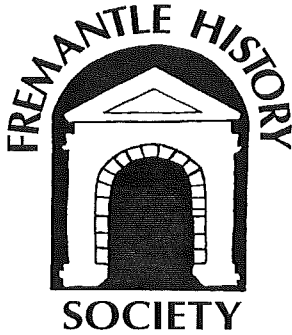


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FREMANTLE
LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION

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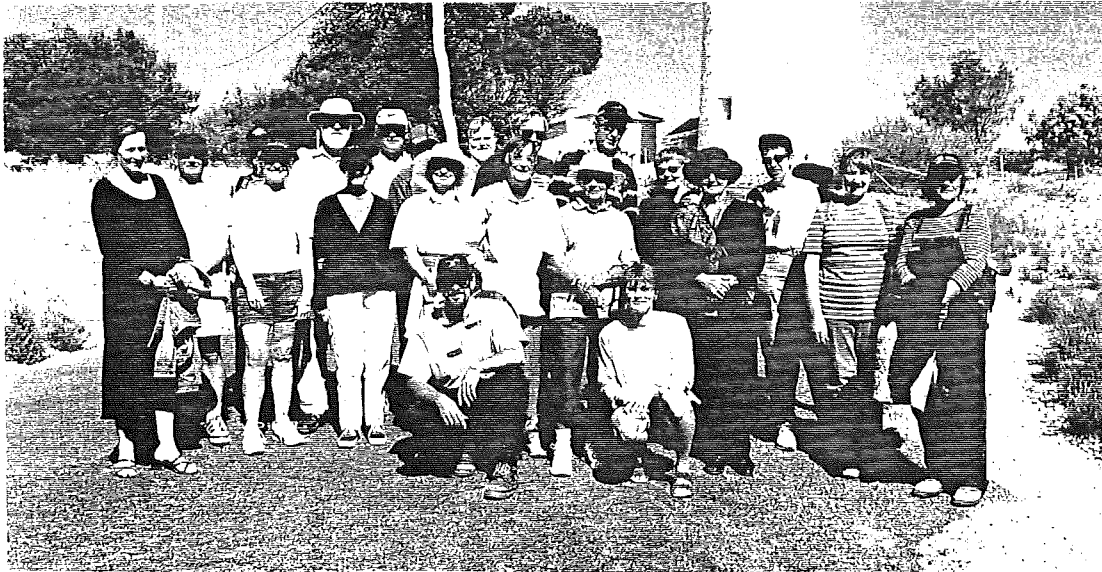
FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY

Established 1994

The Secretary, 24 Fothergill Street,
FREMANTLE WA 6160

Winter Edition
2001

Editors: Anne Brake, Dianne Davidson



Members and friends enjoyed the day's outing to Rottnest in March

Our Society has achieved much over the last year and who better to blow our trumpet than ourselves. Read all about what we are up to in our President's report!

I have much pleasure in presenting my report of the activities of the Fremantle History Society for the year ending 30 June 2001.

It has been a good twelve months for the Society: the level of membership has been steady and the finances have remained reasonably healthy; the quarterly newsletter has continued to go from strength to strength, passing a significant milestone in the Spring with the publication of its 25th edition; the Fremantle Studies Day was well supported and was again adjudged a resounding success; and the programme of General Meetings covered a wide range of topics and venues, and was enjoyed by the members and visitors who attended.

Our two **social gatherings** also occurred at places of considerable historical interest. The now traditional Winter Pub Lunch was held at the Davilak Tavern on South Terrace, where an additional attraction was Rusty Christensen's entertaining reminiscences about his early days in Fremantle; and for our end of the year function we went to St Patrick's Basilica, where Father Hughes made us very welcome and,

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE NOW!

before indulging ourselves in a truly sumptuous array of festive refreshments, Treasurer Alan Kelsall gave us an incisive outline of the building's history and the Basilica organist, Dominic Perrisnotto, spoke passionately about the recently restored organ. He also illustrated its capabilities with great verve and aplomb during a brief but memorable recital.

A highlight of the Society's calendar is the **Fremantle Studies Day**, through which we strive to achieve two of our main objectives – to encourage research and writing of the history of Fremantle, and to disseminate the results. This year over fifty members and visitors gathered in the Function Room of the Maritime Museum on 29 October to listen to five papers which ranged from the broad perspective of the development of the heritage movement in Fremantle (Kristy Bizzaca) to a narrower focus on the Victoria Quay slipways (Jacqui Sherriff); a social history of the Parish of St Patrick (Geraldine Byrne), the Bateman family houses (Bruce Bott) and the early life of William Dalgety Moore (Richard Moore). The sessions were efficiently and deftly chaired by Committee members Anne Brake and David Hutchison, and the audience's enjoyment was clearly revealed by the enthusiastic participation in question time. Thanks are due to David Hutchison for his meticulous planning of the arrangements for the day, to the Maritime Museum for so readily making their premises available, and to Mike Brevenholt for his skillful assistance with the technical side of the presentations. The five papers delivered on the day, together with a further five resulting from the 1999 Studies Day, will come together to

form the Second Edition of our journal, *Fremantle Studies*, which we hope to publish later this year and launch at our Studies Day on 26 October 2001.

The Society has undertaken a number of new initiatives during the year. Five members **assisted the Fremantle City Council** with the preparation of its inventory of buildings for submission to the Heritage Council. In October we participated in the **Hilton Primary School Fete** with a display of photographs and information from the Fremantle Local History Collection about the pre-fabricated wooden houses built in Hilton by Austrian migrant workers in the 1950s. David Hutchison and Margaret McPherson from our ranks were invited to give **talks** to the **Rockingham Historical Society**, and the Fremantle History Society flag was again flown during **Fremantle Heritage Week** when David conducted a walking tour of the West End and Kristy Bizzaca ran two workshops at the Local History Collection. Heritage Week also saw our successful nomination of the Fremantle Society for a Category 4 Award: a significant contribution by an individual or group to Fremantle's social, cultural, built or natural environment. And finally negotiations with the Fremantle Cemetery Board have been set in train for the Society to become involved in the **planning of a historical trail** incorporating significant grave sites.

The Society does not see itself as having a strong activist role, but following on correspondence last year with the Library & Information Service of WA about changes affecting the **Oral History Unit**, the Committee has seen fit to express a view on a number of issues relevant to our interests and purpose. A letter was written in February to the Director of the WA Museum expressing concern at a

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE NOW!

report in the local press that the closure of the **Fremantle History Museum** was under consideration. A reply from Dr Gary Morgan was fairly non-committal, and we have asked to be kept informed of any further discussions about the Museum's future. In March, in response to an invitation from the **WA History Foundation**, a submission was made about a proposal to form an umbrella body of societies and organizations dealing with the study of history. Attention was drawn to the difficulties in deciding the eligibility for membership of such an organisation and in defining its authority and functions. Negotiations on this are continuing.

A sad aspect of the year was the passing of two of our members. In August Fred Kingswood, a stalwart supporter from the Society's early days, lost his struggle with cancer and his quiet, unassuming presence at our meetings has already been greatly missed. Len Vickridge died suddenly in August after a long illness. He served for a year on the Committee soon after joining the Society in 1999 and quickly made his mark in our deliberations.

I would like to thank my fellow members of the Committee for their cooperation and hard work during the year. They were a harmonious and effective team, and they made my role as Chairman very easy and pleasant. The advice and support of Alison Gregg as Vice President and Librarian at the Local History Collection was appreciated, and Alan Kelsall handled the thankless role of Treasurer with good heart and a minimum of fuss. I would like to pay particular tribute to Dianne Davidson for her diligent and wide-ranging contribution as our Secretary and for the flair and commitment which both she and Anne Brake continue to bring to the onerous task of editing our newsletter. And

finally I thank you, the members, for your interest and support during the past year, and I look forward with you to a further period of well-being for the Society and its affairs in the twelve months ahead.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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

Executive:

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

Committee:

Elaine Berry		9336 1906
Anne Brake	(wk)	9212 1116
Beres Coley	(wk)	9335 9473
Kristy Bizzaca		9332 7664
David Hutchison		9335 1594
Jean Cecil		9335 2352
Robert Besford	(wk)	9335 9473
Phil Brown	(wk)	9427 2728

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.



MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE NOW!

CHANGE TO FEE STRUCTURE

At the Annual General Meeting on 19 July the Treasurer, Alan Kelsall, proposed that the membership fees of the Society should be increased, as these had remained constant and at a very low level since the Society's foundation in 1994. Some discussion followed, after which Alan moved a motion for the increase. This was seconded by Alison Gregg, and was passed unanimously by the meeting.

The new fees are:

Ordinary Membership	\$14
Family Membership	\$20
Organisational Membership	\$30
Concessional Membership	\$8.

MEMBERS ARE REMINDED THAT FEES ARE NOW DUE (EXCEPT FOR MEMBERS WHO JOINED AFTER APRIL THIS YEAR).

WE HAVE BEEN AUDITING OUR MEMBERSHIP. MEMBERS WHO HAVE BEEN UNFINANCIAL FOR TWO YEARS WILL BE DELETED FROM OUR MAILING LIST AFTER THIS MAILOUT UNLESS OUTSTANDING FEES ARE PAID PROMPTLY.

A membership form is attached to this newsletter. Fill it out and send it with your cheque NOW.



New Members

Orla Gunn
Bettie Lithgo



COMING EVENTS

Step Back Into Old Fremantle!

The Pub Lunch is on again! This has always been a very popular annual event, and this year we will have feasting at the Fremantle Club, with a choice menu selected by Club chef Donna. The Fremantle Club is a famous local institution; a phone call to find out a few details was answered by a couple of life members enjoying a drink at the bar. The men informed us that the current Club dates from August 1940, before which it was an Italian institution called Club Giovanni. Club Manager Wally Maker will give members a tour of the Club and explain some of its colourful history. This is your chance to step back into old-style Fremantle and enjoy a real sense of camaraderie in a traditional port city setting!

Our Dionysian feast will take place on **Sunday 26 August** at the **Fremantle Club**, 15 Bannister Street, and tours will start at **12 noon**. **Bookings are essential**, and must be made by **Tuesday 21 August** (ring Dianne 9430 6096, or email ronaldi@cygnus.uwa.edu.au). Cost is \$15 excluding drinks which are available at very low prices.

Fremantle at Federation

What was happening in Fremantle at the time the Australian colonies decided to federate? Come and find out on **25 September** when historian Kris Bizzaca will entertain us with social snapshots of Fremantle in the year 1901, including the hugely publicized visit of the Duke and Duchess of York and the official and unofficial events surrounding this visit. This presentation is a timely one in this year of the centenary of federation.

Kris' talk will take place at the **Maritime Museum** in Cliff Street at **7pm**. Usual refreshments afterwards!

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE NOW!

Fremantle Studies Day

This has become a major annual event for the Society, and we will once again be presenting a brilliant selection of papers focusing on various aspects of the history of Fremantle. A flyer giving full details will be sent to members closer to the date.

The day will conclude with the launch of the second edition of our journal, *Fremantle Studies*, so mark **Sunday 28 October** in your diary!



MEETING REPORTS

Tiptoe Round the Town Hall

Despite the inclement weather a sizable group of members gathered on Tuesday 29 May to explore the intricacies of the Fremantle Town Hall under the expert guidance of Manager of Services & Information, Ray Allan. Ray gave us a thorough description of the history of the building and its gradual aesthetic decline over the first three-quarters of the last century before detailing the amazing work and dedication which finally went into the restoration of the grand building and its interior in the late 1980s.

We also visited the very impressive original Council Chambers which still retains the massive table and chairs used by the early Councillors, and were delighted when Ray offered this room for our use for future Committee meetings.

Ray's dedication to the building and his enthusiasm and pride in its restoration was very evident throughout and we felt very fortunate to be shown over it by such a knowledgeable and expert guide. Thank you Ray!

Inside the Christian Brothers

It was an evening of recollection and reflection for CBC Old Boys Mick McGinley (1935-1942) and Doug McPherson (1942-1948) when together with other members of the Society they visited their alma mater in Ellen Street on Tuesday, 26 May. Despite the strict discipline and hardships prevalent at the time, their memories of the school were mostly happy ones, and both seemed to believe that their education there generally stood them in good stead in later years.

The Principal, Brother Alan Wedd, warmly welcomed our group to the College in its centenary year and went on to give an absorbing account of the history and development of the institution and its buildings over the past hundred years. This was followed by a tour of the campus where interest and admiration were aroused by the way the task of preserving and adapting the older buildings had been combined with the provision of some impressive new facilities, notably the recently completed Physical Education Centre.

The usual refreshments and an opportunity for some of the party to purchase an inviting bottle of the CBC Centenary Port rounded off a most informative and enjoyable evening. Our sincere thanks to the College and to Brother Wedd for the hospitality extended to us.

Annual General Meeting

A larger than usual crowd gathered for the Annual General Meeting held at the Fremantle Education Centre (the former Princess May Girls' School) on Thursday, 19 July. Kristy Bizzaca gave a very interesting and erudite talk on the history of the school, as well as education in WA generally and the philosophy of education reflected in the school buildings of the time. She was followed by Margaret

McPherson, who entertained those present with amusing but informative stories about her time at Princess May Girls' School in the 1946-1948 period, which also illustrated the general ethos and community feeling of Fremantle in the 1940s.

After the conclusion of official business members were invited to inspect the panels which had been set up illustrating the various stages the school had passed through from its official christening by the Duchess of York in 1901 up to the present. There were several ex-pupils present, who found the displays brought back vivid memories of their school days.

A delicious supper had been provided by the Port Café, which was much appreciated by members who stayed to chat and socialize.



NEW EVIDENCE IN SNOOK-CONROY CASE

In our last newsletter we reported that during the celebrations of the opening of the Town Hall in June 1887 Councillor Snook had been shot by the licensee of the National Hotel, William Conroy, because Conroy had been drunk and for this reason refused admission to a children's ball.

During our tour of the Town Hall, Ray Allan disclosed that new evidence had been uncovered. Apparently while researching documents about the subsequent trial, Peter Dent of the Law Society came across the information that Councillor Snook had shortly before reconciled Conroy's aunt with another of her nephews, which led to her cutting Conroy out of her will. The shooting, rather than being an impulsive retaliation for refusal of admittance, may well have been motivated by revenge.



Mervyn Regehr of the Rockingham District Historical Society is trying to find information about a re-enactment in 1929 of the landing of settlers at the site of Clarence (now Naval Base).

He would be pleased to hear from anyone who can help him. His address is 34 Evandale Street, Floreat 6014 (telephone 9387 1237)



THE FUTURE OF HISTORY IN WA

In the Summer Edition we reported that we had been taking part in talks held under the aegis of the WA History Foundation to discuss the formation of an umbrella organization which would be widely representative and which could act as an effective advocate to encourage interest in Western Australian history and lobby for research funding.

We have now been notified that the Foundation is bringing Dr Shirley Fitzgerald, a member and past president of the History Council of NSW, to facilitate a seminar on Saturday 27 October at the Constitutional Centre in Perth.

The History Council of NSW was put forward as a possible model for the proposed umbrella organization at the various meetings held last year. Its objects are:

- a) to facilitate coordination between the various organizations engaged in history
- b) to function as an information, communication and referral center for individuals and organizations in the history community

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- c) to raise the profile of history at all levels of government and throughout the community
- d) to raise awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal peoples' history and Aboriginal perspectives of history
- e) to improve liaison with government and other organizations
- f) to provide advocacy for history
- g) to seek increased resources and funding for history
- h) to achieve greater recognition of the value of historians' professional expertise in heritage, education, government process and policy making

The seminar sounds like a promising beginning. We will be attending, and will bring you an update on progress in our next issue.



STILL ON PATROL

Margaret McPherson

When an American submarine is lost at sea, it is referred to as 'still on patrol'. Recently one of our American members, Dan Krusenklau, lost his fight for life. His dedication to ex-submariners groups with which he was connected suggest that he, too, will 'still be on patrol'.

Dan came to Fremantle during World War II as a young man eager for adventure and to enjoy life to the full. He found a town and community whose kindness and way of life he never ceased to talk about on his return to America. Fifty years after the war Dan and his wife Barbara attended a submariner convention at Fremantle where he was thrilled to show her 'his

town'. The people were the same, the buildings and places he knew well were still here. The trip was the highlight of their lives.

Through our newsletter he maintained an important link to his past, a link that Barbara will continue.



For Your Diary

Sunday 26 Aug: Step back into old Fremantle: Our annual pub lunch is on again. Come and join the fun and feasting at **the Fremantle Club, 15 Bannister St.** Tours will begin at **12 noon, followed by a hearty meal. \$15 excluding drinks.** Bookings are essential. Ring Dianne on 9430 6096 or email ronaldi@cygnus.uwa.edu.au by **Tues 21 Aug.**

Tuesday 25 September: Fremantle at Federation: Find out more about Fremantle at the time of federation including the Royal visit of the Duke and Duchess of York. **Maritime Museum meeting Room, Cliff St. 7pm.**

Sunday 28 October: Fremantle Studies Day. Mark this date in your diary NOW - further details will be circulated closer to the time! Activities will include the launch of Volume 2 of *Fremantle Studies*.



MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Don't sit at home on Tuesday nights because you don't have anyone to go to a meeting with. Recruit a friend for the Fremantle History Society and help to keep our organization a vibrant and active group.

Membership form attached

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE NOW!



FREMANTLE TOWN HALL AND THE CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION ACT, 1901

Patricia M Brown

What a turn of the century it was for Western Australia last time! Even before federation, the colony became a state, there was universal suffrage, gold was discovered, and the first true Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Court sat in Fremantle's Town Hall in April 1899.

This last event transpired because, despite all the good things that were happening, there was no wealth for toil for the waterside workers, or lumpers, as they were called in Fremantle. Even if lucky enough to make thirty shillings a week in those times the lumpers could barely survive. 'Their work,' it was said, 'wears their soul cases out at a fearful pace and makes old men of them long before their time.'ⁱ

So when on February 16, 1899, the employers of waterside labour, members of the Steamship Owners' Association, posted a notice to the effect that they would reduce the lumpers' wages and lengthen the working day so as to lessen overtime a strike began that was of such savagery as if to underwrite Henry Lawson's poetic warning that ferocious industrial conflict would mean that 'blood would stain the wattle'. Indeed, in the days that followed, when the employers imported 'free labourers' as strike breakers under freedom of contract rules, street warfare broke out, involving horse whippings, beatings, gang attacks, intimidation and terror.ⁱⁱ

As the strike wore on suffering mounted. D J Doherty, Member for North Fremantle, became emotional in his parliamentary addresses, saying:

'the whole trouble is over a few shillings, and if you could see the men and their starving children your heart would melt.'ⁱⁱⁱ The community also stood behind the lumpers and as a token of public abhorrence, W E Moxon, manager of the Adelaide Steamship Company, was booed in the street, and cab drivers refused to take him as their fare.^{iv}

As distress worsened others, too, became deeply concerned and made valiant attempts to resolve matters. James McHenry Clark, the handsome young Mayor of Fremantle, was not idle. On March 8 he called a conference in the Fremantle Council Chambers. It lasted for two days but ended in stalemate.^v Then Arthur Lovekin, owner of the *Morning Herald*, published an open letter to the Association on March 14 proposing that the dispute should go to a board made up of three members, all of whom would be disinterested parties. Their decision was to be final.^{vi} But still the hearts of the employers did not melt. They refused.^{vii} On March 18 Clark called another conference. Three days later he deplored that 'neither side knows its own mind, and I will wait until the disputants come to their senses.'^{viii}

Meanwhile the violence spread from the shore. On March 27 the German mail ship *Karlsruhe* came into port and the lumpers declined to coal her. Free labourers were brought up and police stood ready to protect them. At noon 200 lumpers marched on the wharves followed by 2000 supporters. Some in the crowd heaved lumps of road metal at the free labourers and in the ensuing battle police were cut and members of the public wounded by police batons. The free labourers fled and took refuge on the *Karlsruhe*. The crew then threatened the strikers with marline spikes and lumps of iron and the captain menaced them with a six chambered revolver.^{ix}

Desperate, as the situation thus deteriorated, the Wesleyan minister of

Fremantle, the Reverend George Wheatley, now took a hand. On March 27 he preached a sermon choosing as his text: "He appeared unto them as they strove and would have set them at one again, saying 'Sirs, ye are brethren, why do you wrong one another?'"^x As a result of his pleading, on April 2 four Godly men and others gathered in Wheatley's Fremantle manse. They were the Anglican Bishop, C O L Riley, the Roman Catholic Bishop Gibney, the Methodist Conference Head, the Reverend W E Rowe, Wheatley himself, Arthur Lovekin and Mr Cockburn, the manager of Bon Marche Stores.^{xi} If prayer was on their agenda it seemed it was answered, for after some perils a way was found that was ultimately successful.

Clark called one more meeting in Fremantle Park on Sunday 4 April. That rally attracted 2000 people and they were addressed by the churchmen. Rowe believed the Labor movement was a struggle for life. Gibney likened the lumpers' struggle to the strife in Ireland, and government oppression there to what was taking place in Fremantle. They then urged that a meeting be held at the Town Hall at 10am the following day.

At that meeting Wheatley moved that should no resolution be reached through discussion, the matter would go to arbitration, when each party would select a representative and a third party as umpire. The decision of the arbitrators would be final. The lumpers agreed but the employers stood out against it. By 9pm it was still unresolved. A successful outcome once more seemed unlikely.

But then Lovekin evolved a *via media*, and through it all at last agreed to arbitration. Representatives were chosen: Rowe for the lumpers, Gibney for the employers and Riley as judge.^{xii}

At five minutes past four in the morning the judgement was handed down. The lumpers' demands on wages were accepted but the employers insisted on employing free labour. The lumpers, though disappointed, conceded the arbitrators' decision. On their behalf Wheatley called the strike off.^{xiii}

Thus the first Australian Arbitration Court had convened at 3.15am on 5 April 1899, in the Fremantle Town Hall. Best of all, the work of the protagonists in that place made it possible for the Western Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Bill to be enacted in 1901.^{xiv}

ⁱ *Umpire*, 11 March 1899

ⁱⁱ *Morning Herald*, 11 March 1899

ⁱⁱⁱ Quoted in *Morning Herald*, 16 March 1899

^{iv} *Umpire*, 4 March 1899

^v *Ibid* 11 March 1899

^{vi} *Morning Herald*, 13 March 1899

^{vii} *Ibid*, 14 March 1899

^{viii} *Ibid*, 22 March 1899

^{ix} *Umpire*, 25 March 1899

^x *Morning Herald*, 28 March 1899

^{xi} *Umpire*, 1 April 1899

^{xii} *Morning Herald*, 3 April 1899

^{xiii} *Umpire*, 8 April 1899

^{xiv} *Western Australian Parliamentary Debates*, vol 14, 1899, pp 1041-1044

