



FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY

Established 1994

The Secretary, PO Box 1305
FREMANTLE WA 6959

**Summer Edition
2005**

Editors: Ron Davidson, Anne Brake



A fisherman emerges from the water carrying a basket of fish – one of the two sculptures that make up part of The Jetty a memorial to fishermen recently installed in Fishing Boat Harbour

Photo: Jane Davidson

FISHING FOLK FOUNDERS OF FREMANTLE

Dr Geoff Gallop officially launched The Jetty on Friday 29 October 2004 as a memorial to the thousands who have helped create and sustain Western Australia's fishing industry.

Much of Fremantle's colour and flavour has been attributed to the rich cultural mix that has long been the heart of its fishing industry. Italians, Greeks, Portuguese, Croatians, Yugoslavs and Scandinavians as well as Australians laboured often under difficult

and dangerous conditions, to build this vital billion dollar industry.

Jon Tarry, local artist and UWA lecturer, designed and built the memorial. The bronzes of the two fishermen at each end of the jetty were the work of Fremantle sculptor Greg James. The jetty symbolises the links between the sea and the land and the two sculptures represent two different eras of fishing. The different materials used in the work also aim to symbolise the changing eras of the industry.

As well as the jetty and the sculptures, there are 12 posts with 608 names representative of the many who contributed to the founding and development of the fishing industry. There is also a map of the coastline showing Fremantle's traditional fishing grounds.

The memorial was funded through contributions from the State government, private sector, City of Fremantle and fishermen and their families. Funding also included in-kind donations of materials and expertise. It is located in Fishing Boat Harbour between Joe's Fish Shack and Cicerello's.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Executive:

Bob Woollett (President)	9335 7451
Lisa Williams (Vice President)	9430 7966
Alison Bauer (Treasurer)	9432 9739
Ken Hopkins (Secretary)	9339 7399

Committee:

Elaine Berry	9336 1906
Anne Brake	9336 5206
Jean Cecil	9335 2352
David Hutchison	9335 1594
Ron Davidson	9430 6096
Loretta O'Reilly (wk)	9432 9739

Fremantle History Society's committee meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

If you have something you would like discussed at a meeting, please contact one of the members at the numbers shown above.

General meetings of the Society are generally held on the 4th Tuesday of the month. Details of these meetings can be found in your newsletter and reminders are placed in the local press. As we have started to have Sunday afternoon meetings occasionally, please be sure to check details.



COMING EVENTS

CLAREMONT MUSEUM

Join other members and friends at the Claremont Museum on **Tuesday 22 February**. The evening will start with a talk and a tour hosted by Denise Cook, the museum's curator.

Claremont Museum has long been a leader in best practice for community museums not just in Western Australia but across the nation. Supported by the local authority, the museum has a strong volunteer group who work on a range of activities from conservation and documentation of the

collection to guiding and promoting the place.

Members are encouraged to bring a picnic dinner and enjoy it in the park adjacent to the museum on the river's edge while catching up with other members and friends.

Meet at the museum at **6.00 pm** –
Claremont Museum, Victoria Avenue, Claremont.

For those who would like a lift, please contact Bob Woollett on 9335 7451.

PENSIONER GUARDS IN NORTH FREMANTLE

March's meeting will follow very well from February with two presenters continuing the connection to our convict past. Jean McDonald will present information on the pensioner guard settlement in North Fremantle. Jean will be followed by Colin Jamieson who is the secretary of the Northbank Residents and Ratepayers Association. He has been doing some research into the allocation of land in the Northbank area.

The meeting will be held on **Tuesday 22 March** at the **Shipwreck Galleries Function Room in Cliff St** (our regular venue) at **7.00 pm**.

A NIGHT AT THE OPERA – THE DALKEITH OPERA HOUSE

Members are to be given a rare opportunity to visit the Metropolis Night Club without the noise or the regular patrons. The Dalkeith Opera House was opened in 1904. It was built for James Gallop who lived in Dalkeith House on the north east side of Queen's Square in High St. It held 1500 people including those in the gods. Most of the old interior has gone but the balcony was reinstated in 2002 and the following year won one of the Fremantle Heritage Awards. Jamelia Gubgub who is a part owner of the building is a daughter of Victor Gubgub who

bought the place in 1946 and opened a Ford dealership there.

Jamelia will be the host for the evening. Ivan King, the archivist for His Majesty's Theatre, will entertain us with a history of the place and insights into the theatre world of Perth

Meet at the entrance to the **Metropolis, South Terrace, Fremantle at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 26 April.**



MEETING REPORTS

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

This, our last function for the year, was held at Grosvenor Restaurant at the TAFE in Sth Fremantle. There were two speakers, Jennifer Navard, Director of Statistical Planning, who spoke of the history of technical education in Fremantle. It had a chequered start before the school was established in Sth Terrace.

The second speaker was Rusty Christensen who described the shops of Fremantle as they were fifty or sixty years ago.

The meal was excellent. It was cooked and served and we were looked after by the students who were learning the hospitality industry. They were real charmers and we wish them well in their chosen careers.



THE NELSON BI-CENTENARY 2005

A series of events for 2005 is being planned to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar and to commemorate the death of Lord Nelson. It is thought members may be interested in some of the events, particularly as some of them are being held here in Fremantle.

28 May – Best of British Concert at Perth Concert Hall with a special emphasis on the music of Nelson's navy and times.

31 July – performance of Haydn's Nelson Mass by Pipe Organ Plus and the Giovanni Consort in St Patrick's Basilica, Adelaide St, Fremantle at 2.30 pm.

1 – 31 October – the Nelson Exhibition, Shipwreck Gallery Function Room, Cliff St, Fremantle. Open daily from 9.30 – 5.00 pm. Admission free.

Late October – series of lectures on Nelson, his life and times. Lecture Theatre, WA Maritime Museum (details to be circulated closer to the time).

21 October – Bicentennial Trafalgar Dinner at South Perth Yacht Club which will be organised by the Royal Naval Association, Perth.

22 October – *My dearest angel: Horatia's secret pain*, a presentation by the Midnight Youth Theatre Company about the life of Nelson as seen through the aged eyes of his daughter Horatia (venue to be confirmed).

23 October – Trafalgar Day Commemoration Service, St George's Cathedral. 11.00 am.

6 November – *Pickle* Night Dinner, 7.00 pm, St Michael's Hall, Mount Pleasant. A celebration of HMS *Pickle's* arrival in the UK with the news of the victory at Trafalgar. Hosted by the Nelson Society of Australia.

For enquiries on any of the above activities, contact Bob Woollett on 9335 7451.



SNIPPETS FROM THE LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION

Loretta O'Reilly, Local History Librarian

The last quarter has traditionally heralded in a quieter period for the Local History Collection here at the Fremantle Library. With exams and study put aside for the summer holidays, students, who make up quite a percentage of our clientele, are noticeably absent.

Travellers and workers, who are on holiday and finally have the leisure to spend quality time tracing and tracking down their ancestors, make up the bulk of the inquiries for this time of year. A further surge in enquiries has been generated by the Migrant Wall project with children of migrants wanting to know exactly what date their parents arrived here and what ship they travelled on, etc. It is surprising the number we cannot locate or place as arriving in Fremantle. A theory put forward is that these ancestors actually arrived in the Eastern States and came across country to Western Australia. As these children of the original arrivees lament 'if only we had listened to Dad/Mum while they were still alive', a lesson there for all of us!

The more detail we have makes it so much easier to trace families or family members.

The Local History Awards writing competition has been launched early this year. Our inaugural year in 2004 saw a pleasing number of entries submitted and quality winners announced. We are hoping for bigger and better entries this year and have put the plans in place to ensure that we do.

Money for the prizes has been pledged by Notre Dame University, the Fremantle History Society, possibly Fremantle Ports, and, we are hoping that the Fremantle Society will come on board with a small sponsorship.

The categories are:

Junior award (Pre-primary-Year 2)

Theme - 'My Fremantle' - entries can include poems, prose, collages, pictures etc. 1st prize \$50.00, 2nd prize \$25.00 book voucher.

Primary School Award (Year 3-7)

Theme - 'Fremantle & World War 2' - word limit 300-500.

1st prize \$50.00, 2nd prize \$25.00 book voucher.

Secondary School Award (Years 8 – 12)

Theme - 'Fremantle & World War 2' - word limit 1000-2000

1st prize \$100.00, 2nd prize \$25.00 book voucher.

Unpublished Open Award (incl. personal reminiscences) - word limit 5000-15 000,

must provide footnotes/endnotes and a bibliography

1st prize \$500.00, 2nd prize \$250.00

Published Open Award, includes work produced within the last five years (since 2000), photographic and text based works welcomed.

1st Prize \$500.00, 2nd prize \$250.00

The entries have to be submitted to the Fremantle Library by 5.00pm Monday 2nd May, 2005 or mail to:

Richelle Gandy,
City of Fremantle
PO Box 807
Fremantle WA 6959

Come on, search out your old manuscripts, take the punt, and enter!

Good luck!



WHALING STATION REVEALED?

Sheridan Bourke and Cath Renwick of Sydney based archaeological firm Godden Mackay and Logan have recently visited Fremantle as part of a consultancy to better conserve, interpret and make accessible the Whaler's Station at Arthur Head.

Arthur Head is one of Western Australia's most significant sites, primarily for its association with the Beeliar people and as the first settlement site of the Swan River Colony. It is still a relatively intact natural landscape as well as showing evidence of uses associated with the historic port town. It incorporates historic features related to all periods of development of the state of Western Australia: from the first settlement and first contact with Aboriginal people to present day. It is also an area of national

importance as the focal point of European settlement of the western third of the continent.

Arthur Head is now vested in the City of Fremantle as an A class reserve for the purpose of 'historic buildings, recreation and community services'.

Much work has been done at Arthur Head to conserve and interpret the place including an extensive historical and archaeological investigation of the area, removal of the deposits used early in the 20th century for reclamation of land, reconstruction of the 1870s beach and dunes, restoration of the original seawall, former Kerosene Store, Defence Battery buildings, and pilots' cottages and upgrading of visitor facilities (toilets, café, information centre) and signage.

The City of Fremantle is also developing the Maritime Heritage Trail linking the old and new Maritime Museum on Victoria Quay, which includes conservation and interpretation works in the area. The current works come under this scheme.

The Whaling Station site forms part of the reserve and represents one of the colony's first industries. It is recognised as being of exceptional significance and includes the Whalers' Tunnel, whalers' jetty wall Whaling/Boat Building (1837-1860s), Tryworks and other archaeological remains buried on the site, and the site of the Station House. It is also important for its pivotal role in the colony's early economic and industrial development. In addition the Whaling Station was the site of the first and frequent post settlement contact between the new settlers and Aborigines

The City Of Fremantle recognises that the site is of national as well as local and State significance but also has a role as an inner city beach and recreational area.

The current project is attempting to bring these often disparate areas together to ensure better public access and understanding of the place without

compromising the fragile remains of this important site.

(Consultant's brief for conservation / interpretation plan, Maritime heritage Trail & Whaling Station, Arthur Head Reserve, Fremantle)



RWAHS AFFILIATED SOCIETIES' CONFERENCE

16 – 18 September 2005
FREMANTLE

Co-ordinators in the following areas are still required to serve on the Conference Management Committee:

- merchandise
- publicity
- sponsorship
- accommodation liaison
- finance

Anyone interested in fulfilling one of these roles is asked to contact Bob Woollett on 9335 7451.

FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 22 February, 6.00 pm – visit to **Claremont Museum, Victoria Ave, Claremont**. Bring a picnic dinner and stay after the meeting to enjoy it in the park beside the river

Tuesday 22 March, 7.00 pm – Pensioner **Guards in North Fremantle. Shipwreck Galleries Function Room, Cliff St** (our regular meeting room).

Tuesday 26 April, 7.00 pm – A night at the **Opera – the Dalkeith Opera House. The Metropolis Night Club, South Terrace.**

JK HITCHCOCK ON 'SHIPS AND SHIPPING, 1839 - 1928'

The Fremantle area is again a major shipbuilding area, although the material used is now welded aluminium rather than steamed jarrah and oregon. It is interesting

to look at an earlier look at shipbuilding, as noted by JK Hitchcock in this extract from *The History of Fremantle*, 1929.

'Because of her position as the principal port of Western Australia, Fremantle's history has been affected largely by the progress of marine navigation and the improvements of ocean transport and means of communication. As a port Fremantle was born in the days of sail, she achieved importance in the steamship era, and in these days of the motorship age she has become the busiest of all Australian ports for oil fuelling.

Up to the early eighties, the whole of the coastal cargo and passenger trade was carried on in small sailing vessels of 25 to 60 tons. The trade with China, Straits Settlements, Java and Mauritius was catered for mostly by vessels owned by J and W Bateman until the establishment of steam transport rendered them unprofitable. The trade with England was maintained by sailing vessels of 300 to 500 tons, which discharged their cargoes into lighters in Gage Roads, as craft exceeding 100 tons could not berth at the old south jetty.

In these days of big ships it is interesting to note that in 1839 Captain John Thomas had built a little cutter of 22 tons named the *Emma*. After being employed for a time on the coast, she was lengthened and her tonnage increased to 25 tons. In that diminutive craft Captain Thomas traded to Adelaide, Hobart, Mauritius, Singapore, Algoa Bay and the Cape. In 1846 he built the *Empress*, of 125 tons, and he employed her in the same trade until 1858, when he bought the *Rory O'More* (296 tons), which he commanded for some years. After his retirement from the sea he engaged in farming at Ravenswood and later built and managed the Albert Hotel. He came to the colony in the *Gilmore* in 1829 and died in 1907 at the patriarchal age of 92. He it was who, after leaving the sea, taught most of our old-time coasting skippers all they knew of navigation, and that was very little, as most of them used to find their way about by instinct or rule of thumb. In those go-as-you-

please days certificates of competency were not required, and anyone could be a shipmaster or practise as a doctor or dentist without his qualifications being put to the test. There was consternation among ancient mariners when certificates were first brought into vogue. Many of them, though they were splendid seamen and had sailed vessels for years, could pass only after several attempts the most rudimentary examinations they required, and some never passed at all. Unkind people said that the gift of a bottle of whisky to the examiner greatly facilitated the acquisition of a ticket in those days.

Half a century ago shipbuilding was a thriving industry at the port, and although no very large vessels were launched, those that were built suited the requirements of the time. Probably the largest vessel ever built in the State was one of about 300 tons built near the mouth of the Murray at Mandurah in the middle forties. She was named the *Ocean Queen*. About the same time a brigantine of about 125 tons named the *Empress* was built at Fremantle for Captain John Thomas. Other vessels were built in Fremantle between the sixties and eighties and considered to be fairly large in those days, were the *Janet* (226 tons) built by James Storey; the *Iris* (206 tons), built by Robert Howson; the *Laughing Wave* (161 tons), built by W Jackson; the *Rose* (100 tons) built by Robert Wrightson, and the *New Perseverance* (127 tons), built at Preston Point by Jones and Owston.



A COLOURFUL CHARACTER RIDES AGAIN – LAUNCH OF AN IMPORTANT BOOK

Long-standing Society member Danny Cusack has recently launched a book based on his PhD thesis.

The book, *With an Olive Branch and a Shillelagh: the Life and Times of Senator Patrick Lynch*, covers one of the most colourful characters in West Australian political history, who spent considerable

time in and around Fremantle. Paddy Lynch was known for his political meetings held on the back of a cart or truck. When someone interjected, he would step down and silence the culprit with a well aimed punch.

The book was published by the Centre for Irish Studies, Murdoch University, in conjunction with Hesperian Press, and was launched by former Senator for Western Australia and former Chancellor of Murdoch University, Fred Chaney.

Danny, who will be talking about the Seamen's Strike at our May meeting, will bring along copies of his book. The book, which includes a number of pages of photographs of the times, costs \$35.

And, talking of Hesperian Press, they are in the process of publishing a re-edited and much more coherent version of George Fletcher Moore's Diaries. The present version suffers from the fact that it seems to have been taken from newspaper extracts published in the 1880s, and it is sometimes difficult to know where events are taking place – it is still a rich source of information about early white settlement and includes detailed studies of Aboriginal language and tribal geography.



WELCOME

The Welcome Wall at the Western Australian Maritime Museum was funded as part of the State's 175th Anniversary Celebrations and was seen as part of the recognition of the contributions of migrants to the State.

The Maritime Museum was chosen as the most appropriate spot as many migrants came to Western Australia by sea arriving at Victoria Quay, particularly prior to 1970 when plane travel became more affordable and the Suez Canal was closed.

The first of the European settlers in 1829–30 were mainly retired service men, professional men with their families and artisans and servants from Britain. The

'Bride Ships' of the mid nineteenth century brought single women to the colony in attempt to boost the population and to bring a balance to the genders which had skewed with the arrival of the Parkhurst Boys and convicts.

The gold rushes of the 1890s saw a massive population explosion and a number of migrant schemes were initiated to feed the growing numbers. After World War II, Australia embarked on an ambitious immigration scheme in an attempt to build the work force which had been affected by both the war and low birth rates during the Depression.

As well as the new immigration policy, which was implemented in 1947, Australia also entered into agreements to take some of the 9 million displaced persons in Europe following the war. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, around half a million people had migrated to Australia. Forty percent of them were British, the rest coming from Malta, the Dutch East Indies, Italy and Greece amongst others. Today Australia is the second most culturally diverse country in the world.

The wall is a monument to the significant contribution migrants have made to the state. Each listing on the wall will contain a person's name, year of arrival and ship of passage.

The Wall is supported by 'Passages', an evolving and dynamic computer database containing information on arrivals in Western Australia by sea, displaying archival photographs and records of the ports, the ships as well as the people. Individual migrants listed on the Welcome Wall will also be listed on the database, with additional family history where available. As well as a terminal inside the Museum, the information will be available online.

For more information contact the Maritime Museum on 1300 858 438 or visits www.museum.wa.gov.au/maritime.

(taken from the 175th Anniversary of Western Australia web site and WA Maritime Museum Welcome Wall brochure)

