

Town Hall Event

2.30pm – 5.00pm Sunday 12 July 2026

Time	Activity	Speaking notes
2-2.30pm	Adele DJing (Upbeat)	
2.30pm	Junkadelic (walk in with procession and keep playing for one song)	
2.35pm	MC Intro (acknowledgment, housekeeping, order of the day)	Brad: Acknowledge Wadjuk Noongar country Hannah: Today, as we gather to remember Horatio, we acknowledge his whakapapa (<i>fah-kah-pah-pah</i>), his roots, his ancestry - which began in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Though he made his life here among us, his wairua (<i>why-roo-ah</i>), his spirit, carried the land of his birth with him always. We send our aroha (<i>ah-raw-hah</i>), our love and compassion, across the ocean to his whānau (<i>fah-now</i>), his family, in New Zealand, who mourn his passing alongside us today. Very soon we'll be hearing some words on behalf of his family. Both: Introduce selves, what we were to Horatio (Alternative Mayor, Cultural Attache, Hairy Godfather)

		Hannah: TOILETS, FOOD, EMERGENCY • Silent auction – please visit the desk to see what is being sold, noting that the highest bidder at 4.30pm will take home the work. One significant work in particular – stunning portrait by Vittorio Natoli that will definitely attract some attention! If you don't want to bid, you can also find Edie and Aoife and pop some money in the donation buckets. • If you want to take a moment to note down your wisdom or memory of Birdbath, we have a post-it note tribute wall underway. • You will also see photographs by Vittorio Natoli and Rodney Stratton displayed in the hall & foyer, as well as some of Birdbath's own art. The work he created with Marcus Canning that was projected onto the State Library is showing on display screens. Brad: Explain how the three-minute eulogies will work (and introduce the squeaky chickens and timekeeping clock). • Write your name on the mirror (point out location) under whichever era you're going to mostly speak about. Pre-1990s (NZ, East Coast, the Hills), 90s in Freo, post-2000. • We will call you up to speak and you will keep your eye on the countdown clock. • If the chickens are squeaking, it's time for the next person to get called up. • We'll be starting the eulogies in about 10 minutes time, so please sign up now.
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		Hannah: We acknowledge that remembering Horatio will be like collectively taking turns looking through a kaleidoscope – the image we held of him is made of the same parts but looks different to everyone. By sharing the eulogies today, we not only remember the man that we know, but also celebrate everyone here who knew and loved him. As somebody recently noted, perhaps his greatest artwork of all time was the community of people he gathered around him.
	10mins settling in time and signups for Eulogies (Adele to continue DJing)	<u>First speaker Rose (exempt from the squeaky chicken rule)</u> We'll start though with an era of Horatio's life that most of us know little about – by hearing from Rose, speaking on behalf of his family.
2.50pm	First set spoken eulogies (early life)	(Supplement as needed from Timeline prepared by Brad's team.)
3.05pm	Junkadelic (2 songs) + belly dancers	
3.20pm	Second set of spoken eulogies (1980s and early 90s)	(Supplement as needed from Timeline prepared by Brad's team.) Phoebe Corke to read eulogy from Will Thomas <u>At the end of the second set of eulogies:</u> A day like today marks the impact Horatio had on so many lives. But there are some key people who have driven this community celebration and they should be recognised. (See <u>thankyou list at back</u>).
3.35pm	Harlequin performance (Dancing in the Moonlight) 5-10mins	
3.45pm	Third set of spoken eulogies (late	<u>At the end of the third set of eulogies:</u>

	90s to now)	Brad: Horatio slipped away from us a month ago, on Saturday 13th June. He was found under the stars near his caravan, on a friend's property near Fremantle, and was said to look 'the most peaceful' he had ever been. He was buried at Fremantle Cemetery, in a small private ceremony organised by his nominated next of kin. You can visit his final resting place at lawn C7, grave 451. He had told friends he wished to be buried and continue to live on under the ground and that he wanted a large headstone so his family from NZ could find him if they wished. He also had a laugh with a friend over a potential inscription, "well, that was weird". Hannah: We are so grateful to everyone who has contributed to the fundraising efforts, that will hopefully get him the headstone he wished for, as well as start the fund for a permanent memorial of him somewhere in Fremantle. We also know it was his dream to have some of his works go back to New Zealand, to TePaPa, the national museum in Wellington, and we have started discussions to try and realise this dream for him. There are donation buckets here today and the GoFundMe will remain open to allow for further donations.
4.05pm	Circus toys	(Brad has to leave around 4pm)
4.20pm	Ceremonial bit • Slide show of photos – music	You may have noticed today that we've had a wild mix of the creative, irreverent and fun alongside the grief we all feel,

	by Thylacine • Finish with Bohemian Rhapsody singalong	remembering our dear friend and knowing we will not see him again. We know that unexpected juxtaposition is exactly as he would have wanted it. Being part of a process that allow us to mark the passing of someone is important, and today we are going to take a moment to pause and remember this wonderful, hairy man with the sparkling eyes. A moment to watch some of our memories of him on the screen, listen to some of the music he loved, and if you wish, come and place a sprig of rosemary here by his golden shoes. (AFTER BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY) Thank you for being a part of today's acknowledgement of this very very special man. We invite you to stay now to watch the fantastic documentary 'Flow' that has immortalised Birdbath and his work. You are then welcome to continue festivities at the Buffalo Club with some of Fremantle's finest musicians. Winners of the silent auction are... Thank you. Fare thee well. (END MC DUTIES)
4.35pm	Show film	
5.10pm	Finish	

Thank you to:

Phoebe and Dave who not only dealt with the immediate needs after Horatio's passing but also have been absolutely key to today happening.

Diane who has been a complete superstar on the fundraising front and who, along with Carrie, has been building the connections with his family in New Zealand.

Ross, Vittorio and Marcus who collaborated with Horatio in life to create incredible art, and in his death have been instrumental in ensuring today is true festival of Birdbath.

Freya who has made the Town Hall into a Birdbath happy place today and ensured we all had his favourite Moroccan Mint Tea to drink. Rachel and the team of volunteers who did setup, will do packup and have helped during the event today.

The team from Good Sammy's, particularly Kane, Charmaine and the team at the Fremantle store, who answered the call and jumped onboard straight away to fundraise via Horatio's Op Shop. Sydel and the team who took the Op Shop on the road today down to Artsource. Those who donated auction items today which will also be 100% for his legacy.

The artists and performers who have been part of today – Junkadelic, DJ Adele Hitchcock, the bellydancers, Harlequin and our circus friends.

Sandie Williams who was named as Horatio's next of kin and flew back from the east coast to support his burial proceedings.

Local Members of Parliament Simone McGurk, Josh Wilson and Brad Pettitt who funded the catering today by Cool Fodder.

City of Fremantle, Artsource and the Buffalo Club who said yes immediately when we asked them to host our celebrations! And all the others who have supported.

Horatio T Birdbath

A Life Timeline — 1953 – 2026

Compiled from family recollections and community tributes, for his memorial service — 12 July 2026, Fremantle Town Hall

Who He Was Born

Ian Fraser Ayson — the name his family knew him by — was born in New Zealand in 1953 (a 70th birthday was celebrated for him in September 2023), likely in the Palmerston North / Levin area. He was adopted as a newborn; his mother, who worked as a seamstress and dressmaker, had lost four babies before adopting Ian and, later, his sister Kathy. As a boy he was an A-grade student who won a scholarship to university in Dunedin, but was expelled after stealing a car — around the same period he trained at New Zealand's fine arts school. His sister Kathy Andrews recalls him as an amazing artist even then, often disappearing into the hills behind their home with a sketchbook.

He was legally declared Horatio T Birdbath by deed poll some 35 years before his death, cutting contact with his New Zealand family at the same time — which is why searches by his siblings and nieces and nephews for so many years turned up nothing. His birth family have been finding one another through this memorial group since his passing.

Leaving New Zealand (early-to-mid 1980s)

Horatio loved to tell a particular version of how he left New Zealand: that he never planned to leave at all but simply woke up one morning and found himself on a flight out. With \$100 in his pocket and a fare to either Perth or Darwin, he tossed a coin for Perth — and always joked he landed in Darwin instead, sweltering through Arnhem Land two days later before making his way west.

It's a wonderful story, and almost certainly one of the many he mythologised about himself. Several who knew him in Perth recall meeting him as early as 1983 — Georgina Palmer and Alan Wilson both place him at the Parkerville Yacht Club around the 1983 America's Cup, and Alison Barley recalls meeting him at Scarborough in November 1983, barefoot in shorts and a gold cape. What can be said with confidence is that he was living in Western Australia by the early-to-mid 1980s.

Before settling in WA, he spent time in Tasmania, working as a postman — doing his rounds with his dog Mullah issuing directions from a laundry basket tied to the forks of his red postie bike.

Mid-1980s — Married, and — as his stepson **Wil Thomas** recalled it — "sailed across Bass Strait to drive the Nullarbor to the hills of Perth," the family packed into a Datsun 120Y along with their cats, three dogs, and cartons of Peter Jackson cigarettes. Wil, who arrived from London as a teenager to live with

them, wrote one of the fullest tributes on this page — the Wooroloo winters, the mission-brown Honda CB 175, being collected from school "before the peers gaped, wide-mouthed and daren't laugh."

Perth Hills Years (1980s – early 1990s)

1980s — Settled into the Perth Hills — Parkerville, Mundaring, Chidlow and Wooroloo. **Al Day** remembers him as caretaker of the Parkerville Hotel while Al played jazz there; **Margaret Austin** knew him from the same era as "my confidant," recalling he stuck a Band-Aid on her damaged car bumper after a Hills wedding, and that he nicknamed her "my little Tuatara" after teasing a group of visiting Kiwis. **Larissa Andrews** and **Roxanne Moore** both recall the Friday-night caricatures and Mullah in her flying helmet and goggles from the Mundaring Weir Hotel days of 1988.

Adopted the self-styled — and entirely invented — title "Horatio T Birdbath, of the Mundaring Goldfish Training Centre." He and Mullah were inseparable; she rode alongside him on his motorcycles in a WWI-style flying helmet and goggles.

1985–89 — Ran a much-loved but ill-fated vehicle at the Black Duck Rally. **Ian Wright** and **Mark Hardwick** were there the day the Mundaring Goldfish Training Centre's staff vehicle — paper-mâché nose cone and all — met its end.

Became known for his ever-evolving, upcycled vehicles — a Honda CB 175 repainted mission brown and fitted with sewing-machine badges and a 1950s police siren found at the Mundaring tip, eventually with a handmade sidecar — and for building a house truck on an old Datsun flatbed. He also dragged home a cabin cruiser he intended to rebuild and sail away in, naming it the "Talbot Duck Manton."

1989 — **Carrie Clark** remembers him as "Beeb" that year — she did his birth chart ("lots of Scorpio, strong Neptunian themes") while he lived in her garden shed, one of several such stays over the years that earned him the affectionate nickname "the garden gnome."

Fremantle — The First Chapter (1992 – late 1990s)

6 May 1992 — Arrived in Fremantle — a precise date confirmed in the documentary Flow — drawn to what he called "the last Bohemia before gentrification."

1992 — **Rodney Stratton** photographed him on a ledge outside his Market Street studio (above what is now Kakulas Sister) not long after he landed in Freo — and, separately, on the roof nearby, apparently looking for Gino's. Rodney's photographs are some of the most iconic of Horatio. **Vicki Boxell** says she "met HTB a few days after he came to Freo" and that he later lived in her garden shed too, in '92 or so; she recalls he also stayed in her back sleepout in the early 2000s.

1993 onward — Quickly became part of daily life on the Cappuccino Strip around Gino's Cafe. **Darshan Pichler** met him that year at 13, when Horatio parked an old car on the street and photographed as many strangers as possible piled on top of it — the first of many encounters. A rainbow-gathering road trip in October 1993, on a bus driven by Gyan or Jamie, is remembered by **Rodney Stratton**, **Alan Wilson** and **Rachel Pemberton**.

1990s — A regular at the old High Street bank building markets, part of a wider circle of Fremantle artists, musicians and buskers of the era — including members of Wunjo, Sundiata, Trent Humphries, a young John Butler, and a young Dave Johnson, as recalled by **Alan Wilson**.

1997 — Began work on what became "Horatio's Wall," the mural behind Gino's Cafe — remembered by **Kyal Rowe** as already "in its infancy" that summer. **Jan Maria Meissner**, who had just arrived from East Germany, met him outside Gino's that year — the dragonfly-king jacket, the ice-cold pebble he pressed into her hand — and became a close friend; she later wrote a published tribute for the Fremantle Shipping News. He added to the wall over many years, deliberately never restoring it as pieces fell away — instead mounting fallen fragments on gold card, wanting the work to fade with time, as **Juzzy Robinson** and **Kylie Richardson** (who watched it grow from her seat at Gino's Pizzeria) both remember.

1998 — **John Morgan** had his caricature painted at Clancy's during a Sunday session, depicting him leaving Novak's in Northbridge at 1am. That same year, Jan Maria began scanning his drawings; by 2000 hundreds of works had been digitally archived this way.

1990s — Known for elaborate costume and performance, including dressing as a Christmas tree during a street parade. **Denyse MacNish** remembers him gate-crashing the Fremantle Festival parade with a cardboard box on his head.

South West Years (late 1990s – c.2008)

Late 1990s — Moved south for several years, spending time around Bridgetown, Bunbury, Balingup and Margaret River. **Enrico Fazio** says he loved Bunbury "because it reminded him of the early days of Freo," though he never stayed away from Fremantle for long. **Sue Kalab** recalls him associated with the Bunbury Regional Art Galleries and driving a Valiant with his staffie-cross dog riding shotgun in sunglasses.

— Stayed for some weeks at a Margaret River shop, **Robert Wardell's** Saharan Daze, becoming an honorary companion to the shop dogs and taking a turn on the catwalk during events.

1998 — Kept a foothold in the Perth Hills during these years — **Kyal Rowe** visited a shack that winter, aged 8, and remembers an elaborate diorama built around the fireplace, obscuring it completely — sketches, paintings and paint-marker collages from a lifetime of travel.

Early 2000s — Lived for a time in Vicki Boxell's back sleepout. In 2002, painter **Joe Record** prepared patinated backgrounds for Horatio to draw over on a large collaborative piece; friends (recalled by "Groffie Jagster") documented the process in a thirteen-shot panorama photograph.

Return to Fremantle (c.2008 onward)

c.2008 — Returned to Fremantle for good. **Callum Baker** and Amy Baker recall his Bunbury home, filled with art and moving 3D sculptures, around 2007–08, shortly before this move back. He became a fixture at Featherhorn, a Fremantle shop run by a friend, and later a regular at FOMO and the Flamingo Freo Fiesta.

2009 — **Paula Gallagher** — temporarily homeless — stayed in Horatio's shed. Her flood-damaged childhood teddy bear, Barney, was carefully revived with a heat gun, becoming "Portrait of a Resuscitated Barney" by HTB, 4 July 2009.

— — **Grant Dunne**'s family owned two car parks behind Old Papas, and Horatio lived in his car in their business for five years — "a joy to interact with him every day," Grant recalls.

2011 — Commissioned by the City of Fremantle to design murals for the planter boxes along the Cappuccino Strip. That same year, as Brendan Coleman recalls, he took part in the International Street Arts Festival as an "honorary pink person" in a Slovenian performance piece, The Invasion — the beginning of his long association with the festival, where he became known for his signature "drain fishing."

Early 2010s — Commissioned by the City of Fremantle to paint the bollards around Walyalup Koort; **Neil Wallace** photographed him at work on them in 2013.

Portugal & Wider Recognition (2012 – 2021)

2012–2014 — Inspired by **Mike Burns**' stories of Lisbon, travelled to Portugal and set up a temporary studio, producing his "Lisbon Six" series. There he crossed paths with Portuguese street artist Vhils, who later travelled to Fremantle to create the brick-relief face on the Norfolk Hotel — and shared a coffee ritual at Horatio's wall with mutual friend Vitor da Costa, who told Horatio quietly in the Rossio, "Hombre."

2010s — A well-loved daily visitor at Good Sammy's Fremantle store — twice a day, according to **Bonnie Gill** — where staff, including store manager **Charmaine Hall**, kept a permanent spot on the couch for him.

2015 — Played captain on a boat craned into position outside Fremantle Town Hall for artist Andrew Christie's *Fieldguide to Homemaking* project, as remembered by Brendan Hutchens — climbing up to strike a pose the moment he spotted it.

2016 — Attended Blazing Swan with **Marcus Downs** and Vicki Boxell at the Serene Green theme camp.

2017 — Turned heads during the campaign for marriage equality, parading through Perth streets, in his words, "proudly and elegantly as a full-bearded transgender person."

24 June 2018 — **Peter Walpole** photographed him for the first time in a Fremantle side alley — the "Love Heart" a Freedom Fairies artist had just painted on his forehead capturing, Peter felt, exactly how Horatio loved and was loved by everyone.

2021 — Profiled in a Fremantle news feature as a "creative of a certain renown," aged 68 — recounting his arrival story and his catchphrase, "Do justice to your talent," alongside memorable lines like "I'm not afraid of making a spectacle of myself because I am comfortable in my own skin." That year, artist **Elzara Art** drew his portrait in pencil for the City of Joondalup Community Art Awards, and he held a 'One Exhibit Exhibition' outside Featherhorn — where Toni Armstrong discovered, that same visit, that she was his sister.

Final Years (2024 – 2026)

2024 — Travelled to Witchcliffe for an exhibition and residency at The Marritree, organised by **Diane Hunter** and **Miranda Aitken**. The documentary *Flow*, made about his life, was screened that year at CinefestOZ, featuring portrait work by Vittorio Natoli, his close friend and photographic collaborator of many years — Vittorio has since described losing him as losing his "muse."

April 2025 — Photographed fishing through a drain on the Cappuccino Strip during the Fremantle Street Arts Festival on 21 April, by **Cato Ninetails** — telling **James Buckner** that day he was fishing for interesting humans, with no luck yet.

Saturday 13 June 2026 — Passed away in Fremantle, in the caravan he was living in behind a friend's home — the city he had called home, on and off, for over three decades since first arriving in 1992. He was found by **Amanda Joy**, who has said he appeared entirely at peace, "the most peaceful I have ever seen him."

Family

Kathy Andrews — his younger sister by adoption, based in Melbourne — has shared that their mother lost four babies before adopting them both; Ian was seen as different growing up and bullied at school, but was an A-grade student. She and other family members, including sister Toni Armstrong and niece Paula Jones, have found one another and reconnected through this group since his passing.

Wil Thomas — his stepson from his marriage in the 1980s — wrote one of the most detailed tributes on this page, describing the Perth Hills years in vivid detail.

Rose Marie — his granddaughter — has written: "He happily took on the role of Grandad and supported me when no one else did. I could never thank him enough for his love over the last 25+ years. I love you Gramps."

Sandie Walker — listed by Horatio as his next of kin on paperwork, though not a blood relative — has been coordinating arrangements with the community since his passing.

Philosophy

"Do justice to your talent." Throughout his decades in the Hills and in Fremantle, Horatio encouraged countless artists, musicians and writers with this simple philosophy. Many later credited him with giving them permission to live a creative life.

Community

To many people, Horatio wasn't simply an artist. He was mentor, provocateur, storyteller, performer, teacher and friend — and his greatest work may well have been the community he quietly gathered around him.

A Note on Sources

This timeline draws on a family tribute, a stepson's eulogy, and hundreds of community recollections shared on the Farewell Horatio Facebook group, along with published tributes and news coverage. Some dates remain approximate, and a few genuinely conflict — most notably Horatio's own whimsical account of arriving in Australia in the late 1980s, set against several friends' specific memories of meeting him in Perth as early as 1983. Where sources disagreed, the most specific and best-corroborated date has been used, and remaining uncertainty has been flagged rather than smoothed over. This document reflects only a portion of the many hundreds of memories shared by the community — it is not, and cannot be, comprehensive.