

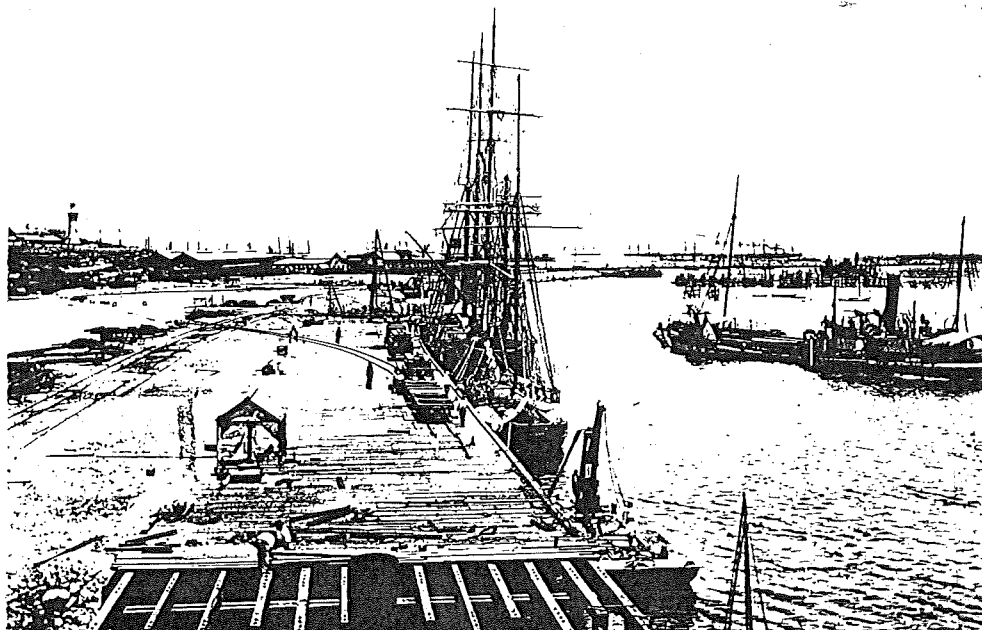


FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY

Established 1994

The Secretary, Local History Collection
Fremantle City Library, PO Box 807,
FREMANTLE WA 6160

Autumn Edition
1997



Fremantle Port under construction, 1897
Courtesy Local History Collection, Fremantle Library

FREMANTLE PORT CELEBRATES ITS CENTENARY

In 1897 the *SS Sultan* sailed into the new Inner Harbour, the first vessel to use the facilities constructed according to the revolutionary plans of Engineer-in-Chief C Y O'Connor. The opening of the port was timely - Western Australia was about to experience an upsurge of population and trade with the influx of prospectors dreaming of fortunes to be made on the goldfields of Kalgoorlie.

Although Fremantle had been used as a port since settlement in 1829 (the first Harbour Master, Captain Mark Currie RN, was appointed in that year), there had always been a steady stream of complaints and criticisms from ships' captains about the dangerous weather conditions and the lack of a safe anchorage. Ships were prevented from entering the Swan River because of a rocky bar at its mouth, and were compelled to anchor in Gage Roads where there was little shelter. Ships were often held up in Fremantle for weeks, and sometimes months, before it was possible to unload their cargo, and this in turn discouraged much-needed trade.

The government took a bold step in accepting C Y O'Connor's proposal to remove the bar at the mouth of the Swan and to use the river as an anchorage. The received wisdom of the time was that sand would continually drift back to block the river mouth and that constant dredging would be required: O'Connor believed that there would be no sand drift. He was proved right, and Fremantle at last acquired a safe harbour.

Some notable watersheds in the history of the Fremantle port have been the introduction of bulk handling of grain in 1932; the use of the port as a base for Allied vessels patrolling the Indian Ocean during World War II; the opening of Cockburn Sound to deep draft vessels in 1955; and the introduction of containers in the 1960s.

To mark the centenary of the Fremantle port the Fremantle History Society will adopt the port as the main focus for its annual Fremantle Studies Day this year.



FREMANTLE STUDIES DAY

100 Years of Port Development:

Malcolm Tull from Murdoch University will present some of the research he has been doing on the history of the Fremantle port.

Shedding Light on Sheds in Transit:

David Hutchison, Consultant Historian, will give an illustrated talk on the construction, modification and relocation of the historic sheds on Victoria Quay.

The Contribution of the Italian Fishing Community to the Port of Fremantle:

Sally May, Curator, WA Maritime Museum, will discuss the first 50 years of the Fremantle Fishermen's Co-op. The establishment and purpose of the Co-op was a direct consequence of and resistance to disadvantages and exploitation that the Fremantle fishing industry and the Italian community in particular, had experienced over many years. Sally will reflect upon the history and contribution of these pioneer fishermen of Fremantle and their relationship to the port city.

The 'Purple Circle', 'Untouchables' and Seagulls: the Development of a Work Culture at Cooperative Bulk Handling, North Fremantle:

Geoff Harcourt from Cooperative Bulk Handling will talk about work in the wheat silo on North Wharf during the period 1933-1977 and discuss the rituals and work practices which developed among the men employed there.

History Into Art - Animating Our Heritage:

Di Shaw, Special Events Co-ordinator with the City of Fremantle and former artistic director of Deckchair Theatre, will discuss the rich social history of the Fremantle harbour, which she uncovered during a recent project. She will outline plans by the City of Fremantle to animate this history through public art and public performance.

The day will end with an opportunity for delegates to share some of their stories of the port and its relationship to them and their families with the speakers for the day. This session will be chaired by Stuart Reid, Co-ordinator, Oral History Unit, Battye Library, and should provide a lively end to a fascinating day.

Details on when, where, etc in Coming Events on p 3.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The following are members of the committee of the FHS

Dianne Davidson	430 6096
Elaine Berry	336 1906
Margaret McPherson	337 2668

Anne Brake	(wk)	335 9473
Sally Rodgers		339 7922
Lorraine Stevens	(wk)	430 2266
Ron Davidson		430 6096
Milton Jones		337 2331
Helen Brash		387 7453
Linley Batterham		364 2356
Courtney Thomson		335 7659



COMING EVENTS

Vlamingh exhibition – lecture and special viewing

Mike Lefroy, Education Officer, Fremantle Maritime Museum, will provide members and their guests with a fascinating insight into this exhibition. The talk will be held on **Tuesday 27 May** starting at 7.00 pm. A special price for Fremantle History Society members of \$3.00 for the talk and entry to the exhibition has been offered. Don't miss this opportunity to learn more about our maritime history.

Fremantle Studies Day

The second Fremantle Studies Day will be held on **Sunday 22 June** from 12.30 – 5.30 pm. The venue for the day is the newly refurbished and extended Fremantle Maritime Centre, an annexe of the South Metropolitan College of TAFE, located in Fleet St, Fremantle. The day will include five papers and a panel discussion focusing on the 100

years of the port and its relationship with the town of Fremantle. Further details can be found on page 2 of this newsletter.

Be sure to RSVP by 18 June to avoid disappointment. (see enclosed flyer for details and registration form)

Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will be held on **Tuesday 22 July**, and will feature one of the many centenaries that are happening in the Fremantle district this year.

Andrew Smith, newly elected Mayor of East Fremantle, has agreed to allow the Society to use the historic East Fremantle Town Hall for this meeting. Andrew will chair the session, and an illustrated talk on the history of the town of East Fremantle will be presented, with highlights drawn from the recently issued publication celebrating East Fremantle's centenary.

Elections for the executive and the committee will be held at the AGM. A nomination form can be found at the back of this newsletter. All members are encouraged to take a more active role in the activities of the Society - becoming a member of the committee is one way to achieve this. It is not an onerous task; the committee meets once a month for approximately an hour and a half. Come and bring a fresh approach to the running of the Society! **NOMINATE NOW.**

Nomination close on 22 June. Forms should be sent to Lorraine Stevens, Secretary, c/- Local History Collection, PO Box 807, Fremantle 6160 or handed in at the Fremantle Studies Day.



MEETING REPORTS

Uglymen's Association

On 25 February Society members heard a fascinating talk given by Rita Farrell on the Uglymen's Association, a long-lived community welfare organisation which flourished in Perth and Fremantle in the inter-war years. In the absence of a screen the slides which illustrated Rita's talk had to be projected onto a window blind, but despite this minor handicap members thoroughly enjoyed this informative session which was followed by many questions and even some personal reminiscences. We also discovered how the Association got its name!

Buckland Hill Battery Tour

Don Rae, together with volunteer tour guides representing the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society gave our group a very interesting and exclusive tour of this facility. We were divided into four groups - each going to a different area but all eventually covering the complete site. Our group initially started at the command post and given the history of the site before being shown the restored guns and areas where other guns were and hopefully are to be re-established.

A cup of tea refreshed our group before we went below ground into the tunnels. These are worth the visit alone - they presented a world apart from every-day activities of the site, giving insight into the defence mechanisms used by our armed forces. The tunnels also showed how capable and inventive some of our military officers were.

The officer-in-charge recruited Kalgoorlie miners who volunteered to dig the tunnels. The ex-miners were quite happy to do so, as the limestone was much easier to tunnel through than rock they had experienced in the past. As recognition of their role, a diorama within one of the shafts shows a miner doing the excavations. The tunnels contained a command post, a first aid station, carpenters shop for any repairs and sleeping quarters for both male and female personnel. Women were stationed on site when the first group of men was transferred to Darwin.

Storage for ammunition, as well as necessary mechanism to work the guns was also underground. Escape exits were installed should the main entrances be bombed or blocked in some way - air vents were also included. In memory of those men and women who died while serving in the Artillery, a chapel has been established in the tunnels - jarrah wall plaques with their names, an altar and a comfortable seat provides a place to rest and remember those who sacrificed their lives for us.

A group of 42 people, some from Bunbury, were present on the tour. There were only 12 members from our society, the rest came as a result of the promotion for the 70th Anniversary of the Royal Western Australian History Society and all agreed it was an excellent tour.

Thanks to the Fremantle City and Cockburn Councils for allowing us to hire their Community Buses and to Robert Woollett and Doug Scorer who acted as drivers.

The Buckland Hill site will be open to the public in November and will certainly be well worth the visit.

Among the tombstones

Approximately 40 people braved what started out as a cold and threatening kind of a day to take a tour among the tombstones of the Fremantle Cemetery. They were rewarded for their efforts as the afternoon turned into one of Western Australia's beautiful autumn days. The hospitality of Paul and Irene Tritton added to the information compiled on specific graves by several Society members.

Paul started the afternoon with an interesting talk on the history of the development of cemeteries in the Fremantle district, with specific emphasis on the Carrington St site. Members and other participants were then taken on a short tour of tombs of some of Fremantle's famous folk. These included several people related to the Fremantle Prison who were originally buried in Skinner St Cemetery and whose headstones have been moved to Fremantle; AE Davies (the funeral director); the memorial to those who died in the wrecks of the *City of York* and the *Carlisle Castle*; and a significant section of the cemetery allocated for the Lumpers Union, amongst others.

During the afternoon tea, Paul and Irene opened the cemetery office and allowed people to view the old record books and provided others with print outs of information about their loved ones who were buried at Fremantle. Their generous assistance really added to people's enjoyment of the day.

The walk was very successful and has encouraged us to plan further excursions in this ever fascinating location.



FHS BADGES

Members may have noticed the Society's committee wearing Fremantle History Society name badges (when they remember!). These are a useful way of identifying your link with the Society in a practical way. The badges are blue and white, with the Society's logo and the member's full name.

Members who would like to purchase their own name badge can do so by contacting Ron or Elaine Berry on 336 1906. The complete badge will cost members \$4.50.



For your Diary

Tuesday 27 May – Vlamingh exhibition, special viewing and talk – Mike Lefroy of the Maritime Museum will enhance this interesting exhibition with further details of the first known European to see Australia. Maritime Museum, 7.00 pm, Charge - \$3.00 members, \$5.00 non-members.

Sunday 22 June – Fremantle Studies Day – this year's papers will explore the place of the port in Fremantle's past. Fremantle Maritime Centre, TAFE, Fleet St, Fremantle, 12.30 – 5.30 pm.
\$10.00 members, \$15.00 non-members. BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL

Tuesday 22 July – Annual General Meeting - East Fremantle celebrates - following our AGM, incoming Mayor Andrew Smith will chair a session which will include a talk illustrating some of the highlights of East Fremantle's first 100 years. East Fremantle Council Chambers, Canning Highway, East Fremantle (parking at rear), 7.00 pm.



ABOUT OUR NECROPOLIS

Centenaries seem to be all around us - soon the Fremantle Cemetery will also celebrate its 100 year anniversary. A new Cemetery Bill was presented to Parliament by the Premier, Sir John Forrest, in December 1897 - this Bill established two new cemeteries, one at Fremantle and one at Karrakatta. The cemeteries were to be run by trustees responsible to the Minister of Lands.

Until then burials had taken place at East Perth cemetery and at Alma and Skinner Street cemeteries in Fremantle. The old Fremantle cemeteries were closed and headstones in good repair removed to the new site in Carrington Street - some of the remains were also exhumed, notably those of the well-to-do citizens whose relatives could afford the expense.

The Fremantle Cemetery Board first met 24 June 1898, and a sub-committee was formed to allocate land to the major religious denominations. Prominent Fremantle funeral director Arthur E Davies was asked for a breakdown of funerals performed over previous 12 months to work out these allocations: he reported that there had been 155 Church of England burials, 100 Roman Catholic, 71 Wesleyan, 69 Congregational and 66 Presbyterian. Allotments were duly made according to these figures.

However, other needs quickly became apparent - in February 1899 Elias Solomon requested and obtained a Jewish section, and in December of the same year the Board allotted 55 gravesites for Chinese burial grounds.

The Fremantle Cemetery Board remained responsible to the Fremantle Town (later City) Council until 1 January 1989 when the Minister for Local Government transformed it into an independent statutory body.

Among the names on the headstones are many familiar to Fremantle residents from the names of Fremantle streets and buildings. Here are some of these prominent citizens:

C Y O'Connor. One of the most imposing headstones belongs to this brilliant and innovative engineer, architect of the Fremantle harbour and the water supply to Kalgoorlie.

Lucius Manning: Son of Charles Alexander, builder of the famous West End building known as Manning's Folly, Davilak in Hamilton Hill and the Manning Building in South Terrace.

William Dalgety and Samuel Moore: Prominent Fremantle merchants, William was also the first President of the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce and the first Treasurer of the Fremantle Town Council.

Higham Family. Merchant family headed by the enterprising and very successful 19th century businesswoman Mary Higham, who operated a business in Fremantle for 25 years after her husband's early death, diversifying into pearling and shipping. Commemorated in the Higham Buildings at the corner of Market and High Streets.

Samson Family. Another well-known merchant family, whose wine and spirit business is still in existence. Members served in both local and State government, and two Samsons served as Mayors of Fremantle.

Many other well-known names can be found on Fremantle Cemetery headstones: Marmion, Lilly, Bateman, Scott, Henderson, Pearse - to name just a few.

There are also the infamous: **Eric Edgar Cooke**, the serial killer who terrorised Perth in the 1960s, is buried (appropriately enough) in an unmarked grave together with **Martha Rendall**, the only woman to be hanged in Fremantle Prison (1909). The famous bushranger **Moondyne Joe**, who was originally buried in a pauper's grave together with three others, has acquired an impressive modern memorial courtesy of the Toodyay Historical Society which bought the grave and had it inscribed.

In addition to the famous and the infamous, Fremantle Cemetery is also host to a community of workers from the Fremantle wharf. The Lumpers' Union purchased a large number of graves, and their members rest together in death as they were in life. Their simple graves are grouped around the more ornate resting place of their local hero and martyr, **Tom Edwards**, fatally injured during a confrontation with police on the wharves in 1919.

The most visited memorial in the entire cemetery, according to Chief Executive Officer Paul Tritton, is that of **Bon Scott**, former lead singer of AC/DC, who died of a drug overdose in England in the early 80s. Interstate and overseas tourists make a regular pilgrimage to wonder at the unpretentious plaque which commemorates their hero.



EXTRACT FROM RAILWAY RULE BOOK, 1850 (Unearthed by Milton Jones - source unknown!)

Every person is to come on duty daily, clean in person and clothes, shaved and his shoes blacked.

All persons, especially those in uniform, are to keep their hair cut and at all times be neatly dressed.

It is urgently requested that every person, whether on duty or off duty, shall conduct himself in a steady, sober, honest and creditable manner, and that on Sundays and other Holy days when he is not required on duty, he will attend a place of worship as it will be the means of promotion when vacancies occur.

Not any instance of intoxication, singing, whistling or levity while on duty will be overlooked and besides being dismissed, the offender will be liable to punishment.

Any person talking, shouting, hooting or making any unnecessary or unpleasant noise or unseemly or unsightly actions of any kind, whether by hand, mouth or otherwise, will be fined.

Rules

1. Godliness, cleanliness and punctuality are the necessities of a good business.
2. This firm has reduced the hours of work and the Clerical Staff will now only have to be present between the hours of 7.00 am and 6 pm on week-days.
3. Daily prayers will be held each morning in the Main Office. The Clerical Staff will be present.

4. Clothing will be of a sober nature. The Clerical Staff will not disport themselves in raiment of bright colours, nor will they wear hose, unless in good repair.
5. Overshoes and top-coats may not be worn in the office, but neck scarves and headwear may be worn in inclement weather.
6. A stove is provided for the benefit of the Clerical Staff. Coal and wood must be kept in the locker. It is recommended that each member of the Clerical Staff bring 4 lbs of coal each day during cold weather.
7. No member of the Clerical Staff may leave the room without permission from Mr Rogers. The calls of nature are permitted and the Clerical Staff may use the garden below the second gate. This area must be kept in good order.
8. No talking is allowed during business hours.
9. The craving of tobacco, wines or spirits is a human weakness and as such, is forbidden to all members of the Clerical Staff.
10. Now that the hours of business have been drastically reduced, the partaking of food is allowed between 11.00 am and noon, but work will not on any account cease.
11. Members of the Clerical Staff will provide their own pens. A new sharpener is available on application to Mr Rogers.
12. Mr Rogers will nominate a Senior Clerk to be responsible for the cleanliness of the Main Office and the Private Office and all boys and juniors will report to him 40 minutes before prayers and will remain after closing hours for similar work. Brushes, brooms, scrubbers and soap are provided by the owners.
13. The new increased weekly wages are as hereunder detailed:

Junior Boys (to 11 years)	1s.4d
Boys (to 14 years)	2s.1d
Juniors	4s.8d
Junior Clerks	8s.7d
Clerks	10s.9d
Senior Clerks (after 15 years with the Owners)	21s.0d

The owners recognise the generosity of the New Labour Laws, but will expect a great rise in output of work to compensate for these near utopian conditions.



BOOK REVIEWS

Chris Rowett and Selina Baxter's *Working Port* (Fremantle Arts Centre Press; \$39.95) was launched during the weekend celebrations for the harbour's centenary. It is not meant to be a history - the authors call it a celebration of the world inside the harbour gates.

It's predominantly a world of strangely shaped ships which look as if they couldn't float and slender cranes which look too slender to lift. Chris Rowett's wonderful photographs capture the world of such ships and machinery with great skill and a fine sense of colour.

"Where are the people?" an old timer asked me. He was right, of course. Most of the people are dwarfed by their machines. But then that's how the port is these days. Not even Izzy Orloff could recreate today that colourful waterfront world peopled by his images of men who worked with their hands.

Chris' best picture has no people in it. It's taken under the wharf and is an evocative collage of bolts, beams and barnacles. I remember a spot like this. It was where I used to hide when police

on push bikes tried to stop fifties children from fishing from the harbour landings.

One criticism which could be levelled at Chris' images is that they don't reflect the considerable interaction between the harbour and the city.

Selina Baxter's accompanying prose suffers from a number of serious problems. She doesn't have an adequate feel for Fremantle itself or for the specific wharf work culture. I'm convinced that you need to live in Fremantle to write sensitively about it. And no one will convince me that the truculent Fremantle tugs move "like gracious ladies", as they do on page 21 of this book.

Ron Davidson



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Ed

Thanks for allowing me to attend the afternoon amongst the tombstones last Sunday with the Fremantle History Society, I really enjoyed it very much, consequently I now have more research to do!

Speaking of research I did a little checking in an English-Welsh dictionary and found *RHYDDIO* means freedom!

Langley Smith
2 May 1997

Note: During the tombstone tour, we were taken to the grave of the infamous Moondyne Joe. The grave has been refurbished by the Toodyay Historical Society and across the bottom was inscribed the word *RHYDDIO*. We assumed it was Welsh as Joseph Bollitho Johns (alias Moondyne), was from Wales. Thank you Langley.



SOUTH FREMANTLE STABLES

Horses were very visible in South Fremantle between the wars. By 5 am most mornings, gallopers were clip-clopping down Mandurah Road, Douro Road, Commercial Road and a dozen other streets, on their way to build muscle in the dunes or speed on the firm fast beach sand. The sound of the horses' hooves brought out the neighbours with queries about form.

Not much later Bartholemew Daly's giant Clydesdales would be drawing large drays from the stables behind Bat's place in Douro Road, heading for the port.

On Saturday mornings the race train arrived at South Beach station to take up to one hundred horses to meetings at Ascot, Belmont, Goodwood or Helena Vale. They returned on Saturday evenings.

On Sunday mornings the Clydesdales had a day off and many were brought to cavort on the beach. The local kids tried to ride them bareback.

South Fremantle was still a gallopers' town when trainer Dave Miller took over Dave Oates' stable at Douro Road. Soon he had top horses in his backyard. There were farriers at either end of the street to shoe them. The locals saw horses as their opportunity to get into the big money. They were usually wrong.

Trainers headed south over the next 30 years until there was only Dave Miller's racing stable left. A State planning by-law finally destroyed this unique bit of history. A developer wanted to build units next door and he used the "no

stables within 16 metres..." clause to condemn the stables, despite strong Fremantle council efforts to retain them.

Racing left the area with a bang. Darby The Dasher, Larry Foley's 17 hand stallion and the last occupant at the stables, won at Ascot. There was another bang next day as Dave Miller began demolishing the 80 year old, severely horse-eaten timbers to use in developing his new stable at Hope Valley.

Obviously Darby didn't like the move. He finished last at his next start.

This was the sort of inconsistent form which would have endeared Darby The Dasher to Larry's father, who used to sit sat behind a brown and gold window at 50 High Street, which announced **George Foley, Turf Commission Agent**. This was the thirties euphemism for SP bookie.

If you want to read more about the colourful days of race horses at South Beach, Bill Marks' two books published by Fremantle Arts Centre Press stand out. They are *The Fall of the Dice* and *South to Sillytown*.



FROM THE LOCAL HISTORY DESK

Recent Additions to Stock:

The Fremantle Courier (later *The Evening Courier*) 13/5/1902-31/3/1906 (Microfilm)

The Evening Mail 1/11/1906-30/6/1910 (Microfilm)



Snippets from the Past

The prison gates are open and out comes old Lefroy, with his tall hat on, his trousers six inches too short, short sleeves and high collar, his gentle voice exclaiming "who-o-one gone! a-a-a-h, who-o-one gone", perhaps the escapee has managed to cross the river. If so he may gain the start of his pursuers, but it was generally to the bush they went, and once inside Moore's paddock tracking became difficult, the scrub being so dense. They were seldom away for long, a reward of five pounds to anyone giving information leading to the capture of an absconder. Ticket-of-leave men were always to the fore in this regard in their endeavour to curry favour with the police.

The Evening Mail 2/2/1906 p.1



JIG SAW COLUMN

"My dear children," said an old rat to his young ones, "the infirmities of age are pressing so heavily upon me, that I have determined to dedicate the short remainder of my days to mortification and penance, in a narrow and lonely hole which I lately discovered; but let me not interfere with your enjoyments; youth is the season for pleasure; be happy therefore, and obey my last injunction - never come near me in my retreat. God bless you all." Deeply affected, snivelling audibly, and wiping his paternal eye with his tail, the old rat withdrew, and was seen no more for several days, when his youngest daughter stole to his cell of mortification, which turned out to be a hole, made by his own teeth, in an enormous Cheshire cheese.

Horace Smith