Besford



## The Latest from the Oral History Unit, Batty Library

The long-awaited report on future directions for the Oral History Unit at the Batty Library has finally reached us.

Overall, the report is most disappointing. It clearly envisages no more than basic maintenance of the current collection, with additions happening more or less only when someone provides money for specific projects. Considering that Batty Library were pioneers in the oral history area it seems short-sighted not to pursue their existing advantages and improve their holdings, aiming if possible to build a Centre of Excellence which could well attract federal funding.

We have written to LISWA expressing our reservations about their approach to the Unit, but we must reluctantly acknowledge that there appears to be no real commitment to improvement and growth in this area.



## LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION NEWS

The Local History collection will be hosting two workshops during the upcoming Heritage Week celebrations. *Family History for absolute Beginners*

will be held in the LHC rooms on Wednesday 31 May between 10.00 and 11.30 am. Norma Silich and Karen Rattray will show you where to start.

Or if you are interested in buildings, heritage consultant (and FHS committee member) Kristy Bizzaca, will show you how to research your house or any other historic buildings you may be interested in. The workshop, *Building Histories for Absolute Beginners* runs from 10.00-11.30 am on Thursday 1 June in the LHC rooms.

To book for either workshop phone 9432 9739.



### **The Western Australian Maritime Museum, Challenge and Change.**

Sally May, Head of the Maritime History Department, WA Maritime Museum.

"The Western Australian Museum has embarked on a major program of redevelopment of the Western Australian Maritime Museum. A world class exhibition facility is being built at Forrest Landing in Fremantle. The new maritime museum facility will show, from a maritime perspective and through specific themes, where the western third of the Australian continent, and its people, are situated."<sup>1</sup> However, this major redevelopment has not occurred in an economic, political or social vacuum. Indeed, it is indicative of international, national influences and trends. This article will explore some of these broader international and national trends, providing a context for the events leading up to the development of the new maritime museum.

#### **International trends**

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<sup>1</sup> Henderson, G: *The West Australian*, 4 December 1999, p.80.

Containerisation, around the world, has revolutionised the landscape of waterfronts and ports. Throughout the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, traditional ports, planned to be in close association with large population centres, dominated by sheds and warehouses, are either redundant or becoming redundant. Where sheds and warehouses were once crucial for cargo handling and dominated the landscape, vast barren acreages are now required for stacking metal containers.<sup>2</sup> New port facilities, frequently outside of major metropolitan areas, are being built to accommodate containerisation, leaving behind 'ghost' ports, closer to population centres.

So what is happening to these 'ghost' ports? Like Liverpool Docks, or the port at Bombay, they are being transformed into tourist centres and precincts, keying into the 20th Century's growth in tourism. Inevitably, at the heart of these port redevelopments is a maritime museum vested with the responsibility for maintaining some vestige of continuity within an industry facing challenges and change. Closer to home, the Australian National Maritime Museum, a bi-centennial project, was built as the heart of Darling Harbour's redevelopment within Sydney's central business district. At regional coastal centres throughout Australia, increasingly local historical societies and shire councils are looking to the development of maritime museums to project the history and heritage of their community and locale. This begs the question, "Why?"

#### **National trends**

In Australia, over the last two decades there has been a seemingly silent revolution of quiet achievers—maritime industries—rivalling rural industries in

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<sup>2</sup> Broeze, F: *Island Nation, A history of Australians and the sea*, Allen & Unwin, 1998, p.xv.

output value and export-earnings. Reflecting a growing awareness of the economic importance of maritime industries, there has been a parallel growth in the development of major and minor maritime museums. Historically, the evolution of museums was greatly influenced by the great European industrial exhibitions of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, promoting national progress and development. Australia, once a country which was proud of its economic development 'riding on the sheep's back', looked inland to its rural industries for its national identity. As an island nation, with its population concentrated along its coastline, Australian people's way of life is intricately connected directly or indirectly with maritime pursuits whether they are of a commercial or recreational nature.

"Australians have perhaps been even slower in recognising the home-grown strengths of our capabilities in maritime industry and marine science. The maritime sector of the economy is one which has the potential over the next decade to contribute substantially to the establishment and growth of vitally needed new industries and employment opportunities... Australia is a maritime nation with extensive maritime interests. We have considerable skills and experience in marine industries, maritime security and marine science and technology."<sup>3</sup> Over the last decade, Australian marine industries have had a faster rate of growth than other industries. Fisheries (including aquaculture) contribute close to \$1,500 million a year in export earnings as does marine tourism (based on overseas visitors, alone). Similarly, civil shipbuilding and boat building grew in value 1,525% and 231%, respectively,

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<sup>3</sup> Bateman, S and Sherwood, D (ed): *Australia's Maritime Bridge Into Asia*, Allen and Unwin in association with the Royal Australian Navy, 1995, p.4.

between 1987/88 and 1992/3.<sup>4</sup> Australia no longer 'rides on the sheep's back' and is looking out to sea for its future. In this respect, the expansion and redevelopment of the Western Australian Maritime Museum is indicative of international and national trends and provides the opportunity for the Museum to expand its horizons in representing the State's maritime history more broadly than it has done in the past. At a local level, the historical context and events precipitating this redevelopment are unique and very briefly described.

The current Maritime Museum of Western Australia is housed in two exhibition buildings. The Maritime Museum is located in an 1860s limestone Commissariat building that served Fremantle's outer port until 1897. At this venue, the archaeological excavation of foreign shipwrecks (Dutch, British and American) and their associated artefacts is the dominant focus of displays.

The Historic Boats Museum occupies a 1920s weatherboard fruit cargo shed in the Port of Fremantle. By necessity, it is a boat storage venue on display, with little interpretation. While acutely aware of the lack of representation of our maritime industries, neither of the venues was suitable for the accommodation and interpretation of a broader cross-section of the State's maritime history. However, the two display venues attract 250,000 visitors each year, 60% of whom come from outside WA.

In late 1994, the announcement by the Commonwealth Government's that: "in

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<sup>4</sup> McKennon, Professor Ken: in Bateman, S and Sherwood, D (ed): *Australia's Maritime Bridge Into Asia*, Allen and Unwin in association with the Royal Australian Navy, 1995, p.146.

accordance with the Government's commitment to conserving objects in their original place, and because it recognises the strong sense of regional identity often placed on objects, the Government will return the yacht *Australia II* to the Fremantle community."<sup>5</sup> *Australia II*, exhibited in the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney's Darling Harbour since 1987 had been an icon Western Australians had wanted exhibited in Fremantle where the successful America's Cup challenge was based when the yacht won the America's Cup on 26 September 1983. The State Premier, Richard Court, himself a champion eighteen foot skiff sailor, accepted the return of *Australia II* and committed his government to building a new maritime museum to house the 32-metre tall yacht and to develop world class exhibitions of the State's maritime history.

[*Australia II* racing off Fremantle in 1987. Photo. Courtesy of Gary Merrin.]

The challenge for the staff involved in this new development is to ensure that its exhibitions are representative of our State's maritime industries and communities. With a site selected for the purpose-built museum, on the west-end of Victoria Quay, construction is expected to be completed by the end of 2001. Exhibition planning and development is in full swing. The working titles of the major exhibition themes are: *Western Australia within the context of the Indian Ocean, Fremantle and Swan River, Fishing, Leisure, Trade and Defence*. Subsequent issues will explore the planning and development of the new maritime museum and the exhibitions planned for this new building.

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<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*



### For Your Diary

**Tuesday 23 May, 7.00 pm - Another assault on the Asylum.** Rob McK Campbell will share with members some of his recent findings in regard this significant Fremantle building. The talk will be held in the Fremantle History Museum, Finnerty St, Fremantle.

**Tuesday 27 June, 7.00 pm - Notre Dame.** Redevelopment of heritage buildings for other uses ensures their place in the future of our towns and cities. Notre Dame University has converted buildings for use as a university campus in the heart of the city. Come and see how they have done it. Meet at the Mouat St entrance.

**Tuesday 18 July, 7.00 pm, AGM and Whodunit rolled into one.** Those who have always wanted to be on stage can take part in the unfolding drama while those who like a good show can observe from the side lines. The mock trial will be followed by our AGM and the night will finish fittingly with light refreshments. The action will take place at the old Courthouse on Marine Terrace.



### FREMANTLE STREETS (continued)

**ISLAND:** This street is in the sand drift between Rockingham Road and the sea, and forms the boundary on the south between the municipality and the road board district.

**JAMES:** Sir James Stirling, first Governor of the Colony. But for the



intervention of the Park, Stirling Street, as originally surveyed, would join James Street.

JENKIN: Rev. J G Jenkin, of the South Fremantle Methodist Church, who was afterwards transferred to Adelaide. It was originally called By-the-sea Road, although it led to and not by the sea.

JOSEPHSON: Josephson, of McCleery & Josephson, who was said to be a Jew of high birth exiled from Russia for political reasons, built a row of three-storeyed houses in this street. In the very early days he kept a shop where the National Hotel now stands, but latterly his place of business was in Cliff Street.

KEEGAN: C Keegan, Councillor 1907-1912.

KNUTSFORD: This street is near Holland Street. Knutsford, the Cheshire town immortalised in *Cranford* was the birthplace of Lord Holland.

LEAKE: George Leake, uncle of George Walpole and Sir Luke Leake was a storekeeper in the town in the early days. He was the first RM at Fremantle.

LEFROY: The whole of the Lefroy Road forms the northern boundary of the Lefroy Estate, which extended as far south as Lloyd Street. Henry Maxwell Lefroy was Comptroller of the Fremantle Prison in the 'sixties.

LILLEY: James Lilley was manager of the Adelaide Steamship Company. He established the first coastal service, which was afterwards purchased by this company.

LITTLE HOWARD: Continuation of Howard Street.

LOUISA: The property on which this street was built belonged to Captain Owston and afterwards came into the possession of his step-son, Mr Fred Jones, who was with the Council for many years. On the subdivision family names were given to the streets.

LOUKES: Fred S Loukes, who was a councillor in 1905-1908, and died in 1919, lived here.

MALCOLM: Sir Malcolm Fraser, Commissioner of Lands in old Government and later first Agent General for Western Australia in London.

MANDURAH: Mandurah Road was the main entrance to the town from the south, being a continuation of South Terrace. Mandurah Road would be the natural route to Mandurah in the early days, and it undoubtedly was, but owing to the shifting sand dunes it was necessary to make a deviation at Douro Road and travel further inland. Less than 40 years ago (from 1931!) there was a house and orchard east of Robb's Jerry, and now the site even is quite obliterated by the sand, which threatened to cover wholly the old Rockingham Road.

MANNING: The Manning Estate owned considerable property in Fremantle. C A Manning was a West Indian merchant who settled in the town, dying in 1869. He built Manning's Folly, lately demolished in Pakenham Street, to be a home for Indian officers on furlough.

MARDIE: This was originally a private street before it was taken over by the Council. The owner was called Mardie Simpson.

MARINE: Marine Terrace from Anglesea Point (beside which was built

the small jetty, now the Fish Market Jetty) to Essex Street, derives its name from its situation on the water front. Before the railway to Robb's Jetty (afterwards extended to Armadale) was laid down, the roadway, which was much higher than sea level, followed the line of the beach, and was protected by a high stone sea wall with a coping, which extended almost to Essex Street. From there a row of piles resisted the encroachments of the sea on the road, which from that street to South Street was named Fitzgerald Terrace, Captain Fitzgerald RN being Governor 1848-1853. The continuation to Douro Road is shown on the survey of 1844 as being in the suburban area, South Street representing the southern boundary of the town. It was named Wellington Terrace after the Great Duke. These last two names have since disappeared, and the whole south esplanade is now Marine Terrace. It was along this road that the camels were driven after disembarkation at the long jetty (now practically demolished, its jarrah piles having been used for cabinet-making purposes). A quarantine station for camels arriving by sea was established on 18 November 1896, and before being sent to the goldfields the keepers used to camp with their animals on the site of what is now South Beach. It used to be considered the correct thing for all the children of the neighbourhood to repair thereto daily after school, and incense the Afghans by calling out 'ooshta', which was the signal for the camels to kneel, whatever they might be doing at the moment.

**MARKET:** In J S Roe's earliest survey this street is shown with Market Place at the present railway station end. No market apparently eventuated.

**MARMION:** William Edward Marmion, born in Fremantle in 1845, died 1896, Minister for Crown Lands on the

proclamation of Responsible Government.

**MAXWELL:** This street was in the Lefroy Estate, owned by Henry Maxwell Lefroy.

**MINILYA:** This is the southern continuation of Robinson Street, park lands intervening. The adjoining streets were also altered lately by the present Health Inspector, Mr T Smith, to Wongan, Nannine, Yalgoo, Wiluna, to avoid confusion, and with a view to perpetuating purely Western Australian names.

**McCLEERY:** The firm of McCleery & Josephson was in existence in the nineties as general merchants in premises which are still standing next door to the old Bank of New South Wales building in Cliff Street. John McCleery, who was the son of a Belfast surgeon and died in 1911, owned land near the street named after him in Beaconsfield.

**McLAREN:** F J McLaren was Mayor of Fremantle, 1912-1914. The name of this street was changed from Silas Street. William Silas Pearse, son of William Pearse, one of the first settlers in North Fremantle.

**MONTGOMERY:** W Montgomery, of Montgomery & Co, drapers, was Mayor of Fremantle 1919.

**MORAN:** C J Moran was Minister for Lands, 1906.

**MOUAT:** J A Mouat, Senior Lieutenant, HMS *Challenger*.

(From K Caldwell, 'Fremantle Street Names', in *WA Historical Society Journal & Proceedings* Vol 1 Part IX, 1931, 45-57)