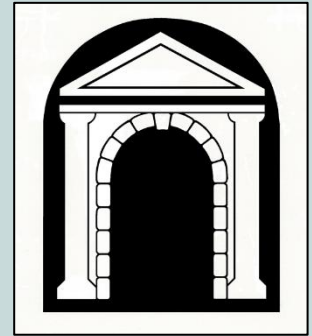


# FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY

Established 1994

WINTER EDITION, JULY 2025



## NEXT MEETING:

Annual Pub Lunch – The Local Hotel



1984 Seaview Tavern (formerly Seaview Hotel), South Fremantle,

State Library of WA 371674PD

On 9<sup>th</sup> October 1896 the Inquirer and Commercial News, p.11, announced a proposed hotel, *designed by Architect O.N. Nicholson, built to the order of Captain Hughes and Mr Charles Day, at a cost of nearly £5000...a large ornate structure in the style of the French renaissance.*

The Sea View Hotel, open for business, appeared in the West Australian 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1897, p. 10: *This commodious and well-appointed Hotel has now been completed and stands unrivalled as a First-class Family Hotel...The position ...cannot be surpassed, combining as it does, all the conveniences of the city with the retirement and quiet of the country. From a spacious balcony running round three sides of the building, magnificent panoramic views of the Indian Ocean and surrounding countryside are obtainable.*

A century later in 1996, the spacious balcony had disappeared and one imagines the views were not quite so panoramic, but the Seaview Tavern sold for \$475,000. It had been owned and run by the Fisher Brothers during the 80s, a family well-known for their nurturing of the local music industry, and the hotel was the launching pad for many a Fremantle band, before being sold to prominent Rajneeshee, Jay Harman in 1987.

Several changes of ownership later the hotel was taken on by a consortium of four, two silent partners and two young Dockers star players, Paul Haselby and Matthew Pavlich in 2004. Extensive renovations were undertaken to give the hotel a more modern and exciting look without losing the charm of the original architecture.

In 2015 it was on the market again, to be scooped up by Scope Property Group for \$2.5 million. Having been known for some 118 years as the Seaview Hotel or Tavern, the name was changed to The Local Hotel September 2015. Once again it has had major renovations, which include a 1534 sqm floor area with several bars, a restaurant, a beer garden and boutique accommodation upstairs.

Come join us at The Local Hotel for the Fremantle History Society's 2025 Pub Lunch on Sunday 24th August, 12.00 pm. Allen Graham will regale us with snippets from the newly released second volume of his trilogy: Inns and Outs of Fremantle – A Social History of Fremantle and its Hotels 1829 – 1929, Part Two 1857 – 1890.

It is not a huge menu but an interesting one and reasonably priced. Choices range from pub classics such as fish and chips (\$25), to a Peruvian chicken salad (\$26). Check it out before you go: <https://www.thelocalhotel.com.au/eat>

We will need to book so please contact us sometime before 20<sup>th</sup> August to reserve a spot at: [secretary.fhs@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.fhs@gmail.com)

**Dear Members:**

Yes, it's that time of year again: Membership fees are due  
You will be pleased to know that membership fees are unchanged from previous years.  
If you have paid New Membership fees since April 2025 your membership will be carried over until July 2026.

**Membership categories and fees:**

General membership: \$25	Organisational membership: \$50
Family membership: \$35	Concession: \$15

Westpac Bank details for bank transfers are as follows:

**Account Name: Fremantle History Society**

**BSB: 036 306      Account No: 604012**

Payment may also be made by cash or credit/visa card at our regular meetings.

We value your support of the Fremantle History Society, and we look forward to your ongoing membership.

## COMING EVENTS

### Annual Pub Lunch - The Local Hotel (See p. 1)

**Sunday 24th August, 12.00 pm**

282 South Terrace (cnr. Charles Street), South Fremantle 6162

Don't forget to RSVP before 20<sup>th</sup> August: [secretary.fhs@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.fhs@gmail.com)

### Gordon Lee

**Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 5.00 pm**

Fremantle History Centre, Ground Floor, Walyalup Civic Centre, 151 High St, Fremantle 6160

A friend of Gordon Lee's once wrote about him: 'Accountants are boring. We all know that. Gordon Lee is an accountant but his life on the fringes of Fremantle where he grew up in a time of bare foot adventures, bonfires, bikes, and childhood escapades has been anything but dull.

While accountancy always paid the bills, Gordon had fingers in many pies; he was a nightclub owner, a poultry farmer, but notably he was a top table tennis player, state junior champion when he was young. He took it up again 50 years later, achieving a No. 1 ranking in Australia in the Over-80 year's category in 2019.

Gordon was always something of a storyteller so writing was a natural progression for him. He has written numerous books, some about table tennis, but he has some good stories to tell about various characters around Fremantle as well.

### 2025 Fremantle Studies Day

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2025 12.45 for 1.00 pm start**

Sanderson Room, Level 1, Fremantle Port Authority Building, 1 Cliff St, Fremantle 6160

We are lucky enough to have been offered the Sanderson Room at the Port Authority Building to hold our Studies Day event this year, thanks to one of our speakers, Neil Stanbury, Manager Communications and Community with Fremantle Ports.

There are strict access controls and we will need to provide a list of attendees beforehand.

**Neil Stanbury - The box that changed a city - the social and economic impact of containerisation.** Containerisation in the 1960s transformed the way in which cargo was handled through Fremantle and eventually most ports around the world. Neil's paper explores this transition, almost 60 years ago.

**Max Vickery – Noongar/Colonial history of the Walyalup region.** From Captain Fremantle's proclamation at Manjaree (Arthur Head) in 1829, to the blasting and reshaping of Derbal Nara (the mouth of the Swan River) in the 1890s, colonists related to nature as a site to be rebuilt for their own ends. Their activities over the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, were always entangled with Noongar ways of relating to the environment. This paper will discuss colonial and Noongar interactions with and through the environment around Fremantle across the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Leigh Straw – Murder in the Ballroom.** In 1925, Audrey Jacob, of Fremantle, shot dead her former fiancé in full view of hundreds of guests at a charity ball. Leigh discusses her book which describes this sensational true crime story with its unexpected judicial outcome.

**More details closer to the date**

## MEETING REPORTS

### Fremantle Town Hall Clock

#### Garth Caesar – 12 May

In his previous talk Garth gave us some of his personal background, from his taking up an apprenticeship at Caris Brothers in 1964, specialising in watchmaking, to buying the shop in Atwell Arcade in 1999, where he conducted his clock and watch repair business till he retired. This talk was an additional event staged as part of Heritage Week and focussed on the clock functions and mechanics.

Garth has been responsible for the maintenance and well-being of the Fremantle Town Hall Clock for 30 years. He comes once a week to climb up the four levels of the clock tower, access being via the original wooden ladders installed when the tower was constructed in 1887. The five bells weigh around 9-10 tonnes and they sit on level four, above the clock room and are controlled by levers and pull ropes.



Gears and levers controlling the bells

There are four dials, or clock faces, looking in the four different directions. Each dial has 9 panels, which were found to be quite badly broken during the restoration in 2017, and had to all be replaced. At the same time the hands and minute registers were given seven coats of a special epoxy paint which will protect them for decades to come. The pendulum is 2m long! Back in the day some poor soul had to climb all those stairs with a large crank handle, to wind the clock once a week. Thankfully electric motors were installed in 1970.

### A Hazardous Life: Captain George Forsyth

#### Ian Forsyth – 11 June



Image sourced from:

<https://navyhistory.au/the-ephemeral-commission-of-the-fremantle-naval-volunteers-western-australia-1879-1888/>

Ian visited us for a second time this year, accompanied by Ron, his brother and co-author of a book about their great grandfather, George Forsyth.

Born in London, George arrived in Fremantle aged 21, around 1863. Fremantle's colonial population at that time numbered just over 3000, the era of steamships was just beginning. One of his earlier jobs was as a constable with the Water Police. Within a few months of getting the job, he married a local girl, Marion Henderson, who was the daughter of a convict, and in an elitist society inclined to look down its nose at the 'bonded class', this did cause problems.

The Harbour Master Service was very poorly resourced at the time and in 1867 the Harbour Master and crew were drowned attempting a rescue in a boat unfit for purpose. George applied for and got one of the newly vacated pilot positions, but not before the governor at the time queried his suitability on account of his wife being the daughter of a convict.

By all accounts George was a competent sailor, in 1873 it was reported that he had guided 32 ships into Cockburn Sound without incident. He gained much attention after a particularly daring and successful rescue of the SS Georgette on its inaugural voyage from Albany to Sydney, winning awards for his bravery. He stood in for the Harbour Master when that position became vacant soon after and was officially promoted at the end of 1873.

In 1879 he was appointed inaugural head of the WA Department of Harbour and Light, which administered all the colony's ports, and was also appointed the founding commanding officer of the Fremantle Naval Volunteers which he had actually initiated.

His life took an unfortunate turn with the appointment of a new Colonial Secretary around 1882. Malcolm Fraser was a very class-conscious man and conspired with the colonial elite to replace the Harbour Master with convict connections. George was harassed mercilessly for two years before being contemptuously dismissed from all his public service positions in 1885.

With a wife and two young boys to support, a resilient George went on to become a ship captain, sailing vessels that serviced the North West coast. He resumed painting, a hobby neglected during his time as Harbour Master.

He was replaced as Harbour Master by a man named Charles Russell, who fought long and hard with Fraser over pay and conditions. Eventually Russell was paid double what George had received, conditions for his crew improved and he was given additional pilots, things George had petitioned strongly for during his 17 years service.



George Forsyth's oil painting of Arthur Head and the Swan River in 1893. Fremantle Arts Centre Collection  
Sourced from: <https://heraldonlinejournal.com/2019/06/14/>

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## **FHS Annual General Meeting 2025 – 22<sup>nd</sup> July**

Mardoo Room, Fremantle Library

Once again we were blessed with a typical mid-winter's night for the AGM and numbers were lower than usual as people sensibly chose to stay home, rather than brave the cold and rain! We soldiered on. President Jude Robison delivered her annual report for the 2024-2025 period (attached at the end of the newsletter), and the Treasurer's report. Cr Fedele Camarda kindly did the honours as Returning Officer, and the following committee was duly elected:

### **Executive:**

President: Jude Robison  
Vice President: Allen Graham  
Secretary: Maeve Harvey  
Treasurer: Beth Powell

### **Committee members:**

Alan Kelsall  
Fay Campbell  
Stewart Alger  
Kristi McNulty  
Andrew Pittaway  
Sue Willis

All positions were confirmed by the members. We are sorry to lose Tania Heyne who has been with us since 2020, a dedicated and hard-working member of the committee, always happy to help out and do whatever needs to be done. Welcome to new committee member, Sue Willis, who has been a member of the society for some years.

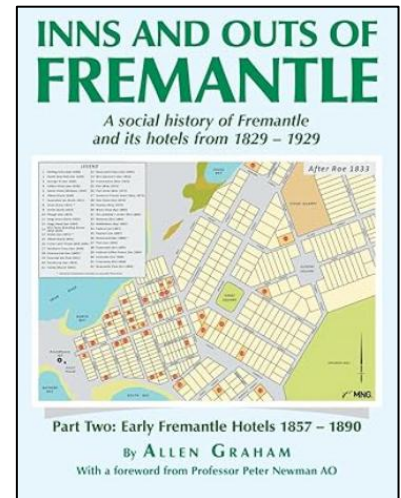
The formalities of the meeting over, Vice President Allen Graham, gave us a bit of a preview of what we can expect from his new volume of Inns and Outs of Fremantle.

### Allen Graham - Book Launch

Allen will be launching his new book Part Two, Early Fremantle Hotels 1857 – 1890, at the Federal Hotel 10<sup>th</sup> August 4.00–6.00 pm. Booking is free but to give the hotel some idea of numbers, registration can be done through Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/book-launch-for-inns-and-outs-of-fremantle-part-two-1857-1890-tickets-1490586838359>

The book will be available to purchase on the day. A more extensive volume than Part One, it contains 108 illustrations. Soft cover - \$70.00. Hard cover - \$80.00



### Vale Bob Woollett



From: The Mitre magazine  
1991 December  
Christ Church Grammar School

Robert Trevor Woollett died on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025 aged 93. Born in the UK Bob trained as a teacher at King's College in London and then at the Royal Navy College, Greenwich. He remained with the Royal Navy, achieving the rank of Instructor, Lieutenant Commander, teaching naval officer cadets on shore and at sea.

Bob first came to Australia on exchange with the Royal Australian Navy in the late 1960s. His visit to Western Australia obviously made quite an impression as, upon his retirement from the Royal Navy in 1972, he gathered his family and migrated to settle in Fremantle. He quickly found a position at Christ Church Grammar School teaching English and Literature, but also coached rugby, tennis, cricket, and squash, and was

very involved in drama and helped produce many school plays over the years. He retired in 1991, having spent twenty years at Christ Church.

In his spare time he had formed a strong association with the Fremantle community. He was involved with the Fremantle Tennis Club, serving as President for many years, was on the committee of the Fremantle Society, but was also an active member of the Fremantle History Society, serving terms as Vice President, then President and many years a committee member.

Sarah, one of Bob's three daughters wrote in her eulogy: He was a kind, caring, thoughtful and generous man, always there for his family. He took pleasure in others' joy, always enjoyed sharing good things with friends, whether it was a good meal, a good conversation, playing sport or games, singing a song or reading a poem. Bob's quiet strength and gentlemanly ways guided and impressed all those around him.

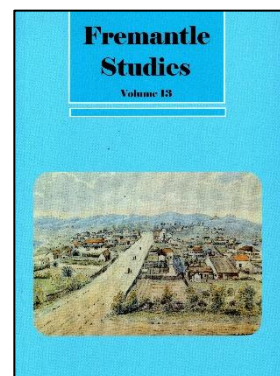
## Fremantle Studies Volume 13 now available

Make sure you pick up a copy at one of the events over the coming months

\$20.00 members

\$25.00 non-members

Or email: [secretary.fhs@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.fhs@gmail.com)



### City Plan: North Fremantle

In June the City of Fremantle sent out a community survey to assist in the future planning of North Fremantle, an area facing a mix of challenges including: the impact of major transport routes, coastal erosion, heritage preservation, and the possible relocation of the port. The Fremantle History Society submitted a response, the main points of which are outlined below.

#### Comments on the City Plan: North Fremantle summarised

The strategic importance of North Fremantle and its potential for large-scale redevelopment means that many of the issues that will need to be addressed will be complex and interrelated. Planning will need to reflect that complexity.

The redevelopment of North Fremantle provides opportunities to introduce new higher density development in locations that are well-connected by public transport to jobs, services, infrastructure and a wide range of amenities.

To make the most of the once-in-a-generation opportunities presented by the relocation of the container port, it is essential that everyone involved adopts a common strategic planning framework, developed jointly by the State, the City of Fremantle, the City of Kwinana, and other relevant agencies, including Fremantle Ports and Main Roads to establish a clearly defined collective vision, clarifying roles and responsibilities, identifying issues and tasks, and programming for long term decision-making.

The information provided to the community by the City of Fremantle is misleading because it ignores the extensive stakeholder engagement (with both the City and the community of Fremantle) undertaken as part of the preparation of the *Future of Fremantle Place and Economic Vision* report. It should have been noted that the *Future of Fremantle* report is:

*based on the analysis of feedback received from the community and key stakeholders. This information was used to outline the future strategic challenges, opportunities and constraints that will need to be addressed, including community priorities that will drive the delivery of a stronger, more inclusive community focus.*

A further concern is the City of Fremantle's decision to designate the North Fremantle Plan as a separate project, instead of recognising the need for it to be integrated with the *Future of Fremantle* report. This would help to ensure that the WAPC and the City of Fremantle are working towards implementing a shared vision for North Fremantle; one that will enable everyone involved in new developments to know what is expected from them.

The development of North Fremantle should not be detrimental to the vitality, viability and historic importance of the city centre. Uses that will reinforce the role of the city centre as the focus for the community's sense of place and local identity should be encouraged.

The intention should be to make the most of opportunities to deliver the number of people needed to re-establish and sustain the city centre as a successful and attractive urban area, dense enough to support the vibrant mix of users and uses needed to support a thriving mix of civic, business, residential, social, cultural and retail activities.

## **Manjaree Area: Vision, Purpose and Guiding Principles**

No sooner had we sent in our submission for the North Fremantle plan when the City of Fremantle requested community feedback for another planning project, this time for the Manjaree/Arthur Head Area, an iconic public site in Fremantle. The City has been developing a revised plan to activate the area, while respecting the different layers of history therein - ideally First Nations culture, colonial heritage and contemporary arts and culture, working comfortably together to become an inclusive, welcoming and creative space for all.

Again, the main points of our response are below:



Arthur Head 1902

FHC Nos: LH004827, LH004828, LH004829

### **Comments on the Manjaree Area plan summarised:**

The Manjaree area is recognised as a site of cultural and historical significance and any plan to shape its future development needs to be made in a way that effectively includes and represents each of the diverse layers of this culture and history.

The first step in developing a revised vision, purpose and guiding principles for Manjaree should be the preparation of a comprehensive history of the area which includes Bathers Beach and the Arthur Head/Round House precinct.

The Manjaree area is a place of deep significance for the Noongar people. It has been a gathering place for ceremonies, storytelling, and trading, but also for fishing and hunting for tens of thousands of years. These stories need to be recognised and included.

Much of the colonial history was collected together as a bicentennial project, funded by the Federal Government in 1988. The Arthur Head Collection is a huge compilation of all available information to do with this area, gathered from repositories all over Australia and the UK. This would help inform a history for that period of time.

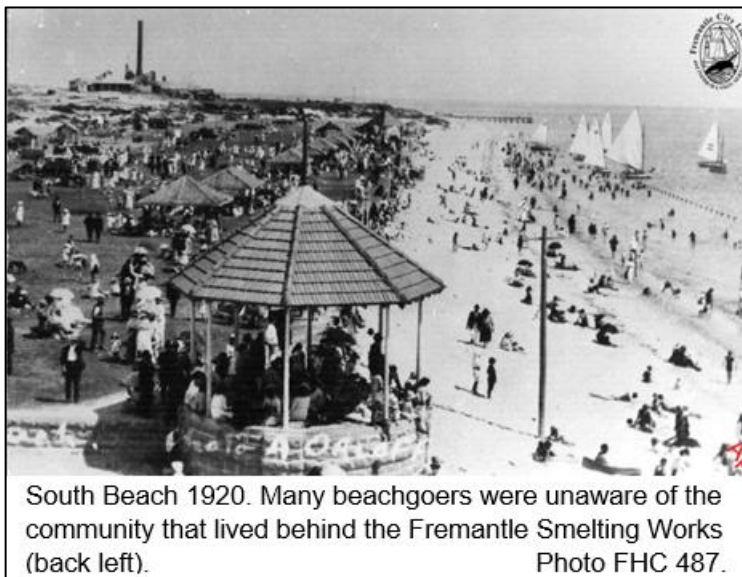
A history of the Manjaree/Arthur Head area will need to include all the diverse events associated with the area's past until the present day, and be presented in ways that will prompt current and succeeding generations to increase their understanding of the complexities of that history when planning for the future.

## A Hidden Community: The Smelters Camp

Maeve Harvey

For many years from the 1890s until around the 1950s a hidden community lived at South Fremantle. Located in the sand dunes between the Fremantle Smelting Works near South Beach and Robb Jetty further to the south, it was known as the Smelters camp. It was home to people who had fallen on hard times such as miners, migrants, pensioners and World War 1 and 2 veterans. There were also Aboriginal families as well as people who had tried their luck on the goldfields without success and perhaps were used to living in rough circumstances, away from the eyes of the law.

Their huts and humpies were built from galvanised iron, wood, hessian and other materials, often salvaged from the nearby rubbish tip. Some of the migrants were newly arrived from southern Europe and didn't speak English, which with the racism common at the time, would have made finding employment difficult. Often referred to as 'dagos' and 'aliens' they were resented by the white population as competition for work became increasingly competitive.



South Beach 1920. Many beachgoers were unaware of the community that lived behind the Fremantle Smelting Works (back left). Photo FHC 487.

One well known Aboriginal stockman who worked at the Robb Jetty abattoir and called the Smelters camp home was a man called Wandi. He was a boxer and a popular identity in the 1890s. Well known around Fremantle he was reputed to be a hard worker and a 'cheeky showman'. The suburb of Wandi was named after him when he died in 1955.

Another early resident of the Smelters camp was a boilermaker called Charles Fitzsimmons who lived there from 1898 until 1904. He and a few other men were hoping to find employment at the Fremantle Smelting Works, which

operated from 1898 until 1921 and processed gold, copper and other ores from the **Yilgarn area** during the gold rush era. Often when there was no work to be found the people would move to other camps in Fremantle, Perth or further afield and the community was a transitory one.

The start of the twentieth century was a time of rapid population increase in Western Australia resulting in a housing shortage. In Fremantle, as news of the gold rush spread around the world, the population almost trebled from 5,607 to 14,704 in the ten years between 1891 and 1901, creating a strain on local resources.

The Smelters camp, also known as the Robb Jetty or Owen's Anchorage camp was dubbed by the *Daily News* in 1928 as 'Battlers Haven'. Many of the residents were people who had fallen on hard times and were resilient and resourceful, decent people who paid their bills on time, according to a local baker who delivered his produce there for many years. Unable to find permanent work they did what they could and occasionally found jobs at the Robb Jetty abattoir, Fremantle Smelting Works or on the railways. Some may also have found work on the new proposed Naval Base which was started in 1913 but abandoned a few years later (and eventually built on Garden Island) or even at the many lime kilns operating at Coogee to the south.

The Smelters camp existed until the 1950s as veterans from both World Wars and the Depression found refuge among the dunes in an atmosphere of post war rising rent. From the 1940s the area to the south of Fremantle became industrialised and there was work to be found at the Wilcox Mofflin wool scourers and fellmongers, and abattoirs such as Anchorage Butchers.



c. 1965 Anchorage Butchers export works at Coogee with the wreck of the Omeo just off the beach. City of Cockburn 265054

Life was hard at the camp but many had happy memories from living a carefree life among the dunes. The more enterprising survived by fishing in the local waters where even the prized dhufish could be caught off the beach. They made their own amusement and there were regular raids by the local police especially when a two-up school, illegal at the time, was set up.



c.1941 Wilcox and Mofflin wool scourers and fellmongers. The area later became known for its "stink sheds". COC 5966574

There was a strong sense of community among the residents and they helped their neighbours in times of need. To get water the residents used to dig wells in the sand. This almost ended badly for a shearer called Ted McCaskie and his neighbour William Westcott. They were digging a well near Ted's hut when, 12 foot down, an avalanche of sand fell on them. It took four hours to dig Westcott out and several hours longer to free McCaskie who was taken to Fremantle Hospital suffering from shock but survived to tell the tale.



Smelters camp at Poverty Point. *Sunday Times* 29 March 1953

The long lifetime of the camp can be attributed to the fact that the land was for many years Crown Land and so the Fremantle Roads Board had no control over it. By the 1950s a series of articles in the *Sunday Times* called for the camp to be closed because of the condition in which people lived and the associated health

risks. Called 'Poverty Point' it was described as a 'filthy eyesore, a disgrace to the authorities and a hideout ... for a vicious criminal element'. By this time the Fremantle Roads Board had regained control of the land from the Federal Government and the feeling was that the local community and the police would be glad to see it go. In addition, the older residents of the camp were starting to die off and others moved on, some further south to a camp at Coogee Beach.

There were many such camps scattered around Fremantle and Perth during the first half of the twentieth century including one behind the Fremantle Cemetery, and camps at Bibra Lake, Swanbourne and Freshwater Bay (Claremont). Very little remains of the camp today, long covered by the drifting sands of the dunes. However even today people occasionally camp in the dunes near the beach as the population of Western Australia is again experiencing a boom and poverty and homelessness is sadly an ever present problem in our society.

#### References:

Cook, Denise. 2019. *That Was My Home: Voices from the Noongar Camps in Fremantle and the Western Suburbs*. UWA Press.

Davidson, Ron. 2007. *Fremantle Impressions* Fremantle Press (p.246)

Raffaele, Julie. 2019. *The Smelters Camp*

*The West Australian* 29 October 1898

*Daily News* 13 November 1928.

*Sunday Times* 16 January 1955

*Sunday Times* 29 March 1953

### **MAAWA (Maritime Archaeological Association of WA) – Invitation to meeting**

Some of you may already know of the MAAWA. Created in 1974, the MAAWA is primarily an archaeological association with members having the opportunity to dive on shipwrecks, and to participate in research and management of maritime archaeological heritage sites around the coast of Western Australia. They have regular monthly meetings with speakers, like our own, and non-members are welcome to join them.

They meet at the Rottnest Island Authority Walyalup Office at 1 Mews Road, Fremantle, usually on the third Tuesday of the month and members of the Fremantle History Society are most welcome to come along. You do not need to be a diver to get involved, there are plenty of opportunities that include friendship, fun and discovery for those in and out of the water.

Time: 6.30 pm – 8.30 pm

Where: 1 Mews Road, Fremantle

Free parking for meetings is usually available in the reception area and along Mews Road.

### **Bakeries in South Fremantle**

Heather Campbell



Through the 1990s the property on the corner of South Terrace and Commercial Street had been a butcher and subsequently an Indian restaurant. The building was then taken over by Wild Bakery, who made a new entrance on the Commercial Street face of the building. Wild subsequently moved to larger premises at 346 South Terrace and Little Loaf Lunch Bar and Bakery then moved to the property at 2/390 South Terrace, on the corner adjacent to the South

Beach Hotel. It still operates from there. These two bakeries, however, were not the first to occupy the building. About one hundred years before, Adolf Walkemeyer, a master baker, set up his bakery there.

Mr. Walkemeyer was born at Brunswick, Germany, in 1869, and at the age of 14 was apprenticed to the baking trade' gaining experience throughout Germany. When he was twenty-one he went to sea for three years as a ship's baker. In 1893 he came to Australia,

first landing in Adelaide before moving on to Melbourne. Like many immigrants Adolf was attracted to the West Australian goldfields, tramping from Southern Cross to Coolgardie, but did not remain there for long. He came to Perth, where in 1899 he purchased the bakery business of King and Co. in Dyer Street, West Perth.

On disposing of this business he took his family – wife Therese Schnefuhs and son - on a twelve months' holiday to Germany. On their return Adolf and Therese moved to South Fremantle c.1906, to 80 Mandurah Road (now 2/390 South Terrace), setting up a bakery and starting an association with the port that extended over twenty years.<sup>2</sup> The property had previously been occupied by WA Chamberlain, a fruiterer.<sup>3</sup> Mr Walkemeyer quickly earned the reputation for being entrepreneurial and 'installed machinery of the latest pattern for the manufacture of bread of the highest quality, being absolutely the cleanest possible process and at the same time the most up-to-date yet installed in Fremantle.'<sup>4</sup>

Tragedy struck the family in December 1915 when Adolf and Therese's son, Carl, aged ten, was electrocuted at South Beach. It appeared that the boy was playing on the beach when he caught hold of an electric wire about four feet above the sea wall and was knocked unconscious. He died on the way to hospital.<sup>5</sup>

Around 1924 the Walkemeyers purchased the Terminus Bakery in Victoria Park, moving into a house on the premises, with the bakery and deliveries being operated by the family, the extended family, and paid staff. Bread was delivered initially by horse and cart and later by motorised transport.<sup>6</sup>

Adolph Bernhardt Walkemeyer died in September 1934, aged sixty-five, after a 'painful illness' during which he displayed remarkable courage and still more remarkable optimism'. At his funeral he was remembered 'for his sterling qualities' and 'although small of stature, big in his sympathies, and held in high esteem by a wide circle of friends. ... His friendly smile and contagious optimism would linger with his friends as a memory to be cherished.' It was noted that the coffin was borne to the grave by members of the staff of the Terminus Bakery.<sup>7</sup>

After Adolph's death the Terminus Bakery was taken over by his son Bernard, who moved into the house on the bakery premises, with his family. They remained there until 1952/53 when the block the house was on was sold to Ampol and became possibly the first Ampol service station



Advertisement for the bakery at 80 Mandurah Road, on the corner of Mandurah Road (now South Terrace) and Commercial Road (now Commercial Street) from *The Golden Gate*, 17 May 1912, p 2.<sup>1</sup>

in WA. The Terminus Bakery continued operating until 1962 when it was sold to Brennan's Bakery.<sup>8</sup>

- 1 *The Golden Gate*, 17 May 1912, p 2.
- 2 *Swan Leader*, 'Obituary, the late Mr A B Walkemeyer, 21 September 1934, p 4.
- 3 *Wise's Post Office Directories*, 1899-1925 at [Post office directories | State Library of Western Australia](#)
- 4 *The Golden Gate*, 'Local and general', 3 May 1912, p 4.
- 5 *West Australian*, 'News and Notes', 16 Dec 1915, pps. 1 and 6.
- 6 Oral history interview with Leon Walkemeyer, by Heather Campbell, June 2020. Town of Victoria Park. Voices: the Oral History Collection of Victoria Park Library. Transcript available at: [WALKEMEYER Leon - Website TRANSCRIPT.pdf](#)
- 7 *Swan Leader*, 'Obituary, the late Mr A B Walkemeyer, 21 September 1934, p 4.
- 8 Oral history interview with Leon Walkemeyer, by Heather Campbell, June 2020. Town of Victoria Park.

## Fremantle History Society contact details:

Email: [secretary.fhs@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.fhs@gmail.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fremantlehistorysociety>

Web: <https://fhs.org.au/>

## YOUR COMMITTEE

### Executive:

Judith Robison (President)  
Allen Graham (Vice President)  
Beth Powell (Treasurer)  
Maeve Harvey (Secretary)

### Committee Members:

Alan Kelsall  
Fay Campbell  
Kristi McNulty  
Stewart Alger  
Andrew Pittaway  
Sue Willis

Ordinary meetings are generally held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month but be sure to check as the days and times may vary.

Details of these meetings can be found in your newsletter

The poster features logos for the City of Cockburn, Royal WA Historical Society Affiliated Societies Annual State Conference, and the Azelia Leif museum. The title 'FACES & SPACES of Cockburn' is in a decorative frame. Below the title, it says 'Stories waiting to be told...' and '12-14 September 2025' at 'Jakovich Centre 4 McGrath Road, Henderson'. It lists a 'Welcome Event' on 12 September 2025 at Memorial Hall 365 Carrington Street, Hamilton Hill, and an 'Official Dinner' on 13 September 2025 at the City of Cockburn Administration Function Room 9 Coleville Crescent, Spearwood. At the bottom, there are four historical photographs: a child with a horse, a group of people, a man on a motorcycle, and a man in a blue shirt. Contact information is provided at the bottom: Email: [history@cockburn.wa.gov.au](mailto:history@cockburn.wa.gov.au) | Website: [history.cockburn.wa.gov.au](http://history.cockburn.wa.gov.au)

### Acknowledgement of Country

I respectfully acknowledge the past and present traditional owners of this land on which we are meeting, the Noongar people. I would also like to pay my respects to their elders past and present and emerging.

I am pleased to welcome you all here today in the Fremantle History Centre which has become home to the FHS since it opened in April 2024. The History Centre has become the base for our meetings and other events thanks to history librarian, Stewart Alger. The work on developing the History Centre and making its extensive collection accessible is on-going.

### Activities in the last twelve months, July 2023-June 2024

2024 marked the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Fremantle History Society which was established by Dianne Davidson in October 1994. Announcing that the Society was 'dedicated to the belief that a greater knowledge of Fremantle's history' would enrich individual understanding and 'help foster a sense of community identity and awareness', the steering committee outlined the Society's aims which are to:

1. encourage involvement in the study of Fremantle history and cultural diversity through research, oral history and writing,
2. disseminate information about Fremantle in a variety of ways, in particular through public forums and liaison with other history and heritage groups and schools in the area,
3. promote the identification and preservation of historical evidence relating to Fremantle,
4. encourage the commemoration of important events, places and people in appropriate ways, and to
5. arrange social gatherings for members.

Your Committee has continued to pursue these aims by holding regular meetings throughout the year which celebrate different aspects of Fremantle's History and arranging social gatherings, such as our up-coming Pub Lunch.

The first meeting of the 2024-25 year began with the AGM here at the Fremantle History Centre. Steve Errington spoke on his recently published book *Locked up in Fremantle 1829 to 1856*.

In August we held our annual Pub Lunch on Sunday 25 at the National Hotel in Fremantle. The owner of the National, Karl Bullers, gave a very informative talk about the history of the National – its disasters and its rebuilding - before taking members on a tour of the beautifully restored hotel. After lunch some members took the opportunity to visit the bar on the rooftop which offers wonderful views over central Fremantle and to the port.

An extra meeting was held on 27 August to celebrate 25 years since the publication of Kim Scott's second novel *Benang: from the heart*, which was the first novel by an indigenous author to win the Miles Franklin Award. Kim explained that although the novel is a work of fiction it is based on historic records in the State Archives.

On 24 September, professional historian Lucy Hair presented the disturbing story of *Annie Barnett v Henry Barnett* which graphically illustrated the disparity between the rights of women and men in cases of domestic violence and divorce pre-1890s.

To celebrate our 30 Year Anniversary, a calendar featuring photos from the Fremantle History collection was published for sale in October. Thanks to all the Committee members involved in this project – Particularly Maeve Harvey, with assistance from Kristi, Tania and Stewart.

Fremantle Studies Day 2024 was held on Sunday 20 October in the Fremantle History Centre. Four papers were presented on the day commencing with Anne Smith and Simon Meath who spoke about their research into *The Boys Reformatory, Rottnest Island Prison: Forgotten genocide site of the Frontier Wars*. Their searches of the archives held in the State Records Office of Western Australia revealed terrible consequences of the use of the Boys' Reformatory as the prison hospital and how this use exposed the Aboriginal prisoners to diseases resulting in many deaths.

The second paper of the day was presented by Caroline Ingram the recipient of the 2024 Ron and Dianne Davidson Scholarship. *Dead in the Water: the Life and Trial of Margaret Cody*, again highlights the way women were treated by the justice system in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Nick Everett's paper *Wobblies on the Waterfront: The Industrial Workers of the World in Fremantle during World War 1*, detailed the arrival in Fremantle of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), an international labour union which opposed both conscription and war itself. The 'Wobblies' as they were known, were portrayed as being radical and unpatriotic, and tensions with existing unions eventually led to Bloody Sunday riots.

The final paper of the day again focussed on the position of women in Western Australian society, but this was a far more positive view. Kiara Gormlie spoke on *The Founding Women of Soroptimist International Fremantle: Early Intentions and Lasting Legacies*. The movement is dedicated to justice, equity and the empowerment of women.

Furthering the FHS's aim to promote social gatherings of members, our Christmas lunch was held at the Miller Bakehouse, Melville on 24 November. The bakery museum is the headquarters of the Melville History Society who invited our visit. The day included a tour of the old bakery museum with commentary by Steve Wells.

In February this year Ian Forsyth presented a fascinating discussion of aspects of WA's maritime history 1600-1900 which he uncovered while researching and writing his recent book: *A Hazardous Port: Fremantle 1600-1900*. Ian explored the reasons behind the establishment of a British colony on the Swan River, despite its hazards.

On 26 March, Perth-based horologist Garth Caesar presented a history of the town hall clock. The bells stopped tolling in February this year after teeth from two gears were found to be worn down. Garth has maintained the clock for over 30 years and he conducted a global search to find a company who could make an exact replica of the gears, which were originally installed in the late 19th century.

Steve Wells' talk on the East Fremantle rubbish tip site in April provided an informative explanation of how discarded items can provide an understanding of the lives of ordinary people - what they ate and drank, what medicines they took.

In June Ian Forsyth returned to discuss a previous book: *A Hazardous Life: Captain George Forsyth (1843-1894)* written with his brother, Ron Forsyth. The book is a biography of their great grandfather, Captain George Forsyth, mariner and first harbour master for the Colony of Western Australia. The talk covered Forsyth's dramatic career, including shipwrecks, rescues, and battles with a resistant bureaucracy.

Our next function will be the much-loved Annual Pub Lunch at the Local Hotel. Studies Day this year will be a special event held at the Port Authority Building - more information later.

### **Committee Membership 2024-2025**

#### **Executive:**

President – Jude Robison  
Vice President – Allen Graham  
Secretary – Stewart Alger  
Treasurer – Beth Powell

#### **Committee Members:**

Kristi McNulty  
Fay Campbell  
Tania Heyne  
Alan Kelsall  
Maeve Harvey  
Andrew Pittaway

I would like to thank all the Committee members for their support during the year – to Allen Graham for stepping up to fulfil my role when I was away, to Kristi McNulty for her wonderful work as editor/writer of the newsletters, to Stewart Alger for his secretarial role and work towards giving the Society a permanent home here in the library, to Alan Kelsall for his expertise and contributions towards maintaining the heritage of Fremantle, to Tania Heyne for her always reliable support, to Fay Campbell for her catering expertise and, of course, to our newer members Beth Powell who bravely took on the role as Treasurer, Maeve Harvey and Andrew Pittaway who have all proven their value to the Society.



1968 Ord Street under construction

Fremantle History Centre ES00461