



## FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY

Established 1994

The Secretary, PO Box 1305  
FREMANTLE WA 6959

**Spring Edition, 2012**

Editors: Dianne Davidson, Ron Davidson ,  
Anne Brake

Patron: Dr Brad Pettitt,  
Mayor of Fremantle



FHS President, Anne Brake, welcomes everyone  
to the 2012 Fremantle Studies Day  
(Pam Hartree)

### **FREMANTLE STUDIES DAY 2012** Ron Davidson

Comparisons are never easy but it was generally agreed that the 17th Fremantle Studies Day on Sunday 28 October was one of our best. The Studies Day was held in the collection of 1910 buildings which constitute the Artillery Barracks in Burt Street. Despite the wild weather 60 attended and the event was included in the Fremantle Festival program for 2012.

The Studies Day included two papers on the German experience during the Great War. Professor of German Studies, Alexandra Ludewig, told how within hours of the outbreak of hostilities a German merchant ship had been fired upon, its crew detained and quickly internment began. The Esplanade Hotel and the Artillery Barracks were temporary internment centres until Rottneest was chosen to hold more than 1000 Germans and Austrians. Sebastian Boch, an Honours student from Professor Ludewig's department told of 'The Kaiser's Spy on Queen Victoria Street'. The 'spy' was the German consul Carl Ratazzi, who had been a prominent Fremantle resident for two decades, and whose mansion overlooked the port.

Sebastian looked at the case against Carl Ratazzi and the German consulate and finds it doubtful.

There was a change of pace when Alex Grose, a philosophy graduate and performance artist talked of the life and times of the Reverend James Brown, the Anglican chaplain at the Convict Establishment 1853-55. It was the Rev Brown's reports to the Comptroller General of the Convict Establishment which provided insights into the working of the prison and the relation between church and state.

Finally Curtin PhD student and social geographer, Shaphan Cox, looked at the history of Kings Square and the solutions which had been offered to meet the dysfunction of the space which is arguably the 'civic heart of Fremantle'. Much of Shaphan's research was based on a close reading of the Fremantle Herald from 2000-2010.

The usual excellent afternoon tea was provided.



## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### Executive:

Anne Brake (President)	9336 5206
Prof Bob Reece (Vice – President)	9335 7892
Pam Hartree (Treasurer)	9432 9739(W)
Dianne Davidson (Secretary)	9430 6096

### Committee Members:

Bob Woollett	9335 7451
Fay Campbell	9341 4102
Jenny Patterson	9438 3711
Cathy Hall	0407 086 300
Peter Conole	9319 1551
Ron Davidson	9430 6096
Madison Lloyd-Jones	0433 844 290
Steve Errington	9367 5504

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 can be found in your newsletter and reminders are placed in the local press. Be sure to check details as meeting dates may differ from this.



## MEETING REPORTS

### WORKERS' CLUB PUB LUNCH

The tradition of the Pub Lunch with hearty meals, historic sites and enthusiastic diners continued with the 2012 function on Saturday 25 August. It was held in the reinstated Fremantle Workers' Social and Leisure Club in Henry Street. Michael the club cook turned on a big lamb roast. On a bad weather day more than 30 attended. Earlier Ron Davidson, our expert on the Fremantle clubs, had spoken at a monthly meeting. He told of the interesting history of the club. It had started as a luxury club for the 'merchant princes', Fremantle's version of the Perth Weld Club. As Fremantle became dominated by organised labour, by 1914 the club had become the Fremantle Workers' Social Club. It was a shock when the club closed its doors in 2011. Don Whittington led the club's resurrection, against all odds. It is a fascinating story.

### Thirty Years On: Fremantle and the America's Cup

Members who braved an incredibly inclement night AND managed to locate the elusive Royal Perth Yacht Club Annex were rewarded with a warm fire, even warmer hospitality and a ripping yarn. John Longley, veteran of seemingly endless sailing adventures, gave a very personal account of what has become known as the America's Cup for Australia but really involved several campaigns, a number of people, heartbreak and triumph, lots of hard work and many many memories.

John took the small group on the adventures with him, too many to tell here, and we were all carried along by his passion and his almost boyish enthusiasm. It was inspiring. And he recognised that it wasn't the America's Cup that 'saved' Fremantle but the hard work of many people long before.



## COMING EVENTS

### Eat Greek for Christmas

This year's Christmas Party will be held at Eat Greek in East Fremantle. The Greek Banquet consists of a giddy array of Main courses (including hot dishes and salads) and a dessert menu as long as your arm.

Our festivities will include a glass of champagne on arrival and once again, a Fremantle history quiz will keep you on your toes.

Our Christmas feast will be held on Sunday 2 December from 12.30 pm. Tickets are \$40 each. Bookings to Dianne Davidson ([dianne.davidson@gmail.com](mailto:dianne.davidson@gmail.com) or 9430 6096) by Tuesday 27 November.

**Please note, any cancellations after 29 November will have to pay.**

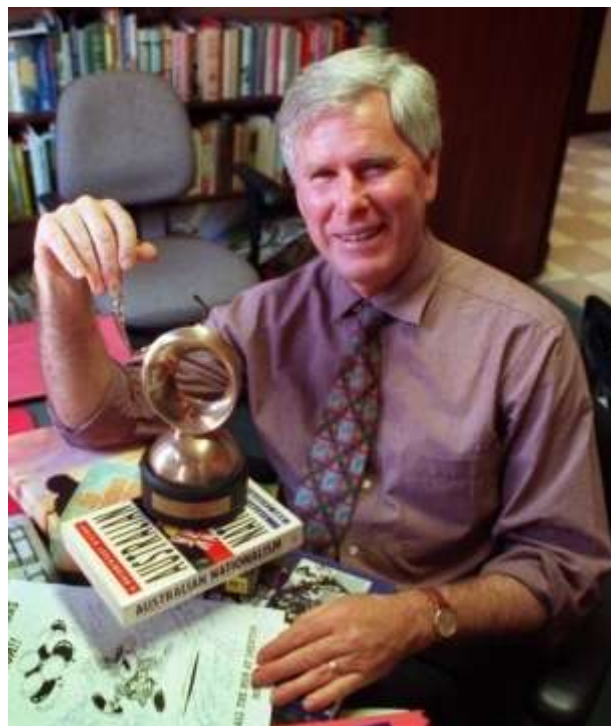


### VALE TOM STANNAGE Ron Davidson

There were many sad faces when the death of Tom Stannage was mentioned at Fremantle Studies Day in October. Tom had become the historian of Perth and of ordinary people. His *People of Perth* was controversial. He became known as the opponent of privilege. He didn't write much about Fremantle but *A New History of Western Australia* which he edited has strong contributions on Fremantle's riotous football, its organised labour and its indigenous origins. His major contribution for groups like ours was an enthusiasm for what he called 'Talking History' and he prepared

guides about what was needed to write community histories and where to find it. When I wrote *High Jinks at the Hot Pool* about Perth's titillating weekly the *Mirror* he often helped.

I first met Tom when I was a part-time football writer and he was a football prodigy. This was before the AFL invaded the West and 55,000 attended the 1965 Grand Final in which Tom was the star. He had an almost magical skill of drifting unnoticed from his flank and into the goal square. The ball seemed to follow him there. He captured it with a surprising leap for a small player. Then in 1967 he stunned the Swan Districts supporters by deciding to go to Cambridge to do a PhD based on a particular British General Election. 'What a waste' said the Swan Districts supporters. He returned, won a Commonwealth teaching award at UWA, then went to Curtin in 1997 where he sponsored the study of Western Australian migration. He also - and Fremantle supporters will never forgive him - helped select the original Eagles player list.



Professor Tom Stannage with the inaugural University Teacher of the Year award he won. (Bill Hatto/The West Australian)

We will miss him.



## TRIBALISM AT THE BARRACKS

Ron Davidson

The Artillery Barracks in Burt Street is rich in Fremantle tribal ritual. I thought this while attending the annual Fremantle Studies Day at the Barracks. In the mid-thirties Hughie Edwards was one of the Coastal Defence Corps gunners stationed there. There was immediate controversy among Hughie's friends when he was offered a scholarship for officer pilot training at Point Cook. Is that appropriate for a boy from White Gum Valley, Fremantle Boys and South Fremantle Football Club? Many said it was not: they thought it was them and us, and Hughie was joining 'them'.

Hughie became Air Commander Sir Hughie Edwards VC, KCMG, CB, DSO, OBE, DFC and Equerry to the Queen. When he came to South Fremantle football game as State Governor he often said that his handful of games with South in the thirties was the happiest time of his life. Meanwhile the great South position player Frank 'Scranno' Jenkins saw things differently. He was offered a foreman's job with the then Fremantle Harbor Trust. It meant joining 'them' and getting a big increase in pay. He could not do it even though he was urged to accept by Imelda Day, the no-nonsense matriarch at the Freemasons Hotel (now the Sail and Anchor), where South players drank.

How Frank Jenkins became Scranno will be told in a latter newsletter.



## AN EARLY LOOK AT FREMANTLE

The State Library of Western Australia brought off a coup when, for less than \$200,000, it recently purchased at a Christie's art auction the diary of Mary Ann Friend. The diary represents one of the few eye-witness accounts of life in Fremantle and Perth in the early days of the Swan River settlement. The diary covers the period January 30 to March 18, 1830, and features life on ship and ashore. Mary Friend's husband, Captain Mathew Friend,

was a ship's captain and Mary was travelling with him. She makes some pertinent observations of early days in Fremantle. In one she complains of the soldiers' noisy singing and drinking in nearby tents. She also writes, 'We expected to find land but we only found sand'.

Included in the journal are three previously unknown watercolours of Fremantle as well as two charts of rivers of the region which were probably the work of Mary's husband. The journal will be prepared for public viewing and academic research as soon as possible.

The purchase was assisted by funds from the State Library Foundation and from the Commonwealth's National Cultural Heritage Fund.



Fremantle's South Bay (now the Esplanade), painted from where Marine Terrace and Collie Street now intersect. (Christie's)



## THE STATE HISTORY CONFERENCE

Bob Woollett

The 48<sup>th</sup> State History Conference of the Royal WA Historical Society and its Affiliated Societies was held on 7-9 September this year and hosted by the Swan Guildford Historical Society as part of their 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations. At a reception on the Friday evening a Welcome to Country was extended by Robert Isaacs and the conference was officially opened by the Mayor, Charlie Zannino.

The venues for Saturday's proceedings during the day were the well appointed Lawe Davies Centre and the spacious

dining hall, generously made available at no cost by Guildford Grammar School. In addition to the business items of the AGM the programme included lectures on aspects of local history: James Stirling, Guildford as a National Trust Town, Woodbridge and Judy Hamersley and the Houghton Winery – and on two topics of general interest, museum management and heritage tourism. The afternoon was rounded off by a tour of the Chapel and a talk about its history by the School Chaplain.

The Conference Dinner on the Saturday evening was held in the Midland Town Hall and took the form of a four-course banquet celebrating the Governors of WA. Max Kay, President of the National Trust, was a jovial and engaging MC. For the occasion musical entertainment was provided by the talented Kalamunda Youth Swing Band.

On the Sunday visitors enjoyed a bus tour to Swanleigh, the Mission House in Middle Swan, and the nearby Houghton Winery. They also visited the Guildford Museum Precinct and the Stirling Memorial Gates, and the weekend concluded with a delicious BBQ at the Swan Bowling Club.

Our congratulations go to Celia Miller and her hard-working committee on their efficient organization of the conference and making us all so welcome. The Fremantle flag was proudly flown during the weekend by Fay Campbell, Joan Donaldson and myself, and Joan and I would like to thank the History Society for its kind contribution towards the expenses incurred by conference delegates on Saturday.



## **LAUNCH OF *FREMANTLE STUDIES* VOL 7**

The seventh volume of *Fremantle Studies*, the standard bearer of the Fremantle History Society, was launched by Ainslie DeVos on behalf of Fremantle Ports at the Fremantle Studies Day. Fremantle Ports was a major sponsor of the publication. Ainslie praised

the journal from her unique position and interest in Fremantle history.



Ainslie DeVos from Fremantle Ports launches Fremantle Studies Volume 7 (Pam Hartree)

The journal carries on the tradition of gathering information about many aspects of Fremantle at a time when such information is not readily available. A look at the chapter headings demonstrates this: Fremantle Markets (Kris Bizzaca); Fremantle Anzacs (Andrew Pittaway); Fremantle's first historian: Joseph Keane Hitchcock (Bob Reece); archaeological evidence for early human presence in the western reaches of the Greater Swan Region (Charles and Joe Dortch); state and federal seats of Fremantle: past, present and future (William Bowe and Martin Drum); Fremantle football in colonial times (Steve Errington); Homefront heroines and Hollywood heroes? Fremantle women and the impact of the American servicemen 1942-1945 (Madicon Lloyd-Jones; and Port plans: Stirling to O'Connor (Reg Appleyard).

Copies of volume 7 are available from the Local History Collection or by completing the attached flier and sending in to the History Society.

Copies of some earlier volumes are also still available. Contact Pam Hartree at the Local History Collection for details - ([pamh@fremantle.wa.gov.au](mailto:pamh@fremantle.wa.gov.au) or 9432 9739.

The perfect Christmas present option!



Contributors Andrew Pittaway, Madison Lloyd-Jones, Charlie Dortch, Martin Drum, Steve Errington, Bob Reece and Reg Appleyard with Ian Chambers (design and layout) and Anne Brake (FHS President).  
(Pam Hartree)



## LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION

Advice was received in September that the National Library is currently digitising the historical copies of the Fremantle Herald 1867-1886 and they will inform us when the paper is available through Trove, their online database. Researchers are keenly awaiting this resource to become available electronically.

Over the last few weeks new images have been added to the online photograph collection on the City's website. Staff in the collection are making a concerted effort to add images as quickly as possible.

Digitisation of the analogue oral histories is continuing and approximately 60 hours of interviews have been added to the extensive collection for this financial year. Interviews are also continuing and include Norm Wrightson, well known barber and musician of Fremantle.

Ancestry.com is becoming more popular for family research and staff are becoming more familiar with the software which is helpful for overseas and interstate family history queries. These queries are still a large part of the research undertaken in the collection, closely followed by property enquiries.

Pam Hartree had the opportunity to attend the New Norcia Library Lecture in September. Three interesting papers were presented which were stimulating and provided practical ideas on service provision in libraries. Pam also attended some of the papers presented at the joint Australian Historical Archaeologists Association/Australian Maritime Archaeologists Association Conference which was held in Fremantle in October 2012. Papers of interest included a paper on a recent archaeological dig at the Fremantle Prison and the demolition of the US Laundry building at the Fremantle Arts Centre. There was also a paper which looked at ways of interpreting the history of the Robb Jetty area and associated beach. Pam also attended a tour of the archaeological dig at Mt Brown. This dig is uncovering the site of the town of Clarence which was the area settled by Thomas Peel in the 1830s.

Progress is continuing on the organisation of the East Fremantle photographs, most have been scanned. The next step will be to add them to the online database.

Recent additions to the collection include:

"Lags": a history of the Western Australian convict phenomenon / Bill Edgar, 2012.  
LH 994.102 EDG

An overview of the South Fremantle tip site / Michael Parker, 1990. LH 363.7 PAR

A concise history of Western Australia / Russell Earls Davis, 2012. LH 994.1 DAV

Dinghy management along the Swan Canning Riverpark shoreline : discussion paper and draft policy Swan River Trust, 2010. LH 333.78 SWA

Parks in Fremantle : site information and short history / Fremantle City Council, 2012.  
LH 712.5 FRE

Patterns of life / by M.E. Lofgren, 1975.  
LH 305.89915 LOF

A pictorial guide to identifying Australian architecture : styles and terms from 1788 to the present / Richard Apperly, Robert Irving, Peter Reynolds ; photographs by Solomon Mitchell, 1989. LH 720.994 APP

Review of major roads in the south west metropolitan corridor Local Impacts Committee / Dept. for Planning and Infrastructure, 2004-5. LH 711.7 DEP

Voicing the unseen in Fremantle's Kings Square : re-instating Fremantle's 'civic-heart' and the exclusion of Aboriginal groups / Shaphan Cox, 2010. LH 712.5 COX

An interview with Norm Wrightson for Curtin FM Radio / interviewed by Pieta O'Shaughnessy, 2006. OH/ WRI

Interview with Norm Wrightson / interviewed by Heather Campbell, 2012. OH/WRI

Interview with Thelma Irene Culver / interviewed by Lorraine Stevens, 2012. OH/CUL

Interview with Brendan Coleman / interviewed by Heather Campbell, 2012. OH/COL



## VICTORIA QUAY

Fremantle Ports have engaged local architect and urban design studio, CODA, to assist in the preparation of three 'enabling' plans for three precincts – the Commercial Precinct of Victoria Quay, the areas associated with the Fremantle Trails Station and Pioneer Park (see plan). The City of Fremantle and the Public Transport Authority are also key players.

CODA is leading a team of specialists including commercial and property analysis, community engagement, heritage, statutory planning and traffic engineering, to investigate options for future developments in these key areas. The idea of the plans is to provide greater certainty and therefore

confidence for both public and private sector to consider developments in this area.

Anne Brake, FHS President, is a member of the Strategic Reference Group that has been established to work with the consultants. June Hutchison, also a FHS member, is also on the SRG, representing the Victoria Quay Taskforce. The work includes a series of workshops as part of the consultation process; the first was held on Thursday 8 November and included a range of representatives from various Fremantle community groups as well as relevant government departments.

There will also be community presentation and open days in December and January.



The three precincts being considered as part of planning for Victoria Quay, the Fremantle Train Station and Pioneer Park. (CODA)

### For Your Diary:

**Sunday 2 December: Eat Greek for Christmas. Hone your Fremantle history skills and pit them against your fellow members at our Christmas repast. RSVP to Dianne on 9430 6096 or [dianne.davidson@gmail.com](mailto:dianne.davidson@gmail.com) by Tues 27 November. Note: Any cancellations after 29 November will have to be paid for.**



***Buon Natale***