



FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY

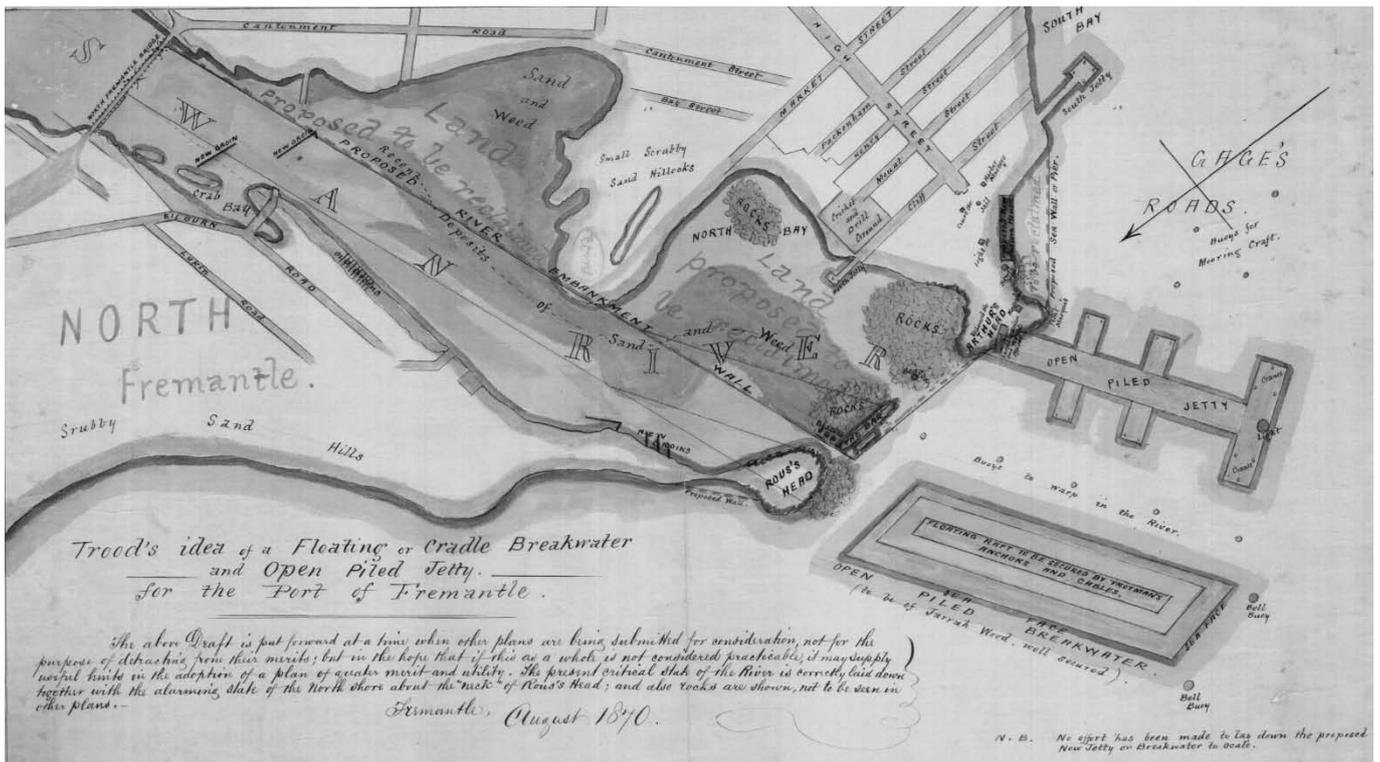
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The Secretary, PO Box 1305
FREMANTLE WA 6959

Winter Edition, 2011

Editors: Dianne Davidson, Anne Brake,
Ron Davidson

Patron: Dr Brad Pettitt,
Mayor of Fremantle



Edward Trood's pontoon option
State Records Office of WA : Acc1647 Item 11219 Plan 2

PORT SOLUTIONS

Ron Davidson

Despite inclement weather the Fremantle History's Annual General Meeting was well attended, with around 50 people arriving to hear our guest speaker Professor Reg Appleyard on 26 July.

The meeting was held at the Film & Television Institute, and it was no surprise that Reg felt at ease there. Reg, who is an authority on international migration and the economic development of Fremantle, spoke on Port Plans from Stirling to O'Connor. But firstly he noted that the FTI was housed in the old Fremantle Boys School which Reg attended in 1941 as a thirteen-year-old. That was a time when Fremantle seemed to be becoming an increasingly dangerous place, with Japan about to enter World War 11. The solution reached was to stagger hours, with Fremantle students going to North Fremantle and Cottesloe primary schools.

Professor Appleyard's talk was accompanied by an amazingly varied collection of sketches representing attempts to provide Fremantle with a safe port. Meanwhile Fremantle had to make

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do with a single short jetty into Bathers Beach, the South Jetty, then the long jetty into Cockburn Sound. Meanwhile port plans proliferated. They included a canal from Leighton to Rocky Bay and a pontoon harbour to be sited near the Long Jetty. The pontoon harbour was proposed by Edward Troode in 1870.

The safe harbour became a necessity even before the discovery of gold. The P&O line had in the 1850s refused to allow its mail boats to call at Fremantle because of the danger of winter gales. They preferred Albany with its protected deep water. The long discussion between the proposals of the British engineer Sir John Coode and that of CY O'Connor result in a surprising win for the O'Connor plan. Unlike the Coode plan, O'Connor's involved removing the limestone bar which blocked the entrance to the Swan and building wharves along each river bank. Work started on this in 1892.

Thank you Reg for an extremely informative talk.

There were the usual copious refreshments afterwards, including a selection of hot savouries, and those attending lingered longer than usual.



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 2191
Ron Davidson	9430 6096
Madison Lloyd-Jones	0433 844 290

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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.

The Fremantle History Society committee consists of a **President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer** and no less than 2 and no more than 8 **committee members**. This hard working team organise all the meetings for the year, Fremantle Studies Day and the production of the Fremantle Studies Journal. The committee also respond to a number of requests and lobby on behalf of the Society on a range of topics. And its fun!

If you would like to be a member of the executive of a committee member, we would love to have you. Complete the nomination form attached to this newsletter and return it to the Secretary at the address on the front page by **Tuesday 29 June**.



COMING EVENTS

Rock Up to Rockingham

Our August meeting will consist of a visit to the Rockingham History Society museum, followed by a pub lunch at the Rockingham Hotel.

We have been invited by the Rockingham History Society to morning tea and to view their museum at the corner of Kent Street and Flinders Lane. You are asked to arrange your own transport, but it may be possible to organise a lift if required.

The cost of the pub lunch at the nearby Rockingham Hotel is \$20 a head, pay on the day and exclusive of drinks.

Sunday 28 August, Rockingham History Society Museum, cnr Kent Street and Flinders Lane, Rockingham, 10.30am. Please let Bob Woollett know on 9335 7451 by Monday 22 August if you wish to attend the museum and/or the pub lunch, and if you would like a lift if it can be arranged.

Trades Hall Revisited

The Fremantle Trade's Hall has had a bit of a chequered history. No less than Sir John Forrest laid the Foundation Stone for the building in 1901, although it didn't open its doors until 1904. It lay empty for several years during the 1960s before it was opened as a theatre restaurant, The Old Time Music Hall, and later became a restaurant, eventually run by the Orange People. In recent times the Trades hall building has received accolades for its high quality conservation and compatible reuse make over. Award winning architect Gerard McCann will give members a tour of the property and give us a history of the place, its architectural significance and its new life.

Tuesday 27 September, 7pm, 6 Collie St, Fremantle. The viewing of Trade's Hall will be followed by our usual delicious supper.



Trades Hall as the Old Time Music Hall

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Our very warm thanks go to the owners for allowing us to visit.

Fremantle Studies Day

This year's papers will all focus on Fremantle women - from politicians to everyday women all have made their mark on their community and wider. Put this important date in your diary now. Further information to follow closer to the date.

Sunday 23 October, City of Fremantle Reception Rooms, 1.00 pm.



FREMANTLE FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Fremantle History Society was very active at this year's Heritage Festival. As well as working in conjunction with the Fremantle Society to run several events, both organisations lobbied the City of Fremantle against a proposal to scrap the heritage festival as a standalone event and to join it with the Fremantle Festival in November.

Our arguments centred around the fact that the two festivals are very different events, drawing very different crowds to Fremantle with both contributing to the wonderful diversity that makes this such an attractive place to live in and visit. Luckily the councillors were listening. The decision to keep the heritage festival in place has been warmly received.

Here are some of the highlights from this year's event.

Heritage Open Doors

Run along similar lines to the Open Gardens program, Fremantle's Heritage Open doors involved opening four heritage places that people don't normally get access to. These included Samson House, the Lionel Samson's Buildings in Cliff St, the partially restored National Hotel and the Chamber of Commerce in Phillimore St. Each place was

open for an hour and the day ended with a sun downer at the Fremantle Society's headquarters in Captain's Lane.

Over 100 people visited each of the properties with well over 250 streaming through the doors of the Nash. We hope to hold this very popular event will be held again next year with other heritage places.

Club Crawlers Return to the Sixties

There were more than sixty club crawlers waiting at 3-30 when the Wyola invited them in, including the mayor and other Fremantle identities. In the golden age of clubs – in the sixties and seventies – Wyola members drank 50 eighteen gallon kegs. That translated to six middies of full-strength beer a Sunday. The club crawlers were more measured in their drinking but when a well-filled glass of white wine appeared for \$3-50 someone had to say, 'But that's seventies prices'. Then on to the Navy club which started in Cliff Street in 1947 and had to struggle without a liquor licence. The club crawlers were impressed with the 360 degree view of the city. There were dart boards everywhere. The pint pot was the preferred drink and the bar was crowded.



Fremantle Navy Club
(Roel Loopers)

Then on to the Buffalo club with its entrance guarded by a moose head with only one antler. This too was entering the sixties with big beers and sausage rolls and crowded bars. Leo Amaranti who had been a member for 40 years, many of them as

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secretary, entertained with quirky answers to members' questions. And so it went on. The Club Crawl is odds-on to be repeated for next year's Heritage Festival.

There was a sad note however. The crawl had been scheduled to end at the Workers Club which was established in 1914 and became a centre for lumpers' (wharfies') beer drinking. However the week before the festival a new notice appeared, beside the one which said YOU ARE REQUESTED TO REMOVE YOUR HAT BEFORE ENTERING THE CLUB. This said that the club would be closed until further notice. Discussions continue.



Fremantle Buffalo Club
(Roel Loopers)

Greg James Entertains

More than 50 heritage festival goers crowded Greg James' sculpture studios in J shed on a wet and windy night. Greg was host and talked on The Making of Maria Montessori. Maria was being constructed for the Beehive Montessori school in North Fremantle. He also touched on other triumphs in bronze which included the Fishermen's memorial, town planner JS Roe and the sculptor Pietro Porcelli in Kings square. The evening closed with drinks and refreshments.

Kate and Shiner return to Fremantle

Ernest 'Shiner' Ryan was the first Australian hold up man to use a car for a getaway. He became a burglar then a Fremantle folk

hero. Kate Leigh was a brutal Sydney gang boss, sly grogger, cocaine dealer and brothel keeper, noted for her gang war with Tilly Devine. Kate was a Sydney folk hero. She and Shiner married at St John's church in Kings Square with the celebrated Canon Edward Collick officiating. A big crowd gathered. Ron Davidson filled in the details of this fascinating story twice: once for the Fremantle Society monthly meeting and a second time in the Heritage Festival. Both were held in Fremantle Prison where Shiner spent much of his working life.

During a question time one of the audience recalled seeing Kate come into the chemist at the corner of Wray Avenue and South Terrace. The questioner had never seen a diamond before that day. The flamboyant Kate wore huge diamonds on eight fingers and both thumbs.

Conservation Works at St Pat's

A sizeable crowd gathered at St Patrick's Basilica for our May meeting, which was also one of the features of Fremantle's Heritage Week. Conservation architect Alan Kelsall, who had done extensive work at St Patrick's, gave an interesting and informative demonstration of how restoration of old stonework had improved since repairs had been done on the FTI building opposite St Pat's.

He also took the group into the Basilica itself and gave a talk about the extensive restorations that had been done there, which generated a lively question time.

Thanks you for an interesting experience, Alan!



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Anne Brake

It is with pleasure that I present to you my President's report for 2010-11. Your dedicated committee continues to meet once a month to plan for our general

meetings and studies day and to discuss strategies relating to Fremantle's history and heritage. Members of the committee are involved, both professionally and personally, in a number of Council committees, precinct groups, the Royal Western Australian Historical Society and the WA History Council, allowing us to keep our eyes and ears open to various issues. Over the past 12 months or so, we have strengthened our relationship with the Fremantle Society as we have come together to lobby the City of Fremantle and the state government on a number of issues. These have included the application by the YHA to develop the Women's Prison section of the Fremantle Prison into short term accommodation. While both organizations encourages the adaptive reuse of the Prison to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the place, the design proposed by the YHA was inappropriate on a number of levels including bulk, height, use of materials, sight lines and the inclusion of a swimming pool abutting the very soft and porous limestone walls. Both groups were pleased to learn that the YHA withdrew their application before it could be considered but have been horrified to learn that it has only recently been resubmitted without, it seems, many changes to the original plan. This all hot on the heels of the celebrations in August on the announcement of the Prison, along with 10 other Australian convict sites, being inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Both the Fremantle History Society and the Fremantle Society joined forces to lobby the City with regards the US Navy Laundry at the back of the Fremantle Arts Centre. The building was full of asbestos and riddled with damage from termites and the like. It had been used for many years by the WA Museum, who retained the site, for conservation labs but has been abandoned for a number of years allowing the deterioration. This fight has been lost with the Fremantle Council giving permission for its demolition. Once removed the site will become part of the Arts Centre and will hopefully be interpreted as part of a program

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of interpretation being developed at the old Asylum.

The Fremantle History Society also joined forces with the Fremantle Society in a number of events, as well as running several of our own, at the recent Fremantle Heritage Festival and once again funded the prize for the Primary School history prize in the History Awards. Both organisations have lobbied hard to ensure the City of Fremantle does not amalgamate the Fremantle Heritage Festival with the Fremantle Festival in November. The two festivals are very different and both express important elements of the personality of our port city. It would be a scandal that a place so well known internationally, and now with a world heritage site, loses its heritage festival. So far there has been a stay of execution and discussions continue with the Fremantle Society to maintain the pressure on the city.

Secretary Dianne Davidson and I met with the Mayor, and our Patron, Dr Brad Pettit during the year to discuss some of these issues. We will request a meeting again in the near future to maintain our contact with the city.

Once again, the Society has enjoyed a lively meeting program with a wide range of topics on offer. The pub lunch continues to be a popular element in our program. Other meetings included learning about the work of the Fremantle Volunteer Guides and celebrating the Round Houses' 160th birthday. The Society visited the home of member for Fremantle and WA's only Prime Minister, John Curtin in Cottesloe to learn about John, his wife Elsie and their children. Vice president Bob Reece entertained the troops at our very successful Christmas dinner held on a sultry night in the courtyard of Villa Roma. Ron Davidson reminded members and their friends of the connections between Fremantle and the 'underbelly' of Melbourne with his talk on Shiner Ryan and the 2 women in his life which are the subject of the recent season of Underbelly. Ron also gave this talk as part of the Fremantle Heritage Festival. Our

other contributions to the heritage festival included Alan Kelsall's presentation on the conservation works at St Pat's Cathedral, the very successful Open Heritage Doors, a fascinating insight into the work of Greg James the artist who is currently working on a statue of Maria Montessori for the Beehive School and your President's inclusion in the panel of the Heritage Q&A.

Of course our biggest event remains our Fremantle Studies Day. Last year's array of speakers maintained the high standards set in the past. Speakers included Dr Martin Drum from Notre Dame Australia who spoke on 'The State and Federal seats of Fremantle: past, present and future'; former curator of archaeology at the WA Museum, Charlie Dortch, presented a paper on 'Archaeological evidence for the earliest known Aboriginal presence in the Greater Fremantle area'; former head of Curtin University's department of chemistry and football fanatic extraordinaire Dr Steve Errington entertained us with 'Football in Fremantle in colonial times' and Notre Dame Australia PhD candidate Madison Lloyd-Jones shared some of her research in 'Homefront heroines & Hollywood heroes: Fremantle women and the impact of the American servicemen that passed through Fremantle 1942-1945.'

The sixth edition of Fremantle Studies was also launched at the Studies Day. This is a mammoth effort for an organization such as ours and one we are rightfully proud of. Special thanks are given to our authors / presenters without whom the publication could not go ahead. I would also like to thank fellow editors, Pam Hartree, Kris Bizzaca and Dianne Davidson and Bob Woolett and Cathy Hall for their efforts in preparing the very important index to the publication. Thanks also go to Ian Chambers for his efforts in the preparation of the manuscript for publication and finally to the very generous support of the Fremantle Herald without which we would not have been able to publish.

This year's studies day will focus on women

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of Fremantle and will be held at the Council's reception room on Sunday 23 October. I urge you all to attend.

This year has seen recognition of some of our members for their contributions to heritage and history. Ron and Dianne Davidson were awarded a High commendation in the 2010 Heritage Councils Heritage Awards in the category of *Outstanding contribution to heritage by an individual in the community*. And the publication they coauthored, *Fighting for Fremantle*, was the winner of the publication award in the Fremantle Heritage Awards. Vice President Bob Reece won the unpublished manuscript award in the same ceremony. And member Alan Kelsall was honored with a special commendation for his outstanding work in the conservation of Fremantle's heritage.

Congratulations to all.

Finally I would like to offer some very heartfelt thank yous. Firstly and foremost to the hard working committee – vice president Bob Reece, Secretary Dianne Davidson, Treasurer Pam Hartree and committee members Bob Woolett, Cathy Hall, Ron Davidson, Jenny Patterson, Fay Campbell and Peter Conole. All have their various roles but I would like to make special mention of Jenny and Fay who keep us well sated at every meeting and I would like to make special mention of Joan Donaldson who has helped Jenny and Fay at every meeting and function we have had for several years now. Thank you Joan.

I would also like to make special mention of Ron Davidson and Dianne Davidson for their work with me on the newsletter. And I have already mentioned my fellow editors of the *Studies Journal* – Pam Hartree, Kris Bizzaca and Dianne Davidson.

Thank you also goes to the City of Fremantle for their ongoing support of the activities of the Society by providing a meeting space in the Local History Collection for our committee meetings and

the use of the Reception Room for Studies Day and other meetings.

Without naming them all, I extend some very special thanks to our meeting and Studies Day speakers. Preparation and delivery of their presentations demonstrates generosity of time and spirit – thank you.

A number of members continue to make contributions to the newsletter – thank you and we encourage others of you to make contributions no matter how small.

Thank you to the FTI for giving us the space for tonight's meeting and to Professor Appleyard for what I know will be a fascinating talk.

And finally to you, our members for your ongoing support and encouragement. Without you there wouldn't be a Fremantle History Society so don't forget to renew your membership and encourage friends and family to join if they haven't.



NAMES – MOSTLY FREMANTLE cont'd Rusty Christensen

'Tinny Thomas' had a tearooms around the corner in South Terrace where he peddled his famous ginger beer, made to his own secret recipe. He also ran a gypsy style caravan complete with wooden wheels, with one side hinged open outside the Fremantle Railway Station. From this he sold his nectar at three pence a pot (three cents) to the teamsters who may have stopped to give their horses a drink at the trough across the road, to us thirsty errand boys and the passing public.

'Paddy King' or 'Black Paddy' was a familiar sight around town pushing his hand cart bedecked with Australian flags. He was a part time stockman at Robb Jetty and had also made a name for himself as a pugilist (boxer) at the old Ugly Land. He was a garrulous character whom I saw a couple of

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times when I was a lad in town with my mother.

'Wandi Dixon' was the stockman at Robb Jetty. Some of the Dixon family would go up to the Wyndham abattoirs in the southern winter on the state boats for the killing season which was an annual source of work. I don't know the circumstances but Wandi became a member of the Dixon clan to the chagrin of the younger members. Wandi would pick up some extra cash as the 'cockatoo' at the back of the cemetery where Willagee is today; he would ride around the outskirts of the two-up game keeping 'nit' for the coppers.

Jim 'Tarzan' Watkins had a machine shop at the rear of Bill Evans' sign writing shop in Adelaide Street when I was the bowser boy at the garage on the corner of Point Street. He was a ferocious looking fellow with a pronounced jutting jaw which reminded me of an ape. I received my early sex information from him. He was in fact as strong as an ape, and worked at the now defunct Marvel Gymnasium in Wellington Street in Perth. This was pre-war times and the police traffic system was not as sophisticated as it is now. Jim lived in North Fremantle. His favourite trick was to ride down Stirling Highway on his motor bike until one of the few motorcycle patrolmen would get on his tail. When he got to North Fremantle he would stop his bike and lift it over a fence. He was lost at sea with a couple of his mates on a fishing trip out from Fremantle.

Joe Ward was an English remittance man, always well dressed. He had a good voice and would break into song in an instant if you were talking to him, or rather winding him up. His favourite tune was 'Cherry Ripe'. He always had a pocket full of Black Cat lollies which he would distribute to the kids who would gather around him, telling them 'Black Cats are lucky'. If riled, and he sometimes was by the cheekier elements, he would call them 'sons of convicts' in a loud voice. He lived in a shed in North Fremantle and to my knowledge was

harmless, even though I was guilty of winding him up on occasion. **(to be concluded)**



LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION

Pam Hartree

The collection has been the hive of activity over the last quarter with the Heritage Festival and Local History Awards early in June. The collection and staff were also filmed as part of a new series for ABC television which will go to air later this year. The program is called "Who's been sleeping in my house" and follows the history of a house from construction date up to the present owners. The crew from the ABC were very impressed with the collection and thrilled that we had the original rate books to use as a primary resource.

Library staff participated in five events over Heritage Week. The Local History Collection had an open day in the collection where they displayed items not usually available for the public to see. Items on display included original rate books, Council registers, posters from WWII and several items of Council memorabilia. Approximately 37 visitors viewed the display and were fascinated with the items. Family History subject specialists from the State Library of WA also presented an informative session on how to use Ancestry.com and the attendance at this event was 49. The session generated many questions regarding the database and all participants were eager to continue their research using the tips and suggestions. Kris Bizacca presented her talk on how to research your house history once again. This talk is always popular and 36 people attended. The talk also generated a lot of discussion and many of the participants have since visited the collection to carry out research on their properties. These events certainly draw people into the library and provide an important avenue to promote the many facets of the collection.

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Other events included a Library Literary Heritage Day where library staff dressed as their favourite classic book characters and included Dracula, Pooh Bear, Mary Poppins and the Queen of Hearts to name just a few. Staff enjoyed the day and the costumes generated amusement and interest for library customers. Linda Thorne also presented two sessions of Time Honoured Tales at storytime for the week and had attendance of 63. Some of those were families who had never been to storytime before so it was good to know that the festival had generated a new interest in the services provided by the library.

The Local History Awards were held on the Thursday of the Heritage Festival Week at the newly refurbished B Shed at Victoria Quay. Bob Reece won the Unpublished Award for his work titled Glimpses of Fremantle and Ron and Dianne Davidson won first prize for their work titled Fighting for Fremantle, second prize was won by Carl Edwards for his work titled Giant Lettered Sheds. Commendations were awarded to David Black for his work on the history of the Fremantle Electorate on the John Curtin website and Fremantle Ports were also commended on their history of the Fremantle Passenger Terminal.

New additions to the collection include:

Captain Charles Henry Watson : a research paper / compiled by Robert B. Primrose. 2011

LH B/WAT

Fremantle Markets courtyard : binding new works into established fabrics / Alexandra Mackenzie. 2010

LH 725.21 MAC

Giant lettered sheds : a street urchin's life in the port city of Fremantle in the 1950s / Carl Edwards. 2010

LH 994.11 EDW

Glimpses of Fremantle / Bob Reece. 2011

LH 994.11 REE

History of Fremantle Navy Club & City of Fremantle Sub Section NAA / John Spreadborough. 2011

LH 367 FRE

Many streams one river : history of Southern Cross Care (WA) Inc. 1966-2006 / Ian Duckham. 2007

LH 362.6 DUC

Perth coastal planning strategy : community engagement program summary outcomes report. 2006

LH 333.917 WES

Raymond Jones : architectural projects / Anderson, Simon and Murray, Andrew (eds.).2011

LH 720.92

Strategic recreation needs assessment : community recreation profile / prepared by SGL Consulting Group. 2011

LH 352 SGL

The warp and the weft : connecting strands of an evolving family / Bruce Menzies. 2011

LH B/MEN

We came by sea : celebrating Western Australia's migrant welcome walls / Nonja Peters. 2010

LH 325.1 PET

FOR YOUR DIARY

Rock up to Rockingham – morning tea and tour of museum starts at 10.30 am **cnr Kent Street and Flinders Lane, Rockingham.** Visit will be followed by our regular August Pub Lunch at the nearby Rockingham Hotel. **Please RSVP to Bob Woollett on 9335 7451 for both events or just the lunch.**

Trades Hall Revisited. A wonderful opportunity to view this award winning redevelopment of a heritage building in the heart of Fremantle.

Tuesday 27 September, 6 Collie St, Fremantle, 7pm.

Fremantle Studies Day – Women of Fremantle, **Sunday 23 October, City of Fremantle Reception Rooms, 1pm.**

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