

1964

Crop of oats grown on a limestone plateau,  
near South Fremantle Power Station.

2497



Print No. 2497 Fremantle City Library : Local History Collection

## The South Fremantle Power Station - confusion reigns over heritage status

The State election is upon us and decisions about the fate of the South Fremantle Power Station are imminent. The old power station has remained derelict for some 25 years. This is about to change with the release of the ambitious Labor Government development plan for the Cockburn Coast. 95 hectares of Cockburn land between South Beach and Coogee Beach is to be turned into houses for some 14,000 new residents. In the middle of this site is the iconic South Fremantle Power Station, a unique example of late Art Deco industrial architecture. Eleven years ago, the Fremantle Society initiated the heritage listing of the power station. We sought the listing to protect the significance of this local historic landmark and to honour the many people who built it and worked there over its 40 year active life. Ralph Hoare in 1997 said that the internal building "with its large expanses of clear glazing on all facades has a cathedral like quality in terms of soaring space and light."

On 28 October 1997, the power station received "interim entry" on the Register of Heritage Places.

In June 2008, Heritage Minister Michelle Roberts said that the power station had been stripped of its interim heritage listing. According to the Heritage Council of WA this is not correct. The power station remains on the interim register - it needs to be formally removed by gazettal to come off the register and this has not happened. The ownership of the power station has changed, with the recent take over by Verve. Verve is not a Government entity and so the provisions of the Heritage Act cease to apply. According to the advice of the Heritage Council, the interim listing needs to be progressed to permanent registration within 12 months in these circumstances. The advice of the Heritage Council is that the power station does have state significance and that it should progress to permanent listing. With the State election looming, perhaps we'll get a fresh new Heritage Minister. We might even get one with a genuine interest in heritage!

*Adele Carles, Fremantle Society committee*



Official newsletter of The Fremantle Society Incorporated. Established 1972. PO Box 828 Fremantle WA 6160

# FREMANTLE

SEPTEMBER 2008

www.fremantlesociety.org.au



## Fremantle Society nomination wins 2008 Spirit of Heritage Award

When the Galati family won the Spirit of Heritage prize on awards night during the Fremantle Heritage Festival, it was a big night for the Fremantle Society as well. The family was nominated by the Fremantle Society to mark their contribution to life in Fremantle over fifty years trading. Jean Tonkinson and Ron Davidson prepared a photographic display and family history for the judging.

The Galati story began when young Antonino Galati arrived in the 1950s to join his aunts and uncles on a market garden in Munster. In 1958, Antonino and his aunts, Angela and Rosana, opened a small fruit and

vegetable shop at 91 South Terrace. Antonino delivered orders, as shopkeepers did in those days. One morning, on his rounds, he saw Vincenzina, covered in mud as she harvested vegetables in her parents' market garden. It was love at first sight and they married in 1962.

The Galatis soon moved to Wray Avenue and their shop is now the social hub of the area - and beyond. On awards night Vincenzina and her son Salvatone were on stage; daughter Rina and many Galatis were in the audience; son Santo stayed behind to shut the shop.

The Fremantle Society is proud to be associated with the award to the Galati Family and congratulates them on their valuable contribution to Fremantle's heritage.

### Calling On Members - The 36th Fremantle Society Annual General Meeting

This year we are excited to be holding the Society's Annual General Meeting of the Members in our own facilities for the first time in many years and expect to celebrate once the usual formalities are over. Though we have only been in residence for a short time plans are developing for this special evening which naturally will have a strong focus on significant aspects of our new (temp) home.

The committee is also calling on members to help ensure a

great event, members with Old Royal George stories to recount are encouraged to come along or better still get in touch with early planning and our Members Social Subcommittee would also greatly appreciate general help from members with the informal aspects of the night. Contact Secretary 0407 086 300/or cathy.hall@bigpond.com.

AGM Notices /Nomination Forms mailed to members postal address in usual way.

## Internal Committees & Taskforces

### PLANNING & HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Dr Ian Alexander—Convenor Cathy Hall  
Nicolas Gurr Kate House  
David Hawks Don Whittington  
Dianne Davidson

### NEWSLETTER & WEBSITE COMMITTEE

Ron Davidson Editor Newsletter  
Cathy Hall  
Michael Adeane

Alessio Capelli Website  
Adele Carles

### MEMBERSHIP & SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Ron Davidson  
Jean Tonkinson

### FREMANTLE PARK TASKFORCE

Graeme Evans—Convenor Don Whittington  
Ian Alexander Pat Everall  
Ruth Belben Don Tierney

The Society is represented by Committee members on a number of committees & Taskforces incl HERITAGE ALLIANCE WA; VICTORIA QUAY TASKFORCE; FCC HERITAGE & SPECIAL PLACES, URBAN DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEES.

## Welcome new Fremantle Society members

On behalf of the Members the Committee extends a warm welcome to the following New/returning Members of The Fremantle Society since the last edition of FREMANTLE: D Mark, J Hutchison, G Warren-smith, C Warren, C Little, A Bauer & M Adeane.

## Committee Meeting Date Change

NOTICE CHANGE OF DATE: COMMITTEE MEETINGS NOW 4TH MONDAY MONTHLY At Royal George Rooms, See Herald Port City Column or Contact Secretary

## The Committee 2008

### PATRON

Cr Les Lauder  
0408 409 900

### PRESIDENT

Dr Ian Alexander  
0403 767 869  
gogreen@iinet.net.au

### SECRETARY

Cathy Hall  
0407 086 300  
cathy.hall@bigpond.com

### TREASURER

Alessio Capelli  
0411 153 370

### VICE PRESIDENT

Nicolas Gurr  
0413 804 401  
nlgurr@optusnet.com.au

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Adele Carles  
David Hawks  
Dianne Davidson  
Jean Tonkinson  
Ron Davidson  
Val Cousins

## Society Diary Dates 2008 SEPTEMBER

### FREMANTLE SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

**6:30PM FOURTH MONDAY** Fmr Royal George Hotel  
Duke & George Sts East Fremantle  
Mondays **22 September, 27 October** and **24 November**  
**All Members Welcome** (Details Herald Port City Column)

### VICTORIA QUAY TASKFORCE MEETINGS 5-6PM MONDAYS FORTNIGHTLY

At the Fremantle Club Bannister St Contact Dr Ian Alexander

### VISIONING A MORE SUSTAINABLE FREMANTLE?

**Thursday 4 September 7 to 9pm**  
Kulcha Upstairs in Evans Davies Building on South Terrace  
Speakers: **Ian Alexander, President Fremantle Society**, Peter Newman CUSP, Peter Nolin CEO Chamber of Commerce, Lynn Maclaren South Metro Greens candidate. Chaired by City of Fremantle Cr Brad Pettit, these prominent Fremantle speakers present their vision for making Fremantle a more sustainable city.  
**Question Time. Contribute your ideas. Bar open 6.30pm**

*Fremantle Society holds Reciprocal Membership with a number of local groups including the following and members welcome to events listed.*

### HARBOUR THEATRE(Since 1963)

Princess May Building next to Clancy's  
Ten Dates incl a Matinee btwn **5 to 20 September** 8pm  
"It Could Be One Of Us" by Alan Ayckbourn.  
Tickets \$18/\$16/\$13 at Bocs

### FREMANTLE ENVIRONMENT RESOURCE NETWORK (FERN)

**A Tour of Fremantle Gardens**  
Fremantle Organic Growers and Meeting Place tour of four unique private Fremantle gardens.  
Saturday **13th September** 10am-4pm Gold Coin Donation  
Contact The Meeting Place 9335 3394 to Register & for Addresses.

### ART DECO SOCIETY TALK

Sunday **21 September** 2pm  
South Perth Historical Society Art Deco Heritage Talk  
Cost \$2 (inc A/noon tea)  
Venue? Contact A Perotti 9367 8472

### FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY SOCIAL

Tuesday **25 September** 7pm  
North Fremantle Bowling Club Thompson Rd  
"From Pong Alley to the Winged Keel: 150 years of industrial work in North Fremantle". Talk by Richard Hartley  
Contact Dianne Davidson 9430 6096

### OCTOBER

**FREMANTLE HERITAGE AWARD WINNER 08-ST PATRICK'S BASILICA**  
Embrace the full acoustic & visual restoration beauty of Fremantle's Basilica.  
Sunday **5 October** 2:30pm  
PipeOrgansPlus Concert 4 - Seraphim  
Door Sales or Bocs Tickets (Inc Refreshments & Clancy's Meal Deal)  
Details PipeOrgansPlus 9339 7418

## Victoria Quay Again:

# ANOTHER FAIT ACCOMPLI OR A New Era?

The disastrous outcome of the \*\*\*\*ING development saga on Victoria Quay is widely regretted among Fremantle's community. The Western Australian Planning Commission-approved high-rise monsters is soon to commence construction, threatening the viability of the Fremantle CBD, demolishing the Quay's historic and John Curtin-initiated CY O'Connor Centre and diminishing the Heritage significance of the old Immigration Building.

Neither the Society nor the City of Fremantle was successful in a bid to intervene in the developer's Appeal to the State Administrative Tribunal over WAPC conditions. We were thus completely shut out of negotiations between the developer and the WAPC.

*Third Party Appeal Rights, allowing community appeals against unfavourable development approvals, are urgently needed to protect community rights in such situations. They are promised in the ALP's platform, but then ALP governments often ignore the platform when under pressure from vested development interests.*

Inspection of the final development plans at SAT, arranged by committee member David Hawks, confirmed our worst fears: the conditions imposed on the development by the WAPC and signed off by SAT have, despite Press reports to the contrary, made little difference to the overall scale and orientation of the development. The retail component may be slightly more outward-looking, a new public access way is to be provided, but can be closed in inclement, cold, windy or hot weather conditions i.e. a considerable proportion of both summer and winter!

So it was with considerable trepidation that Fremantle Society Committee members Ian Alexander, Nicolas Gurr & Ron Davidson recently appeared before the Government-appointed Victoria Quay Planning Committee, whose job it is to come up with a development plan for the rest of the western end of the Quay.

The Committee, chaired by WAPC Commissioner Jeremy Dawkins is small, and comprises two other Government body representatives in Tourism chief Richard Muirhead and new Fremantle Ports Board Chair Alan Birchmore. The only community representative is Fremantle architect Richard Longley, although Mayor Tagliaferri is also a member. Both the Fremantle Society, and the community-based Victoria Quay Taskforce to which we belong, have protested at the narrowness of this representation.

However, we did at least find a Committee willing to listen politely to our submission and claiming that they have no fixed ideas for future development.

On behalf of the Society we stressed the following points:

- The community needed to be convinced that consultation undertaken by this committee would have a real impact on decisions, rather than being a repeat of the tokenistic sham that marked the process of decision-making for the ING development.

- We are not opposed to further development on the Quay, but want to ensure that, unlike the ING proposal, it fits in with the community's aspirations. Thus it must seek to recycle and restore existing Heritage sheds on the Quay. Any further new development must be of a scale and character sympathetic to the remaining Heritage and should house activities that are linked to its maritime history.

- There is widespread concern about the future of the Fremantle Passenger Terminal, given that public access and use of this valuable community resource is now largely prevented by expansion of car-import parking on the Quay.

- We suggested that land adjacent to the railway station on the southern side of the railway, currently used for car parking, could be more productively used for residential purposes. Some low-cost accommodation could be a key component here.

Ron Davidson stressed the loss of a rich vein of labour history which would follow the planned destruction of the John Curtin-inspired amenities building. He also took up the question of just how little the ING project had changed as a result of community protests. Jeremy Dawkins said he would get back to us on this one. We are waiting for the call.

The Victoria Quay Planning Committee promises a public meeting in September at which they will outline their initial ideas for the western end of the Quay and call for public comment. Watch out for it.

*Let's hope the Planning Committee live up to their word: they and their political masters should know that Fremantle people are sick and tired of being promised genuine consultation only to be overridden by an arrogant Government.*

Ian Alexander

# The State Election

With the State Election sprung upon us by an anxious Premier, our thoughts turn to the State seat of Fremantle, held for so long by Jim McGinty for the ALP. The Fremantle Society has a tradition of remaining neutral in elections at this level, so I can't recommend a particular candidate as deserving of your vote.

But I will make to following observations that you may like to consider before voting on September 6<sup>th</sup>:

- The current State government has foisted many inappropriate and environmentally damaging developments on Fremantle in the past few years, South Beach and Coogee to name but two. The ING development is top of the latest list. Our opposition to this development -- and the hundreds of public submissions we encouraged -- were overlooked by the WAPC and disparaged by the Planning Minister. The Fremantle Society called on Jim McGinty to help articulate our position on the development to Government. While he listened, he did not appear to take our case forward with any enthusiasm. The final development outcome is little different from the original proposal. This is disappointing to many in the Fremantle community, including many traditional ALP voters.
- Closer to the election date, and where opposition to particular proposals has generated even more widespread community backlash, as in the Three Harbours Proposal, Jim McGinty has been more responsive and has called on the government to reconsider.
- The Government Heritage Minister, Michelle Roberts, has stood by and failed to act as the valuable South Fremantle Power Station has been de-listed. She has expressed the opinion that the building does not 'deserve' to be re-listed. This leaves the building open to demolition; whatever other plans the State comes up with for its restoration.
- It is often said that the voters of Fremantle would get a far better deal if the seat were not as safe as it is - in the scheme of things marginal seats get a far more sympathetic ear from Government.

Ian Alexander  
President.

## VICTORIA QUAY ABSURDITY

Members will be aware that in September 2005 the Fremantle Society nominated Victoria Quay and the inner harbour of Fremantle for national heritage listing, providing all the necessary documentation to support our nomination. The nomination was duly acknowledged and Victoria Quay and the Inner Harbour were entered on the Australian Heritage Database as a 'Nominated Place' and the matter was referred to the Chair of the Australian Heritage Council for assessment.

Normally such an assessment is required to be finalised within twelve months, but provision is made in the Act for a further twelve month extension if this is considered necessary. In July 2006 the then Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Ian Campbell, wrote to the Society advising that an extension had been granted for further consultation and assessment.

However, in May this year we were advised that our nomination had lapsed because 'it had been excluded from two consecutive work plans.' When we queried on what grounds it had been allowed to lapse, we were informed that the Australian Heritage Commission had decided not to include it in the 2008-2009 Priority Assessment List because it was considered that Victoria Quay and the Inner Harbour were unlikely to have any national heritage value and was unlikely to meet any of the requirements for listing.

This statement completely contradicts the advice we were given by heritage experts and consultants, including members of the Heritage Council of WA, that Victoria Quay at least met most of the requirements under the new Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation act 1999 for national heritage listing.

The Society does not intend to tamely accept this absurd decision, and will continue to try to find ways to have the area listed on the national register!

*or*

## *How the developers ate the ocean.*

The construction of artificial islands is not a new idea, but the Six Islands' 'Northport Quay' proposal brings a new sort of madness to Perth's 'develop-at-all-costs' tendency. If it ever goes ahead, it will only benefit a few, and threatens an environmental disaster in the seas off Fremantle.

To many, including me, the idea is little short of crazy. It is not as if we are short of land to develop, so why fill in and develop the ocean? But as historians have noted, WA's history is littered with examples of grand and unlikely schemes designed for the profit and aggrandizement of their promoters rather than for benefit of the citizenry.

The spin-doctors and lobbyists are already hard at work trying to convince a skeptical public that the idea is widely supported, and that those who oppose it are just 'nay-sayers' and knockers.

But as I see it, there are many cogent reasons why the Fremantle Society should oppose this development. Many of these points were raised by speakers at a recent rally against the proposal in Fremantle, organized by committee member Adele Carles, (who is also running as a candidate for Fremantle in the State election):

- The developers seek to privatise the seabed, a la Coogee, a resource that should remain in the public domain. The price the developers are offering to pay for the land is bargain basement. Should they have to pay equivalent 'market' land price for the seabed, their proposal is unlikely to be on the table.
- The proposal, to build a 'mini-city' in the ocean housing up to 20000 people behind massive sea walls, is environmental vandalism, given rising sea levels and winter storms of increasing intensity.

- The proposal is bound to be elitist and is largely aimed at boat-owners, despite the unlikely claim that Homeswest will be involved. With an up-market clientele, the 'car free' notion is pie in the sky.

The proposal includes high-rise residential and hotels of over 30 storeys: these are massive and in clear breach of State policies that are supposed to limit coastal building height to 5-8 stories

There is little likelihood that the development can be carbon-neutral as claimed, particularly given the energy costs of building the islands and that of boats etc. Solar power/wind etc should be mandatory in all new developments so its inclusion in NQ is just a bit of 'greenwash'. A real wind farm off Rous Head would be a much more environmentally beneficial than Northport Quay.

the amenity of beaches at Port and Leighton via boat traffic, noise and pollution, visual intrusion etc

The proposal is outside the Government's metro planning blueprint "Network City", which while it may not be ideal, advocates intense

development of land along existing transport corridors, and certainly not the creation of new cities in the ocean.

There is a great deal of existing land near Fremantle that can be developed e.g. the Cockburn area around the old Power Station, where DPI is currently proposing additional housing for over 10000 (although there may be less if the amount of high-rise proposed there is reduced). That is where there should be a rail service connecting to Fremantle: the DPI simply proposes bus transit connection

Northport Quay will undoubtedly involve a massive public subsidy to the developers in the land, services, infrastructure etc

Ian Alexander

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*WA's history is littered with examples of grand and unlikely schemes designed for the profit and aggrandizement of their promoters*

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# The Fremantle Society moves...

It's a long time since the Fremantle Society had a space to call their own with the majority of the work of the Society taking place for years in private Fremantle homes with occasional sorties into public places, for members meetings. The exception being the establishment under the Presidency of Ralph Hoare of access to "Fremantle Old Council Chambers" via the kind assistance of the City of Fremantle for formal meetings. The author always discovers new facts of Fremantle History upon visiting that interesting space. Those visits have diminished partly due to limitations of access for some of our longstanding members. With the recent advance of a LW Grant (see elsewhere in this edition) the committee revisited with greater gusto the search for a place to undertake work for the project and with the kind assistance of the Town of East Fremantle has secured temporary digs in the grand old Royal George Hotel on the corner of Duke & George Sts East Fremantle. With a welcoming community of artist tenants alongside us the experience is a most agreeable one and the committee is in discussion with representatives of the resident Artists with the intention of future Members Gallery viewing opportunities. We had a taste of the possibilities with the recent China Photo Opening night held on the 07-08 before the auspicious 08-08-08 opening of the Beijing Olympics with several members responding to the last minute

email invitation (if you wish to hear of such on-spec events in the future send your email address to the Secretary; )

There's still plenty of working bee work to be done esp. in the kitchen (once home of the Thai Kitchen), 'The Rooms' are in full swing with meetings of the Executive and Committee, regular Wednesday working groups of the Archives team (other times by arrangement) sorting, filing & recording Fremantle Society documents and memorabilia coming our way and an ever increasing number of visits from the Davidsons as new material unfolds. We have now acquired some useful pieces of furniture but the Archive team are especially keen to receive any old (working) filing cabinets and other such storage items.

If you are a longstanding Society member please get in touch with either the Secretary or the Davidsons if you have any Society paperwork or other memorabilia we can look through or look after for you. There are a number of gaps so far in the record that we are very keen to pursue further. We welcome any assistance / donations from Society members to assist with this project of particular importance to members. Contact Secretary or President.

## RECORDING THE HISTORY OF THE FREMANTLE SOCIETY

At last the colourful life and times of the Fremantle Society is to be the subject of a book. Lotterywest has provided a \$20,000 feeder for the project; other groups including the City of Fremantle are supporting the project in kind. The grant has been made to the National Trust who will administer the project through a steering committee. The Lotterywest community histories program is always highly competitive and we were fortunate to get such a large grant.

The authors of the text are historians Ron and Dianne Davidson who bring a range of Fremantle experience and knowledge of the Fremantle Society to the task. They have also had a number of short listings for the Premier's book award while Ron's Fremantle Impressions won the Fremantle Heritage Festival award for 2007. The authors would like to talk with anyone who can provide additional insights into the Fremantle Society's history and impact on Fremantle (ph 9430 6096).

The History project Working Groups established to progress this important project include a small Archives team to assist Dianne & Ron in the fascinating tasks of sorting and reviewing the many boxes of materials from the Society's 36 year history. If you have any materials or know of the whereabouts of any please contact the Secretary asap as we are working to Lotterywest publication deadline.

Contact: Cathy Hall 0407 086 300 / <>

The Secretary The Fremantle Society Box 828 Fremantle 6160

## MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Help the Fremantle Society settle in to its new 'History Room' at the Royal George Hotel, George Street, East Fremantle

### Join the BUSY BEE

Saturday Sept 20<sup>th</sup> 10am -12 Noon

We want to spring clean the premises and fit out the rooms in style!

#### Please bring:

- Yourself, family and friends ready to lend a hand;
- any donations/loans of old chairs, shelves, files, pictures for the walls;
- any documents on Society history

Enquiries to Cathy Hall 0407086300



**The Fremantle Society Inc**

(Established 1972)

PO Box 828 Fremantle Western Australia 6160

[www.fremantlesociety.org.au](http://www.fremantlesociety.org.au)

### An open letter from The Fremantle Society (Inc) to:

**Alan Carpenter**, The Premier of Western Australia  
**Colin Barnett**, Leader of the Opposition

### Our Heritage: it's for the future!

The heritage places of our State need decent, effective and up-to-date protection. Our Heritage Act does not provide that.

When investors and developers can bulldoze heritage-listed property, or deliberately let it run down and get off without any meaningful penalty, it's time for a change. The current Government has promised to address this problem, but has not acted. The Minister has allowed Heritage buildings to be demolished and delisted.

Heritage is the community's treasury of its identity. It is a vital part of defining who we are and the nature and character of the places in which we live.

**We call on the new State government to act within the first 100 days of its election to rewrite the Heritage of Western Australia Act. The New Act must provide more effective means of protection for our State's diminishing Heritage.**

Dr Ian Alexander,  
President,  
The Fremantle Society (Inc)  
for and on behalf of concerned Western Australians