



FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY

Established 1994

The Secretary, PO Box 1305
FREMANTLE WA 6959

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<https://fhs.org.au>



Oceanic Trading Exchange, Arundel St, date unknown (Fremantle Society Photographic Survey)

OCEANIC TRADING EXCHANGE AND ARUNDEL STREET

Tim Wright

Arundel Street is shown in town plans of Fremantle from at least the mid 1860s. At that time the government sold lots adjoining the street to interested buyers. Most of the houses, many of which remain today, were built in the late nineteenth century.

The street has been mainly residential, housing predominantly, though not exclusively, working class families, but it has also hosted commercial activities, in the form both of boarding houses and of a major providore in Oceania Trading run by the Sgro family between 1928 and 1994 in the premises now occupied by The Freo Doctor.

The street's nature has changed over the years, though throughout there has been a focus on the ocean: from shipbuilding in the very earliest years, through the sea baths at the end of the nineteenth century, to Sicilian fishermen in the mid twentieth century.

During the 1930's, Oceania's added a Maddington based winery and South Coogee market garden to their business, supplying wine for the premises, local business and export.

A heritage listed building since 1997, 27 Arundel Street was operated by Vintage Cellars until 2006 when local proprietor Jock Wilberforce took ownership.

Learn more about this interesting site and Arundel St at our August meeting.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Executive:

Allen Graham (President)	0412 933 360
Pam Harris (Secretary)	0408 092 100
Anne Brake (Treasurer)	0438 445 141

Committee Members:

Fay Campbell	0419 969 678
Cathy Hall	0407 086 300
Heather Campbell	0408 175 246
Judith Robison	0434 571 666
Stewart Alger (ex officio)	9432 9592

Ordinary meetings are generally held on the 4th Tuesday (or Sunday) of the month. Details of these meetings can be found in your newsletter.

Be sure to check details as meeting days and times may vary.



Welcome back to Fremantle History Society's newsletter. We missed one edition but hope you have enjoyed the stories we have been sending out every few weeks to keep you entertained and updated on all things Fremantle history. Thanks to all those who have contributed.

The committee is excited to start up once again and hope you will join us at one of the meetings between now and Christmas or maybe next year.

You are our life blood and we have been pleased to retain a strong membership over the past 26 years. Don't give up on us now!

You will find your annual membership renewals with this newsletter.

It's also time to call for nominations for our committee. For various reasons a couple of our long-standing committee are unable to continue so we really need to reach out to you for people to take their place. It's not arduous as we all pull together as a team. Please think about putting your hand up to ensure our society remains strong and active. Nominations due Friday 21 August.

Please welcome our latest member, Fiona Berger.

Look forward to seeing you at a meeting soon. Ed

MEETING REPORTS

Addressing historic injustices February

What a terrific meeting we had to start the year. And lucky, it has been our only one to date. Ezra Jacob Smith, a Whadjuk Noongar man (a little younger than most expected I think), gave us an insight into Whadjuk connections to this country stretching back thousands of years well before the rising of sea levels and an inundation that saw a hill on the coast become an island we now know as Rottneest; the Noongars know as Wadjemup.



Aboriginal men in the prison yard at Rottneest Island (SLWA)

Ezra also told us of the incredible impact the incarceration of around 4,000 Aboriginal men and boys from across Western

Australia had on their communities. Key lore men, warriors and holders of cultural knowledge were systematically taken from tribes weakening their opportunities for resistance and impacted the transfer of cultural knowledge. The impact of this, and other injustices, can still be felt through the generations today.

Ezra's passionate but considered presentation was very well received.

Due to COVID-19 meetings from March – July were cancelled.



COMING EVENTS

Pub Lunch

23 August

Our first meeting back together is, aptly, our annual pub lunch. It's always a great opportunity to spend some time together and catch up on each other's news as well as participating in a great Fremantle tradition (the pub lunch) and hearing about the fascinating history of one of our historic watering holes.

This year's event will put a slightly different twist on the pub lunch idea. We will meet at and hear about the Oceanic Trading Exchange which operated out of premises in Arundel St from 1928. We now know it as The Freo Doctor Liquor Store, the oldest bottle shop in Fremantle! As well as alcoholic beverages, the Sgro family were providores of Italian foods serving local families, as well as ships and their passengers and works.

Tim Wright lives right next door and he has been doing a bit of digging on the history of the Trading Exchange and Arundel St in these early days which he will share with us. Meet upstairs (street level) in the Freo Doctor Liquor Store and we will move down into the cellar, where 2 of the original wine vats can still be found, to enjoy drinks, our talk and share platters. \$20 for share platters and drinks for sale separately.

Sunday 23 August, meet at 12 midday, Freo Doctor Liquor Store, 27 Arundel St.

RSVP to secretary.fhs@gmail.com by Thursday 20 August.

(Note: parking may be a problem in the street so we suggest you park in the southern end of the council car park off South Terrace and walk across).

AGM at the Naval Store 22 September

This year's AGM will be held at the old Naval Stores. Adam Jorien will talk about the history of the stores as well as Enkel Collective which now uses the space. This innovative group are exploring new ways to address the problems of today and tomorrow. By working together they believe people will be empowered to create better futures – and who doesn't want that. It will be interesting to get an understanding of Enkel's approach and the role history has in this as it is important to understand where you come from to know where you are heading. It will also be wonderful to see inside this historic building which is in such a landmark position but until now has been fairly inaccessible. Park in the car park above the Army Barracks (on Tuckfield St) and follow the path down to the Naval Store.

Tuesday 22 September, 6pm. Naval Store, Canning Highway (parking in car park in Tuckfield St). 6pm.

Studies Day 2020

This year's Studies Day will be held on **Sunday 25th October**.

Given the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 we are still in the planning stages for Studies Day, so put the date in your diary and stay tuned. The event will kick off around **1.30pm**.



Deckchair Theatre Archive

Pam Harris

The Fremantle History Society took on the challenge of organising the Deckchair Theatre Archives which were rescued by Fremantle History Society committee member Cathy Hall after the theatre closed down in 2012.

In 2015 the Society was awarded a National Library Community Heritage Grant to

conduct a significance assessment of the materials. Kris Bizzaca conducted the assessment and determined that the archives were of State and National significance. Kris wrote a paper on this process which was presented at the 2015 Studies Day and recently published in Volume 10 of Fremantle Studies.

Cathy, along with three volunteers (ex Local History Librarians and Fremantle History Society members, Pam Harris, Kristi McNulty and Tania Heyne) have been working over the last couple of years to organise the materials for potential lodgement with the Batty Library at the State Library of WA. The committee are keen to ensure the archive remains intact and is acquired by a relevant collecting institution that will be able to accommodate the variety of formats that make up the archive.

Volunteers have worked on the archives each Wednesday afternoon for 2-3 hours over the last couple of years. Space to house the archive has been provided in the old liquor store at the Woolworths shopping centre by the owners of the building, Sirona Capital, with outgoings being the only cost which has been paid for by the Society.



The first task was to organise all the materials which related to Deckchair's productions. Over 100 boxes have been created with information about each play such as; production reports, scripts, audio visual material, digital information, photographs, ephemera, marketing materials and press clippings.

Secondly the theatre company's administration information was organised by year including; minutes, annual reports, financial reports, marketing and sponsorship material, grant funding applications and acquittals, information on their various premises and biographical information on staff and actors.



Additionally, digital information and posters have also been organised.

A model of the set of the last production, The Fremantle Candidate, is also part of the archives.



TREASURES FROM TROVE "TRANSPORTATION BEYOND SEAS" Heather Campbell

Our first meeting for 2020, in February, proved to be a very thought-provoking and fascinating one. Ezra Jacobs Smith, a Whadjuk Noongar man who has worked on Rottnest Island, spoke of Rottnest before it was an island and was joined to the mainland via a land bridge; detailing its

significance to Aboriginal people, even from that time.

The name of Rottnest in the Noongar language is Wadjemup 'place across the water where the spirits are'. In tracing the island's history through to the present day, he focussed on the incarceration of Aboriginal men and boys from all over WA and the many injustices they suffered.

It seemed timely to journey back through Trove for the perspective of the early European settlers at the time, via newspaper reports.

Swan River Guardian, Thursday 5 October 1837, page 229

'NATIVE TRIALS

Quarter Sessions of the Peace held at Perth the 2nd October 1837, before W H Mackie Esquire Chairman, D H McLeod Esquire Acting Government Resident at York, and the Rev J B Wittenoom Colonial Chaplain.

These Sessions are worthy of notice, inasmuch, as no white person was indicted for any offence against the laws of England. There were only three cases for trial and all against the Aboriginal inhabitants of Swan River. True bills were found by the Grand Jury.

Neu-an-ung, a Native was charged with stealing two bushels of wheat and a sack from William Cruse a settler on the Swan. The prisoner through the medium of the Interpreter Mr F Armstrong denied the robbery, and a plea of not guilty, was entered. The Advocate General G F Moore Esquire, for the first time in this Colony descended from his seat on the Bench and conducted the prosecution against the Natives, on the part of the Crown.

The learned Gentleman's speech on this occasion we need not publish, as it was chiefly a mere statement of facts detailed in rather a roundabout way to the Jury, which facts were afterwards elicited in the evidence of the prosecutor William Cruse.

The respective addresses of the Chairman to the Grand Jury, and of the Advocate General to the Petty Jury merely enforced the truism, that the Aboriginal inhabitants of

Swan River were placed within the pale of the Law, and recognized as British subjects by the King of England, that in regard to crime no difference could be made between a white and a black — the instructions of the British Government must be obeyed, &c.

William Cruse— The prosecutor deposed he was a Miller, and lost two bushels of wheat on or about May last from the Mill. The Mill was situated about 200 yards from the dwelling house — was absent about ten minutes and on returning, missed the bag containing the wheat; saw no Natives about the Mill — made search for the bag of wheat and perceived the tracks of naked feet down the hill; — saw the bag about two months afterwards on the back of the prisoner (here the learned Counsel requested the prosecutor to point the under Sheriff's wand at the prisoner and identify him as the person who had the sack, which was produced in Court.

The witness accordingly did so, and directed this inoffensive weapon so near the Native's body that he shrunk a little in evident trepidation witness further stated that no white person was about the Mill at the time of the robbery, and he had heard that another native committed the theft. This deposition was explained in a brief way by the Interpreter to the prisoner who strenuously denied the robbery, but stated that *Go-goot* another native had taken the wheat from the Mill, and gave him part of it. Having no cloak he (the prisoner) put the empty bag on his shoulders for warmth.

The prosecutor stated that *Go-goot* admitted he had committed the robbery, and the Advocate General candidly acknowledged that the prisoner stated the same defence when brought before the Magistrates *without any variation*, and had the very sack on his shoulders at the time when he was committed for the offence.

The Rev Dr Giustiniani Missionary, addressed the Jury at some length on the part of the prisoner, which speech shall be reported next week owing to want of room in our limited columns at present. The Jury retired for a short time and returned a verdict of — *guilty* — *Sentence, 6 months*

imprisonment and labour suited to the prisoner.

Dur gap, was next tried for breaking and entering into the dwelling house of Mr John Morrell a Settler in the York district, and stealing some dough. The prosecutor stated that on the day named in the indictment he was working in his garden. There were five natives about the premises. After dinner chained the garden gate, and fastened the house door — went to the barn to work, accompanied by Mrs Morrell who soon after called out that the door of the house was open.

Witness ran with his gun towards the house, and saw two natives leaving the garden gate before he could reach it— found the chain taken off the gate, and the house door forced open. The dough was found on the prisoner. Mrs Morrell corroborated the above deposition in its main points. In this case it was ruled that the evidence of an Aboriginal native as a witness was not admissible in the Courts of Law of Swan River. Accordingly, Dr Giustiniani declined any farther interference. *Verdict—guilty— Sentence 7 years transportation beyond seas.*

Go-goot, another prisoner alluded to in a former trial as the real stealer of the wheat from Cruse's Mill was next tried for stealing 10lbs. of Fresh Butter from Saul Spice. The Interpreter explained the nature of the charge to the prisoner, who admitted the fact.

The Chairman directed the interpreter to ask the prisoner if he entered the plea of "guilty" in a hope of escape from punishment, to which the Native replied, "*qua*" anglice "yes." The Chairman next asked Mr Armstrong to explain the plea of "not guilty" and the nature of "Trial by Jury." The Interpreter very properly said "he could not do so." (*It appeared to us that if Mr Armstrong had done as directed, he would have been persuading the native to tell a lie!*) Plea of Guilty recorded— Sentence, 7 years transportation beyond seas.

The various sentences were explained to the Natives who seemed to regard the whole proceedings with the greatest apathy.

When they received their sentences they were *tied together by cords*, and sent off to Fremantle Jail. It is worthy of remark that one Clergyman sat on the Bench as a Magistrate, and another stood at the Bar defending the Natives.

The query now is, to what Colony are these Natives to be transported? The Government of Van Diemen's Land will not receive them, as no Aboriginal inhabitants exist on that Island, and it is a question whether the sentence will be approved of in other Colonies, or in England. It would be far better to form a penal Establishment on the Island of Rottenest, and point out to the Natives that all those who commit offences against whites, and those who spear other natives, will be sent there for a very long time. We are afraid that the *utter expatriation* of these natives will lead to more acts of bloodshed on the part of their relatives against the unprotected white settlers. Whilst penning these lines the Editor has stated to "Mun-day" (who made his usual call) the result of these trials, and the native Chief expressed much sorrow at the banishment of the two prisoners.'

These transcripts and the sentences brought down read like something from the convict courts of England; particularly given the harshness of the sentence and the imposition of *transportation beyond the seas*.



REMEMBERING ALISON GREGG

Dr Alison Gregg (1939-2020) who died on 1 April was a remarkable woman who achieved so much for children's literacy and education. She was a renowned librarian, author, teacher, and historian who was awarded the Western Australian Institute for Educational Research Medal in 1995, UWA's Cameron Prize for Research in Education (1994), and the WAIT Alumni Medal for Outstanding Postgraduate Student (1982). Alison was also made a life member of the WA branch of the Children's Book Council of Australia. Among other works, she co-authored with Paul Dench the

book Carnarvon and Apollo: One giant leap for a small Australian town (2010). Alison was also one of our long-term supporters and, with her husband Jim, was a committee member for many years.

Her lovely smile, gentle charm, and enthusiasm for life, will be much missed by all who knew Alison. Our sincerest condolences to Jim and their children Robin, Catriona, and Michael.

Thanks to the Friends of Battye (Inc.) for the above obituary. Newsletter No. 168, July 2020

Alison was also Local History Librarian at the City of Fremantle from 1999 – 2002 and was an active committee member of the Fremantle History Society. Alison and husband Jim were also long time members and enjoyed attending many of our general meetings. Alison will be missed.



Alison Gregg (Gregg Family)

Alison died on 1 April after a 12 year battle with slow progressing dementia.

She was cremated at Karrakatta during the time of the viral lockdown, It is the family's intention to hold a "Celebration of her life' when lockdown conditions permit.



In this newsletter Fay Campbell, a long-standing member of our committee, begins a wonderful reminisce of her childhood holidays at her grandparents who lived in Nairn St in the 1940s. Many of you will recognise a number of the places Fay

speaks of. We would love to hear yours stories too – long or short. Please send them to us at secretary.fhs@gmail.com or post to PO Box 1305, Fremantle, 6959.

FAY'S FREMANTLE of the 1940s

Fay Campbell

My memories of Fremantle go back to 1945 when I holidayed with my grandparents Tony and Frances Lukatelich who lived in 7 Nairn St, Fremantle, near the cappuccino strip. My grandparents spoke Croatian, English and Italian so our daily trip up to the cappuccino strip for groceries took a couple of hours whilst Nana chatted to everyone. Our first stop was Nick's shop greengrocer on the site where Dome now stands. Where we bought fruit, vegies and cold meats and where Nana always haggled about the price. Then it was over to Fremantle Fish Supply at 83 Market St for fish, olives, cheese, pasta and continental meats and a chat with Nick or Mr Paino. Then to Con Anastas's fruit and vegie shop where the Seven Eleven store now stands opposite the National Hotel. He was a lovely old Greek gentleman (nothing like Con the Fruiter of TV fame!).

I always relished our tram rides out to South Beach to what I would call a fun fair. Anyhow, Grandad always gave me two rides on the merry-go-round and one turn on gambling on the clowns.



Fremantle Tram, 1951
Fremantle City Library History Centre 2020C

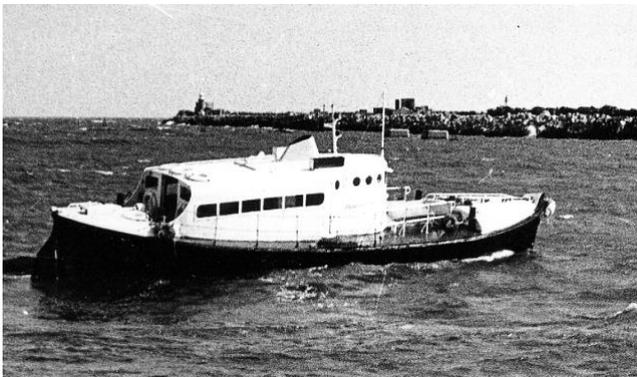
As I came from Osborne Park and lived on a ten acre market garden I never went anywhere on public transport, except at Fremantle and whilst my grandparents sat quietly in their seats I kept changing seats on the tram. You could move the back of the seat so that you could face either way. I also

remember the tram driver letting me pull the bell.

Often, after our tram ride to South Beach, we would go to Fong Milk Bar where the Information Centre used to stand at the Town Hall. I would get a spider, consisting of a glass of lemonade with a scoop of ice cream in it.

I loved going to Victoria Quay to wait for Grandad as he was a pilot on the Lady Forrest. I just loved poking my head in the various sheds (A, B, C etc) and seeing all the cargo being moved around. Just loved the wool wagons being drawn by about six big horses and then there was 'watching the big basket' swinging in the air – a form of unloading the cargo before the present day container ships.

Then often Grandad would go into the workers' canteen and bring me a sandwich - I remember having my first cheese and tomato sandwich. Then the glorious walk back home through Cliff Street, where Nana would chat to Mr and Mrs Lanza, and then into Nairn St.



The Lady Forrest Pilot Vessel (no date)
Fremantle City Library History Centre
E000855-213 (detail)

Sunday morning was great excitement to me as Nana and I dressed for church. I think Nana only had two hats which I would try on. Then there were the gloves. I would sit outside on the kerb of the foot path putting on these two pairs of gloves – I felt like the Queen. On our way to St Patrick's Church we would meet up with other church goers from the southern suburbs - like Norfolk, Suffolk, Arundel and Howard Streets (ha! ha! ha!).

We always sat on the right-hand side and about four pews from the front. I was given two threepenny bits to put in the collection box – oh how I wished I could have kept them and had more rides at the fun fair! On the way home, we would call into Ruggierias store in Adelaide St and buy a few more groceries - Nana always kept her string bag in her one and only handbag.

Sunday afternoon my aunties from Essex Lane and Howard St would come over and whilst the adults chattered on the verandah my three cousins and I played chasey, hopscotch, skittles and skippy on the road – no vehicles in the '40's to worry about. (to be continued ...)



FOR YOUR DIARY

August – Pub Lunch, Freo Doctor Liquor Store (Oceanic Trading Exchange). Meet in the liquor store. **Sunday 23** August at 12 noon. 27 Arundel St, Fremantle. **RSVP** to secretary.fhs@gmail.com by Thursday 20 August.

September – AGM at the Naval Store, Canning Highway. **Tuesday 22** September, 6pm. Parking in Tuckfield St car park.

October – Fremantle Studies Day, **Sunday 25** October. Details to be confirmed.



AGM and ELECTIONS

As already noted, you will find a copy of a nomination form for the Fremantle History Society Committee included with this newsletter. The committee run the affairs of the Society including organising our general meetings, seeking funds for and managing our scholarship program, producing our publications such as the newsletter, the web site, our Facebook page and Fremantle Studies Journal, commenting on matters of relevance in the press and advocating for support for the research and publishing of Fremantle history. **Please join us.**