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FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY

Established 1994

The Secretary, 24 Fothergill Street,
FREMANTLE WA 6160

Spring Edition
2000

OUR SILVER JUBILEE!!!

A Special Message from the President of the Society

One of the significant achievements of the Fremantle History Society since its formation in 1994 has been the production of its newsletter, one for each season of the year, and this issue marks the appearance of the Twenty-Fifth Edition.

Not only have the newsletters furnished members with a record of the Society's activities and information about forthcoming events, but they have also provided a forum for discussion on matters of common interest, and have increasingly become a vehicle for longer articles, ranging from an account of Christmas celebrations in Fremantle Prison, through the history of St Patrick's Basilica to a dissertation on the West Australian Maritime Museum. These articles and other items now form such a substantial body of information that an index has been compiled which it is hoped will be of assistance to those seeking information on a particular topic. Complete sets of these newsletters, including the index, are held in the Fremantle Local History Collection and in the Battye Library - copies can be consulted on application to the staff in both places.

The newsletter has acquired a considerable reputation among historically minded people in Fremantle, and has subscribers both interstate and even overseas. It has been warmly commended for its readability and interest by a large number of people, including the Mayor of Fremantle, Richard Utting, and the Royal Western Australian Historical Society.

A number of people have contributed items to the newsletter, especially the Fremantle Local History Collection, which the editors have regularly drawn on for illustrations and other information. However, the brunt of the production task has fallen to Dianne Davidson and Anne Brake who, from the outset as members of the Society's Interim Committee in late 1994, have worked in assiduous and harmonious harness and have been chiefly responsible for the publication's success. In addition to writing most of the material and editing the rest, they have arranged the in-house printing of the publication and carried out its collation, folding and final preparation for posting - all time-consuming tasks requiring a sense of purpose and a high degree of commitment.

We congratulate Dianne and Anne on a job well done and thank them for what has been an outstanding contribution to the development and well being of the Society. Long may they continue their endeavours. As encouragement, attention might be drawn to a line by G K Chesterton in his poem 'The Rolling English Road'. In typically whimsical fashion describing the situation before going to Paradise by way of Kensal Green, but the words could well be applied to the journey ahead for the newsletter under Dianne and Anne's excellent guidance:

'For there is good news yet to hear and fine things to be seen.'



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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

Executive:

Bob Woollett (President)	9335 7451
Alison Gregg (Vice President)	9432 9739
Dianne Davidson (Secretary)	9430 6096
Alan Kelsall (Treasurer)	9336 4573

Committee:

Elaine Berry	9336 1906
Anne Brake (wk)	9212 1116
Ron Davidson	9430 6096
Kristy Bizzaca	9332 7664
David Hutchison	9335 1594
Jean Cecil	9335 2352

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.



New Members

Andrea Witcomb
 Michael & Stefanie Gregg
 Peter Dent
 Lorna Cross
 Carroll Doyle
 Michael & Sam Hazelton
 Robert Besford
 Ian C Jamieson
 Jane Marrington
 Richard & Kathleen Moore
 Jacqui Sherriff
 Danny Cusack
 Geraldine Byrne
 Claire McManus
 Coralie Solomon
 Robin Roe



COMING EVENTS

Santa at St Pat's

A very special addition to this year's festive feasting will be a demonstration of the capacity of one of Australia's largest church organ installations. Extensive work has recently been completed on the organ at St Patrick's Basilica, which has had several rebuildings since it was first built in 1898.

Members will also be provided with a talk on the history of the church by Alan Kelsall who as well as being our Society's treasurer has completed a conservation plan for St Pat's. Following our viewing of the church and listening to the organ we will move to the Presbytery for our repast of suitable Christmas delights.

Meet at St Pat's at 7.30 pm, Tuesday 5 December.

**Members \$12, non members - \$15.
RSVP to Dianne Davidson, 9430
6096 by Friday 1 December.**



MEETING REPORTS

Another Successful Pub Lunch

An enthusiastic bunch of members gathered at The Squashed Grape (pun intended!) to celebrate our annual pub lunch on Sunday 20 August.

Before indulging themselves in the usual pub feast they explored the Davilak Hotel, taking in the extensive restoration and renovation which had taken place. Unfortunately the upper floor was no longer accessible, having been converted to apartments in current use, but there was plenty of interest in the bar and adjoining areas. Some enterprising members even discovered a stash of old and fascinating posters stacked against a passage wall.

A special thanks needs to be extended to Rusty Christensen who came along expecting to sit back and enjoy a leisurely lunch, and instead found himself having to deliver an impromptu talk about his memories of the Davilak and its surrounding area! Thank you, Rusty, you kept everyone entertained with your wonderful stories and awakened many memories.

Long may the pub lunch tradition continue!

Life at Sea

There was a time (and not all that long ago) when the State Ships were central to the lives of many West Australians. If you lived to the north they were often the only means of supply. If you were in the south you could take a relaxing spin through the northern ports. Fremantle people liked to see them in the harbour. Then came better roads and big trucks: no more State Ships.

At the Society's September meeting Captain David Clarke told of those times when he was at sea as apprentice deck officer, officer then master. He spent considerable time on State Ships like the *Dorigo*. The variable tides made docking in ports like Broome and Wyndham a tricky business calling for skill, timing and a degree of luck. David told of times when his luck ran out.

Some of the guests extended the story when they talked of pre-war State Ships like the *Kangaroo* which mooched through the Northern ports then through the Indonesian Archipelago looking for cargoes and carrying a few passengers. The cost was 36 pounds for 38 days.

David Clarke also described the sinking of the *Koolama* after she was bombed by the Japanese in World War II.

Interestingly, speakers on maritime themes draw special and enthusiastic audiences. Perhaps we should schedule talks on these topics as special events!

Fremantle Studies Day 2000

About fifty people, members and non-members, gathered at the Maritime Museum to take part in the fourth Fremantle Studies Day.

As always, the papers were interesting and challenging, and the sessions were chaired with flair and enthusiasm by National Trust Golden Pipeline Interpretation Manager, Anne Brake and historian, scholar and museologist David Hutchison. The fascinating talks ranged from the wide-perspective report by heritage consultant Kristy Bizzaca on the heritage movement in Fremantle, to more specific topics like the Victoria Quay slipways (the new Prison curator Jacqui Sherriff), St Patrick's Basilica (Geraldine Byrne), the Bateman family houses (Bruce Bott) and the early life of prominent Fremantle businessman William Dalgety Moore (Richard Moore).

It was a full and rewarding day, with enthusiastic audience participation at question time.

The Studies Days have established themselves as a worthwhile and popular way to encourage interest and research in Fremantle history, and hopefully will become an enduring annual event on the Fremantle calendar.

Planning for the 2001 Studies Day is already under way!



A Glimpse in the Rear Vision Mirror (Rusty Christensen)

Now that the days and hours of the twentieth century have ticked away I reflect through my memory bank to not only my own experiences and impressions of Fremantle which stretch back to the time of the depression, but to visions of the earlier part of the century as conveyed to me by my story-telling father Charles (Charlie) or 'Ginger' Chris and later 'Old Chris', as his workmates on the wharf nicknamed him.

I was told and have a mind's eye version of the area before and during World War I when, because of the small population and the fact that very few ventured abroad, i.e. to Perth, everybody knew everybody, the waterfront and its subsidiary activities, railways, wool handling, boat building and repairing etc were the main employers of the workforce. It was a close knit community extending from South Beach to the river - North Fremantle had its own identity, including a league football team - eastwards to Carrington Street where the townsite of Palmyra existed. Beyond that was bush and the battlers.

Those early days were full of stories of the battle of the Somme, Amiens, Bullecourt, Anzac Cove at Gallipoli and the veterans of those senseless bloody encounters would wear their hard-earned and well merited awards on most occasions as I recall. There were also stories of workers' struggles that laid the foundation for the conditions enjoyed until recent times - Fremantle was a predominantly working class town.

Local sporting idols and legends were household names - footballers Nipper Truscott, Trotter McGuinness, Percy Trotter, Jerry Dolan, Carlyle 'Bub' Jarvis, two generations of Doigs, Test cricketer Ernie Bromley, champion jockey Billy Dillon, and there were bike riders, runners, boxers, yachtsmen and of course the two bitter rivals (enemies?) East and South Fremantle football teams who would battle out their 'Derbys' - so called because it was a clash of the colts from either end of the domain.

The twenties, by all accounts, were heady days. The 'war to end all wars' had been won by the good blokes and everybody faced a rosy future. Then something happened in a place called Wall Street way across the world.

I was born at the beginning of the Great Depression and my earliest memories are

of shared hardships, no work, shortage of money and things that money could buy, sustenance workers and an air of general despair. Despite all of this, resilient folk improvised, made do and helped each other in a spirit of cooperation (an attitude missing from today's society). People had time to work on and hone their talents and skills - many artists and sportsmen emerged from this era better fitted and prepared for what was to come.

I well recall in late 1939 after much talk and sabre rattling the dogs of war were released again in Europe which at that time seemed like another world away, but on 7 December 1942 when Japan bombed Pearl Harbour the far off war came home to Fremantle. Blackouts, air raid shelters and drills, the Home Guard, American servicemen everywhere, petrol, clothes and food were rationed, the slow pace of our town was stimulated by troopship convoys, submarine bases and even our own battle (or was it a skirmish?) when New Zealand troops, en route to the Middle East, fought with American servicemen in High Street, leaving several dead and many needing hasty repairs.

World War II left nobody untouched and the safe, almost isolated life that we had enjoyed in Fremantle was over.

The post-war years, from 1946 to the end of 1950 was a period of readjustment. Ex-servicemen and women were being demobbed to civvy street with their distinguishing hair cuts, issue civilian suits and deferred pay, with which they all intended to make their fortunes. A lot of it was urinated against the walls of the many pubs in Freo, some invested it in short-lived business ventures while more prudent types purchased a quarter acre block, average price fifty pounds (\$100), and commenced to build their

dream home - four main rooms, bathroom, front and back verandah, usually with the toilet adjacent to the laundry on the back verandah or free standing under a tree or a grapevine trellis - often with the help of their ex-service or pre-war mates (the lack of 'big brother bureaucracy' made this possible) and, of course, a low interest war service loan.

The 1960s was an interesting time in Fremantle and its environs. Large tracts of non-revenue producing land was cut up to supply the demand for more quarter acre estates. Migrants, particularly from southern Europe, came in large liners and, sensing their promised land, virtually ran down the gangway and spread through the neglected back streets, alleyways and suburbs in and around Fremantle which, at the time, I likened to an invasion of rabbits. The descendants of these hard working inter-reliant newcomers now reap the benefits of their parents' labours and frugality.

In the 1970s citizens who previously had been referred to as 'Dings or Highland Flings, Ities, Dagoes, Wops, Slavs, Wogs or New Australians' were being absorbed into the local populace either as neighbours, work or drinking mates, business associates or even through marriage, and Fremantle was on the road to multiculturalism.

These were years of much political change and upheaval. There were plans to route a freeway to service the harbour through the middle of the West End, via Henry Street, with the inevitable destruction of every building on the eastern side of Henry Street. Old and historic landmarks were being torn down to make way for the new era - the vandals were at the gates. Then a young Turk with fire in his belly named Lauder came on to the scene to save what was left. I had the privilege of chairing the public meeting in the Kings Hall of the civic building from which the Fremantle

Society was formed. Mr Lauder became a councillor and fought long and hard to reverse the trend of mindless change in the name of the mighty dollar and progress.

Fremantle was changing from a working class town to slightly conservative as far sighted folk looking for a slightly slower lifestyle began to move into the stately old homes and workers' cottages which they revitalised. Freo had been discovered.

Great technological changes were looming in the 1980s. Globalisation became a buzz word, pollies were using the four letter word 'jobs, jobs, jobs' as industries and attendant skills were being abolished, downsized or moved interstate or overseas. A chubby, cheeky Pommie migrant set about taking yachting's holy grail from the mob who had held it for over a hundred years by shifting the goalposts, so Fremantle became the place where everybody and their dog wanted to be seen. Freo was not only multicultural but international due to this highly overrated sporting hiccup which sent the 'Silver Bodgie' Prime Minister into a sporting spin.

During the last decade of the century change has accelerated in the old town. Every available piece of real estate has been built on - 'developed' is the word used to describe some most unusual structures that pass as dwelling houses, and of course with more change seekers prices have skyrocketed. The Mall, the Cappuccino capital of Western Australia (South Terrace) and nearby streets are filled with buskers, oddly dressed people and aimlessly wandering ice cream lickers.

On a site in Collie Street (where I once worked as a junior mechanic) has been erected a grey monolithic monstrosity, a temple for modern

man's need to be entertained, which viewed from Market Street gives the appearance of a World War II Maginot Line fortification - such is progress!

However, the Doctor still comes in on cue. It is refreshing to walk around the 'Nard' where Boronia Bend, Dages Jetty, the Fish Markets and Mews' Slipway and boat shed used to be and reflect on days long gone when as a lad I used to refer to what is now a city as the largest country town in Australia. If you missed the last tram out of town at 12.40am you walked home from real dances at the Town Hall, the RSL or the home wreckers as it was called, the Yacht Club at the corner of Louisa Street and Marine Terrace, or Wrightson's in the Victoria Hall, not to forget the Queens Hall in Bicton at the corner of Petra Street and Canning Highway.

My impressions of Fremantle span the greater part of the twentieth century, and I experience a feeling of coming home when I visit the Roma Restaurant which I first patronised very soon after the late Frank and Nella Abrugiato opened its doors and I take in the scents and scenes of the sea, the waterfront, the familiar buildings and the memories which I take with me into the twenty-first century of this historically old (to me) but on the other new version of 'my home town' - Fremantle.



Discovering Hilton

When the Fremantle History Society was invited to set up a stall at the fiftieth anniversary fete at Hilton Primary School on Sunday, we were provided with a great opportunity to learn more about Hilton's past.

So, for all you history buffs, here is how Hilton came into existence!

An area known as the Fremantle Commonage had been set aside for 'Government Purposes' soon after the Swan River settlement was founded at Fremantle. This included parts of the present suburbs of Beaconsfield, White Gum Valley, O'Connor, Samson and Hilton. Areas to the west of Carrington Street were gradually developed during the first half of the 20th century with the Council granting parcels of land to the then Workers Homes Board for low income housing.

In 1927 the 'Hillton Progress Association' proposed to the Council that the Hilton area be named 'Hillton' as 'being euphonious and descriptive of the locality', perhaps because there was a rise near the corner of Carrington and South Streets. The current spelling of 'Hilton Park' appeared in a 1945 street directory. The 'Park' suffix was officially deleted in 1959, though its use still persists.

In 1939 areas of what is now O'Connor, Samson and parts of Hilton were leased to the military for the Melville Army Camp, which was made up of a Headquarters, seven camps and the Australian Special Hospital.

When World War II ended population expanded rapidly because of returning servicemen and a new wave of migrants. This resulted in a shortage of housing, and there was also a shortage of skilled labour and a shortage of materials because production had been directed towards the war effort.

In 1947 a decision was made to create the subdivision of Hilton and to develop it as a 'garden suburb'. The 'garden suburb' concept was developed in England at the turn of the century and had a powerful influence on town planning throughout the world in the 1930s and 1940s. It was part of an attempt to provide a healthy

housing environment for the general community.

Although not as large as some European examples, Hilton has most of the characteristic elements:

- an approximately circular central park where civic, community or recreation facilities are located
- radiating and semicircular tree-lined streets
- defined areas of land for particular uses (shopping, recreation etc)
- a sense that the houses are located in a large park, accentuated by generous lot sizes and a lack of front fences

Hilton houses were economical, but the lack of unnecessary decoration was more the result of the influence of the Modern Movement in architecture of the 1940s and 1950s than of the urge to build cheaply.

To overcome the shortage of skilled labour the State Housing Commission sponsored a migration scheme for building tradesmen from Austria. The men had to:

- be competent tradesmen
- hold a trade union membership ticket or a diploma to show they had served an apprenticeship in their particular trade
- be medically fit
- provide their own tools
- sign a two-year contract with the State Housing Commission

The first group of tradesmen arrived on the MV *Dorsetshire* on 5 September 1949 and were initially housed at a camp at Point Walter. Later families were allocated a house or flat in the Mulberry Farm area (later known as Davies Park).

Then 240 Austrian tradesmen arrived in Fremantle during 1951: on the *Ugolino Vivaldi* (10 June), *SS Australia* (2

November), SS *Oceania* (30 November) and SS *Neptunia* (30 December).

The tradesmen worked in teams of four or five, putting up the framework, outside walls, roofing, internal fittings. The septic tanks were installed by Australian tradesmen.

In 1951 these migrants received six pounds three shillings and sixpence a week for meals and accommodation. Migrants from non-English speaking countries received free English lessons in the evenings.

Conditions were not always what had been promised, and there were legitimate complaints about high charges for half-finished accommodation and poor quality food. However, many of the tradesmen eventually settled in Australia with their fiancées or their families.

To deal with the shortage of materials the State Housing Commission signed a contract in 1950 with Thermo Units of London in association with Thermobau of Austria (the same company which was supplying the migrant labour) to supply 900 timber frame houses. A local company, Sandwell & Wood Pty Ltd of West Perth, organised the building programme.

Between 1951 and 1953 fifty Austrian houses were erected at Hilton Park. They were constructed of Baltic pine and consisted of a kitchen, a living room, a laundry, a bathroom, WC and two bedrooms. It took about a month to complete one house.

(Information for above from material held in a file on Hilton at the Local History Collection of the Fremantle City Council Library)



A Sad Goodbye to Fred

In August, one of our earliest and most enthusiastic members, Fred Kingswood, lost his battle with cancer. Together with his sister Jean Downing and cousin Glad Rennie, Fred was a regular at every meeting. He rarely missed, even in the latter stages of his illness when he was unable to drive.

Fred's great-grandfathers were Pensioner Guards and their families lived in Fremantle and surrounding areas. Proud of his Freo identity and of his family's contribution to the community, Fred was very supportive of the Society's efforts to keep the port's history alive.

His cheery smile and support will be missed greatly.



Women in Leadership Conference

The Committee was approached by the organisers at Edith Cowan University of a Women in Leadership Conference which is due to take place at the Esplanade Hotel in Fremantle on 22-24 November this year.

Having been inspired by the walk which was organised by the Fremantle History Society for the Labor Historians some time ago, the WIL conference organisers requested that we do a history walk for their conference participants, possibly highlighting the role of women in Fremantle history.

This is the ninth year that a Women in Leadership Conference has taken place, and this year's Conference title is *Keeping Gender on the Agenda*. Conference themes are:

Science, Technology and the Environment;
Women Driving Change

Visible and Inclusive: New Face of Rural and Regional Women

The Changing Work Environment: Challenges and Opportunities for Women

Diversity: Good News for Women? The Value of Multiple Faces of Feminism

Details are yet to be finalised, but the walk is likely to take place on Wednesday 22 November, during the Conference lunch break.



For Your Diary

Tuesday 5 December: Santa at St Pat's
RSVP Di Davidson, 9430 6096



Slavery and Trade: a Re-examination of the wreck of the *James Matthews*

Utilising a grant from Texan Mr Joe Matthews, a team of maritime archaeologists and diving conservators are re-examining a section of the colonial trader and former slaving ship *James Matthews* (sank 1841) at Woodman Point in Cockburn Sound near Fremantle, Western Australia.

Currently the team aims to excavate a section of the timbers in order to examine the effects of post-excavation burial (conducted by Museum Director Graeme Henderson in the late 1970s), and to ascertain the state of the timbers after twenty years. The team will also be studying construction, corrosion, biological, sedimentary and other post-depositional and post-excavation effects at this important site.

For the historically-minded, Graeme's research revealed that although the *James Matthews* was of intrinsic interest to the British/Swan River Colony trade and on a personal (de Burgh family) level, the wreck is also one of the few slaving hulls known to exist.

Following the abolition of slavery in the early 19th century, slave ships when captured were broken up to prevent them being re-used as slave traders. The *James Matthews* ex-slave trader *Don Francisco* was a Portuguese registered brig. When captured it had on board over 400 slaves and was on its way to Havana from Whydah on the West African coast. It was in a near sinking state and so rather than take it back to Whydah, the commander of the British warship which captured it, *Griffon*, decided to take it straight to Dominica instead. It was condemned as a slave trader but survived intact because of its special construction. Slave ships were famous for their excellent sailing qualities; they had a shallow draft and were fast. It was sold and re-registered and taken into general trading under a new name, *James Matthews*.

Henry and Robert de Burgh, sons of the Dean of Cloyne, of Oldtown, County Kildare, Ireland, decided to try their luck in the Swan River Colony due to the depressed times in Ireland following the Napoleonic wars. After having come to a financial arrangement with the owners of the *James Matthews*, they left London on 28 March 1841 for the Swan River Colony. They brought with them various goods and equipment they thought would help them to start farming and further goods to sell in the colony on arrival.

On 20 July the *James Matthews* arrived in Gage Roads. The next day the harbour master, Captain Scott, went on board and brought the vessel into Owen's Anchorage. On 22 July a violent storm caused the *James Matthews* to drag its anchor, and the vessel was wrecked

close to Woodman Point in Cockburn Sound. The only life lost was a fisherman who had come on board to escape the storm. With it went a valuable cargo intended for use by the settlers in the new Swan River Colony, roofing tiles, door hinges, carpenters' tools, smoothing irons, brooms, stoneware jars, bottles of wine, cooking pots, china and glassware. For 132 years they lay buried in sand only 100 metres from shore. On 22 July 1973, 132 years to the day since the violent storm that helped sink it, a party of divers found traces of the wrecked ship.

Some 3500 roofing tiles were brought up intact. About 2000 were donated by the Trustees of the Museum to the National Trust for use in the restoration of the historic Strawberry Hill Farm complex at Albany, originally constructed about the time of the *James Matthews'* arrival in the colony. Artefacts from the wreck of the *James Matthews* are on display in the Maritime Museum in Fremantle.

Only one side remains of this important and sometimes tragic reminder of slaving and colonial activities in the period.

Sources:
Dr M McCarthy, Maritime Archaeology, WA Maritime Museum, Fremantle (This work is now being coordinated by Dr McCarthy since Graeme Henderson relinquished responsibility to him)
de Burgh, W J and Graeme Henderson, *The Last Voyage of the James Matthews*



FREMANTLE STREETS (continued)

PARRY: Rear-Admiral William Edward Parry, who was with Franklin in 1818 on his Arctic voyages, and afterwards Governor of Greenwich Hospital. Edward Street joins Parry Street and William Street is also in close proximity, but that was named after the reigning monarch.

PHILLIMORE: Possibly after Sir John Phillimore of the Royal Navy 1781-1840, who served during the Peninsular War. Streets were frequently named after officers with whom the Governor may have served at various times.

PILBARA: The goldfield in the North-West.

POINT: Point Street led to Ferry Point, colloquially known as Willis's Point, from a south-easterly direction, a track leading down Market Street from the South-West. The present railway station is built on the base of the point, which is shown on the early maps as a comparatively broad piece of land, composed of undulating white sand and covered with bushes and a growth of rushes on the Shoal Bay beach, which was on the easterly side of the point. At the Market Street end there was a water-hole and a swamp, and slightly further north a salt lagoon, dry in summer. The original ferry crossed the river from the point to Lukin's Jetty, the approach from the North Fremantle shore being by way of Water Street, which led to Lukin Street. The North Wharf has since been built on the site. The land of William Pearse was just to the west of the jetty, his son Silas being born there. The old homestead, called 'the old house at home' was there for many years, although latterly unoccupied.

PRICE: This street was originally Lord Street, representing the title held by the persons after whom the adjoining streets were named (Grey, Russell, etc.) Shortly before the war the name was change to Price in honour of James Price, Minister for Works, 1910.

QUARRY: In the early days a stone quarry extended across the lower end of the Park between Ellen and Quarry Streets. Traces of this are still to be seen in the cliff at the Parry Street junction. There was also another

freestone quarry on the eastern side of the North Fremantle traffic bridge. This was worked in the 1860s by prisoners in chains, dressed in clothing with alternate black and yellow stripes. They were called the chain gang, and were marched from the prison by way of a small gateway in the Hill Street wall (it is still to be seen) under a soldier guard, along the well-beaten track across the park, and then along the old Cantonment Road to the quarry.

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



'Heritage Sleuths' lend a helping hand

Members of the Fremantle History Society and the Fremantle Society have helped the Fremantle Council progress the development of their municipal inventory of heritage buildings. Those involved with the project provided the leg work to check on a number of queries that had come in following the posting of notices to hundreds of residents informing them their property had been listed on the inventory.

The council's inventory has been built from a number of sources including some very valuable volunteer work done by the Fremantle Society in 1979/80 which photographed and documented some 3000 of Fremantle's properties considered to be of heritage significance. Other studies in suburbs such as North Fremantle, South Fremantle and Hilton and the council's own heritage awards also assisted in the identification of potential entries on the inventory.

But the best laid plans ... in a number of instances changes have

nevertheless been made to properties since this original work was done. Many of the queries that were made came from residents who owned houses that had been built in the last 20 years. Since the earlier work, houses have been demolished and new ones built, or even when restored, new houses were built behind or the land left vacant. It was necessary for someone to actually check the current status of these various properties.

In other instances it was not the building but a natural feature, such as a limestone outcrop, that had been identified as significant. A quick check of the old lists assisted the 'heritage sleuths' to determine just what they needed to look out for.

By its nature, this kind of work is relatively time consuming and one not easily accommodated in the Council's budget. However, the willing workers shared the job between them and by each giving a couple of hours the checking was easily accomplished.

This work will be recognised as part of a handing over ceremony that will launch the council's municipal inventory on 16 November. However, this forms part 1 of what will be a more long term project. Volunteers are still needed to assist in further work to help the council in its continuing efforts to identify and document the municipality's many heritage assets. Watch this space for the 'call to arms' for the next stage of this important work!

Merry Christmas
Merry Christmas
and a very
Happy New Year

Fre-Info
PO Box 807
FREMANTLE 6160