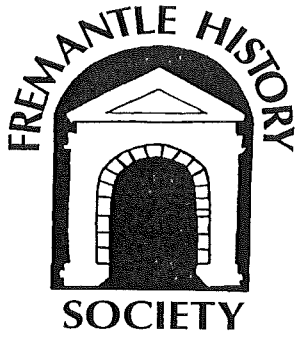


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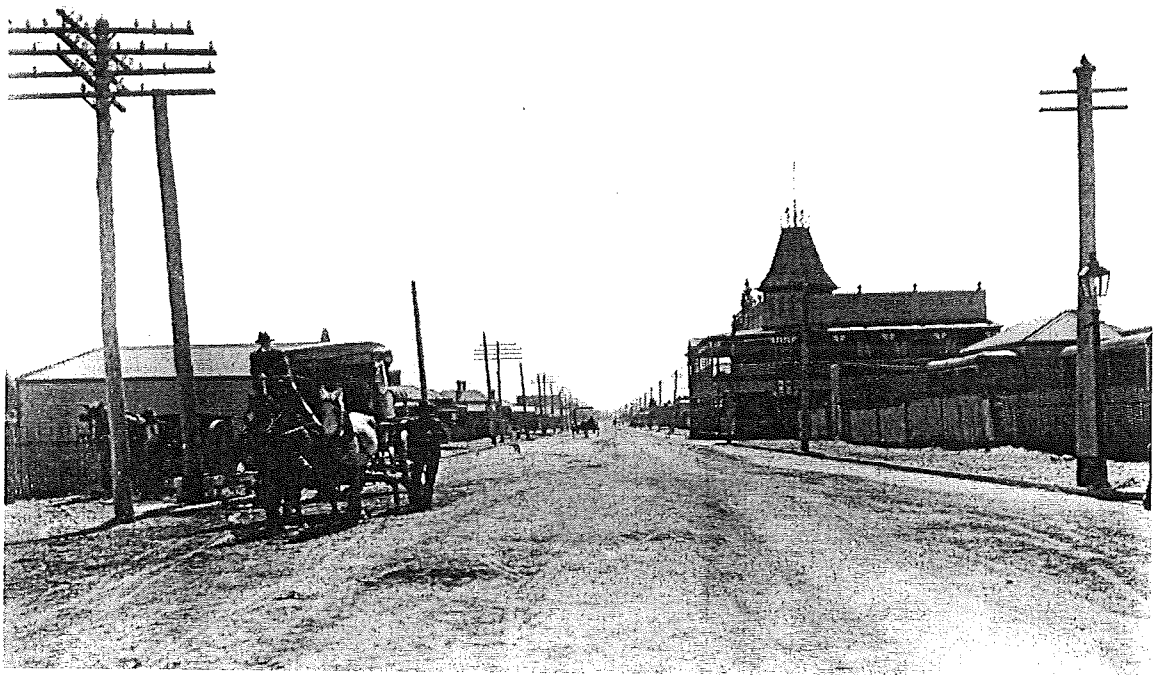
# FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY

Established 1994

The Secretary, 24 Fothergill St,  
FREMANTLE WA 6160

Winter Edition  
2000

FREMANTLE  
LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION



Looking north along South Terrace to Davilak Hotel, 1905  
Courtesy Fremantle Local History Collection No 710

## Social Centre of South Fremantle - Davilak Hotel

The Davilak Hotel has served the South Fremantle community for nearly a hundred years. The *WA Mining, Building & Engineering Journal* of 13 June 1903 noted that: 'Upon the Mandurah Road, Mr R H Holmes is having an hotel of two storeys erected. Brick will be used principally.' Its existence is formally acknowledged with an entry in the Council Ratebook 1903/4, where the property is described as a 'hotel, stables and stores'. More information is added in the following year; the entry reads 'Davilak Hotel, bedrooms, sitting rooms, dining rooms, bars, kitchen, cellars and stables'.

The hotel quickly became an important social centre in the area, attracting the locals to its gardens and dance floor. There was also a popular bar for the ladies known as 'The Passion Pit' or 'The Virgin's Parlour' where the local women could enjoy each other's company and a game of darts. And it catered to the many holiday-makers who visited South Beach with its popular attractions of pier, fun fair and skating facilities.<sup>1</sup>

Long-time Fremantle resident Denis Roberts described the hotel and some of its patrons:

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*The Davilak Hotel was of course the social centre of South Beach and after football matches the pub became a throbbing dynamo.*

*There were several real characters who drank at the hotel.*

*The local dog catcher used to warn customers the day before his round-up. Duly warned, they kept their pets indoors when he carried out his duties.*

*Another fellow was an obliging postman who used to have a drink there after his round.*

*I can remember on one occasion he said to me: 'I've delivered your mail, don't worry about it; they were only bills, so I threw them away.'<sup>2</sup>*

It remained a popular local pub. There were some changes and renovations made in the early seventies, and a major sprucing up during the America's Cup in 1985. The development proposal for this read: 'addition of a drive-in bottle shop to the north of the existing building, the provision of an alfresco dining area to the rear of the building and internal alterations and additions of a fairly minor nature to the ground floor of the existing tavern.' The proposal was approved by the City of Fremantle.<sup>3</sup>

The new lessee, Murray Carter, had taken over the hotel in February 1985. Anticipating demand for accommodation during the Cup, he redecorated and renovated upstairs accommodation in the hotel, and provided what was felt to be an appropriate ambience: 'the exterior and interior of the hotel have been spruced up with coats of paint in the Oz colours of green and gold and its patriotic flavour is further symbolised by a huge painting of a boxing kangaroo on an exterior wall.'<sup>4</sup>

In 1994/95 the hotel was extensively restored by Glenmar Pty Ltd, the new owners, who converted the upper storey to apartments, reinstated the original tower and constructed a warehouse to store bulk wines for the bottle shop. This warehouse subsequently became The Cedar Tree Middle Eastern restaurant, which in turn recently metamorphosed into The Squashed Grape restaurant, run by the proprietors of the Davilak.

1. *Fremantle Gazette* 6.8.1985
2. *Fremantle Herald* 10.9.1994
3. FCC Building & Planning Committee Development Application 212/85, 30.9.1986
4. *Fremantle Gazette* 6.8.1985



## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

At the recent Annual General Meeting the following were elected as members of the committee of the FHS.

### **Executive:**

Bob Woollett (President)	9335 7451
Alison Gregg (Vice President)	9432 9739
Dianne Davidson (Secretary)	9430 6096
Alan Kelsall (Treasurer)	9336 4573

### **Committee:**

Elaine Berry	9336 1906
Anne Brake (wk)	9335 9473
Ron Davidson	9430 6096
David Hutchison	9335 1594
Kristy Bizzaca	9332 7664
Jean Cecil	9335 2352

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 on the numbers indicated.

General meetings of the Society are generally held on the 4th Tuesday of the month. Details of these meetings are 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.



**New Members**

**Langley Smith  
Jennifer Shannon**



**A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

It is both an honour and a pleasure to become your President for the next twelve months. It will be difficult to emulate the achievements of my predecessors, Dianne Davidson and Elaine Berry, but I take heart that they will be at hand for advice and guidance and that I will be working with a Committee which is a promising blend of experience and enthusiasm.

Two positions on the Committee were not filled at the AGM and we would be very happy to hear from members who may be interested so that they can be co-opted on to the team. We would be particularly pleased to find someone to be our Social Coordinator with responsibility for the supper arrangements at our monthly General Meetings and for working with the Committee to organise our Winter Pub Lunch and Christmas Gathering. At the moment the task is shared by members of the Committee but it would be better to have someone who saw this as a particular area of interest and responsibility, perhaps in tandem with another person so that attendance at

Committee and General Meetings could be shared if necessary.

At its next few meetings the Committee will be discussing the programme for our General Meetings in 2001 and any ideas you may have about the nature and form these should take will be welcome. It has been suggested we hold some meetings during the day, particularly during the winter months, and your views on that issue would also be helpful.

As mentioned by Elaine in her President's Report for the past year, the Committee has been looking at ways of extending the scope of the Society's activities and a positive start in that direction is being made with arrangements for interested members to participate in the Fremantle City Council's survey of its heritage buildings (for more information on this see announcement on the back page). The Society is also applying to the Lotteries Local History Pilot Project for a grant to enable Ron Davidson to write a book on the history of the area from South beach to the South Fremantle Power Station, and if that is successful it is hoped there will be an opportunity for members to be involved in some of the interviewing of past and present residents and of people who work or have worked in the district.

Finally, as Phyl Brown mentioned in her Treasurer's Report to the AGM, we should be aware that our income from membership fees fell by a third last year. We need to try and recover that lost ground in the months ahead. The Committee will consider some formal initiatives such as a letter drop, distributing an updated flyer and advertising in the local press, but experience seems to show that the best way to attract new members is by word of mouth. I urge everyone to do what

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they can to tell friends and acquaintances about the Society and its activities. Visitors are always welcome at any of our meetings, and in the first instance it is probably best to invite potential members to come along in that capacity.

I look forward to seeing you at the Davilak on Sunday, 20 August, and to enjoying with you in the year ahead a programme of activities which reflect our common affection for Fremantle and abiding interest in its history.



## COMING EVENTS

### FHS Annual Pub Lunch

This incredibly popular Society event is back again. This year's repast will be at Davilak's at the bottom end of South Terrace. Meet at the pub's restaurant *The Squashed Grape* at **12 noon** on **Sunday 20 August** for pre lunch drinks and a tour and talk of the premises. Lunch will be \$15.00 (drinks excluded) but will include a delicious selection of main courses, desert and coffee or tea. As with other years, a lunch not to miss. Put it in your diary now and ring Dianne Davidson to reserve your seat (all bookings by Wednesday 16 August).

### A Life at Sea

Have you ever wondered what life was like aboard the state ships which formed the original supply line to the north-west before the coming of modern road transport? Come to our September general meeting and find out! Captain David Clarke commenced his career at sea in 1946 as Apprentice Deck Officer with the Australian Shipping Board and served as a ship's officer in the Australian coastal and overseas trades before being appointed Master, WA

State Shipping Service in 1963. He will share his experiences with us at the **Maritime Museum Meeting Room in Cliff Street on Tuesday, 26 September, at 7pm.** Yummy refreshments afterwards as usual!

### Fremantle Studies Day

This is one of the most important events in our program; it is designed to stimulate research into the many facets of history which make up Fremantle. At the third Studies Day last year we launched our journal, *Fremantle Studies 1999*, which contained papers delivered at the first and second Studies Days. This was very well received, and is selling well. We believe that this shows that our aim for the Studies Days is being achieved. Hopefully these Days, and the journal containing papers presented at them, will become permanent features of the Society's activities.

Plans for the fourth Studies Day are well in hand. Five very interesting papers will be presented (provisional titles at this stage):

Kristy Bizzaca: *The Heritage Movement in Fremantle*

Jacqui Sherriff: *The Slipways on Victoria Quay*

Geraldine Byrne: *St Patrick's Church: Its Social Structure*

Bruce Bott: *Bateman Family Houses (illustrated)*

Richard Moore: *The Moore Family*

The Studies Day will be held at the **Maritime Museum Meeting Room in Cliff Street on Sunday 29 October.** Registration will begin at **12.30pm**, and the program will run until **5.30pm** with a break for the usual sumptuous afternoon tea we have become accustomed to on such occasions.

**MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR DIARY NOW!**

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## MEETING REPORTS

### Another Assault on the Asylum

Our May meeting at the Fremantle Arts Centre was very well attended, with a number of visitors coming along to hear Rob Campbell speak about his experience of restoring the old Fremantle Lunatic Asylum in the early 1970s. Rob presented some fascinating illustrations showing the building before restoration began and the various stages involved during work in progress, and highlighted the difficulties of working on the restoration at a time when relatively little information was available about the original buildings.

The talk was followed by a lively discussion about the early days of heritage restoration in Fremantle - many thanks to Rob for sharing his memories and his expertise with us.

Thanks also to the Fremantle Social History Museum for providing the venue for the talk and generous refreshments afterwards.

### Wend Your Way Through Notre Dame

The weather was almost as bad for the June visit to Notre Dame as it was for our visit in 1998. It pelted with rain; then there was a heavy fog. All of which meant that many of our members missed out on an excellent evening once again. There were several highlights at this meeting, but two deserve special note.

One was a walk through the old Navy drill hall which has now been refurbished - a vast asbestos shed has become a corrugated metal one. But a very special one. It has a very fine

interior which will be used for large functions held by the university. A feature of the refurbishment is a series of photographs taken in the days when the drill hall was used by the Royal Australian Navy for general training. The photographs were provided by Len Vickridge who experienced the building as a training establishment in the forties. Len also advised on the changes which were made.

At the end of walk the Manager of Campus Services for Notre Dame University, Terry Craig, led the hardy participants to a huge feast of sandwiches, finger food, red and white wines and much much more. Thank you Terry!

We would like to come again but next time we'll avoid a winter date.

### Mock Trial and AGM

For those of you who weren't there, you really missed out on a good night. Peter Dent from the Francis Burt Law Education was Director of a mock trial of the famous Fremantle duel between William Nairn Clark and George French Johnson. The duel took place on 17 August 1832 in the grounds of Richmond House, Fremantle. Richmond House was the home of William Temple Graham and was just to the left of the southern approach to the Old Fremantle Traffic Bridge. Unfortunately Clark's bullet hit the spot and Johnson was killed.

Members of the Society took the various roles. Of particular note was new member Kenneth A Birt as the Judge Once in costume, also provided by Peter, and ensconced in the Judge's chair, he was just the part.

Although there was a set script for the trial, the jury was left to make its own

decision on whether Clark was guilty or not. Despite the spirited closing address by the Crown Prosecutor, the jury found Clark not guilty. Peter informed us that the original jury had done the same. Even though Clark did kill Johnson it was within the rules and regulations of duels which were still legal in the British Empire at this time.

Duelling was a means of settling disputes and took the form of a prearranged combat or fight to the death according to a set of rules.

The two people fighting the duel were entitled to bring along several friends to ensure a fair fight. Ordinarily, duels were fought with swords or daggers. IN the mid 1700s pistols were introduced. The fight would begin with the two combatants firing at each other while riding toward each other on horseback. They would then finish the fight on the ground using swords and daggers! By the 1770s only pistols were used. The fight began with a signal, often the dropping of a handkerchief.

By 1845 duelling had become illegal in the British Empire.

The Society's AGM followed the trial. Elaine Berry did not stand for re-election as President and the incoming president, Bob Woollet thanked her most sincerely for her hard work and commitment to the Society over her two years in this office. Bob will be ably assisted by Alison Gregg who takes over as Vice President. Alan Kelsall has taken over from Phyl Brown as treasurer, no simple task in this the first year of the GST. Phyl will be on long service leave for several months but we are hoping to coax her back on to the committee when she is back in circulation.

Lots of the old faces remain on the committee. One new face is Jean Cecil who was persuaded to stand for the committee at the AGM. We thank her for her commitment. (see committee profile)

Although the election is over there are still spaces on our committee and new blood is always welcomed. If you would like to join our merry group we would love to have you. Please contact either Bob or Alison.



### **Moondyne Joe "Escapologist"**

Accused of stealing several cheeses, three loaves of bread, two pieces of bacon, part of a shoulder of mutton and a piece of suet, Joseph Bolitho Johns was sentenced to 10 years transportation in 1848. It was over four years, however, before Joe actually made it to the shores of the Swan River Colony and as was typical he was quickly granted a ticket-of-leave.

In 1855 he was freed and conditionally pardoned, he worked at various tasks, including stock trapping near Moondyne Springs in the Toodyay District, managing to avoid trouble during this time. He constructed himself a camp in the district and it was from this that he got the name Moondyne Joe.

In 1861 he was arrested for horse stealing, but made his very first escape from legal custody before the authorities had even had a chance to put him on trial. Irritating the authorities further, he escaped on the horse he was accused of stealing using the local magistrate's brand new saddle and bridle.

Joe was eventually released into the community again, but in 1865 came the Ox Bright Incident, and he got 10 years for stealing, killing, and eating an ox (a

case based on circumstantial evidence). This sentence was later reduced to 6 years.

Over the next several years Joe escaped and was recaptured a number of times. Possibly his most famous escape was through the Prison wall. After breaking rocks and making a pile big enough to hide him from his unobservant guard, Joe cut a hole in the wall and made his escape. It was two years before he was caught - in the cellar of Houghton's Winery!

In 1871 Joe was released, a free man, on condition that he start a new life in the Vasse district. Two years later he was issued with a certificate of freedom.

His career as an escapologist faded after this, even though he lived another 29 years, during which he was in and out of trouble with the authorities for various minor offences. But fate reserved one final bizarre twist for the end of his saga. On 26 January in 1900, when he was well into his 70s, Joe was found wandering the streets of South Perth and taken into custody "being of unsound mind". At the Court of Petty Sessions the next day, he was ordered to the Mount Eliza Invalid Depot, Perth, for medical attention.

The irony was that during the 1860s, Joe had escaped from the very same buildings that then served as a convict depot. This time he "escaped" three times, possibly not realising in his confused state, that the site now no longer served its original purpose.

On 6 March 1900 he was sentenced to one month in Fremantle Prison, without hard labour, for absconding from legal custody. He died some five months later at Fremantle Lunatic Asylum, making his last great escape on 13<sup>th</sup> August. He

lies buried in a pauper's grave that can still be seen at Fremantle Cemetery.

To commemorate Joe's *last great escape*, the Fremantle Prison, in conjunction with the Francis Burt Law Education Centre is putting on an evening of entertainment - see attached flyer.

For those of you who missed our mock trial, here is a chance not to be missed. Seating is limited so send your details and a cheque made out to CAMS to Marg Laccos, Fremantle Prison, The Terrace, Fremantle 6160 as soon as possible.

## REFERENCES

*The Civil Service Journal*, July 20, 1929, p. 76  
Elliot, Ian. *Moondyne Joe: the Man and the Myth*, Chapters 11-14. Perth: University of Western Australia Press, 1978



## Committee Members

Over the past 12 months our committee acquired two new members - David Hutchison and Kristy Bizzaca. We were also fortunate to have Jean Cecil agree to join us at the AGM. Brief biographies of these new committee members follow:

### *Kristy Bizzaca*

Kristy completed an Honours degree in History in 1995 and a Master of Arts Degree in Public History in 1997 at Murdoch University. Since this time, she has been working as an historian and consultant in the State's heritage industry. Some of the projects that she has worked on in Fremantle have included workers' cottages in the Fremantle area, the Fremantle Passenger Terminal and Monument Hill. Kristy will be talking about her Masters thesis which was on the Fremantle

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heritage movement at the next Fremantle Studies Day in October 2000.

### **David Hutchison**

David has degrees in Engineering and Arts, has taught physics and been an adult educator. In 1970 he became the first Curator of History at the WA Museum, and is an Inaugural Honorary Fellow of the National Museum of Australia. He retired in 1985 to work as a museologist and heritage consultant. He has published widely, including a guide to Fremantle, a book about the Benedictines of New Norcia, articles, essays, poetry and short stories - his own and translations from Modern Greek - as well as botanical illustrations. He is interested in Fremantle's heritage, both built and social, and takes an active part in Fremantle community affairs.

### **Jean Cecil**

Jean was born in Fremantle quite some years ago. Her family left Fremantle when she was about three years old. Four years ago she came back to live in North Fremantle.

She describes herself as 'not a good swimmer' but like most North Fremantle people she sees swimming as a very important part of her summer.

One of Jean's main interests is travel with history and geography in mind. One of her great hopes has always been to see the Euphrates River. She got very close during trips to both Turkey and Syria but is yet to realise her ambition.

Another of Jean's interests is bridge which she sometimes plays with our incoming President.



### **For Your Diary**

**Sunday 20 August, 12.00 mid day - Pub Lunch.** The Society's annual pub lunch is on again. This year's event will be at the historic and colourful Davilak Hotel. Meet at the hotel's restaurant *Squashed Grape* at 396 South Terrace for pre lunch drinks and tour of the hotel before settling down to a sumptuous meal. **RSVP by Wed 16 August** to Dianne on 9430 6096.

**Tuesday 26 September, 7.00 pm - State Shipping.** Captain David Clarke will provide us with anecdotes of his interesting life plying our coastal waters as part of State Shipping. Maritime Museum Meeting Room, Cliff St.

**Sunday 29 October FREMANTLE STUDIES DAY, 12.30 pm.** This has become an important event in the Society's annual calendar and deserves your support. Five interesting papers will be presented on a range of topics. The Studies Day will be held at the Maritime Museum Meeting Room Cliff St, Fremantle. A flyer will be sent out to with a registration form closer to the event, but be sure to mark it in your diary **NOW.**



### **A Bush Poet Looks at Fremantle**

Members might be interested in the following poem written by Michael Davey, a member of the WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners group. Though they hail from England, Mike and his wife Maisie have taken with great enthusiasm to the Australian outback where they spend much of their spare time. Obviously Mike also spends some

of it reflecting on the past and present of Fremantle!

## **Fremantle**

*I imagine the battered prison hulks anchored, full of poor prison folks. These leaky ships that left their port carrying poor wretches under escort. They had filled off Chatham in that smelly river and headed south, their sorry cargo to deliver.*

*Some had stolen a single loaf of bread, many never made it, preferring to be dead. Now I see them marching down The springing gang plank to the ground. Although their tattered rags are clinging some could still be heard a-singing.*

*Fremantle was known as a gentler port of call.*

*Some would stumble, trip and fall. But the whiplash can be heard to the sound of a muttered word, a strangled cry and then a curse, it couldn't really be much worse.*

*But in time some would be freed to sally forth and sow the seed of solid heirs, those trusty men that fought at Gallipoli, and then once again in World War II. Yes, some returned, there were but few.*

*Fremantle would have seen it all from times gone by to the market stall. Its sunny streets and trees now shade those descendants who have stayed. The prison's closed now, its sandstone blocks as obsolete as the prison stocks.*

*Laughter echoes down its halls of shame never again will it be the same. Some must have lived in private hell while others lived in a padded cell.*

*In the chapel's window what can you see?*

*The ghostly head of an Aborigine.*

*Yagan's face, how can that be As it stares forever out to sea. Now is the time for all to reflect for what we sow is what we'll get. Then put it behind you, forget this sorrow look forward to a better tomorrow.*

*A motley bunch that first ship's crew. They helped make Fremantle a legend too.*

*Now tourists come in different boats from other lands, quite different folks. Their sun tanned bodies walk the street past those same old men on the seats.*

© Michael Davey, from his book *Pocket Mike*



## **A call for information**

Joan Tucker from the Kings Park Volunteers Guides has contacted the editors to ask if any of our members may be able to assist them with information for their guides for this year's Wildflower Festival. This year's theme is Uses of Indigenous Plants Past and Present. They are particularly keen to find any references or information about the use of Australian native plants in the colonial era.

If you can help please contact Joan on 9389 8174.



## **Be a Heritage Sleuth!**

For those of you who have wanted to have a more active involvement in history and heritage in Fremantle, now

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is your chance. The Fremantle History Society and the Fremantle Society have decided to assist the City of Fremantle in updating the City's Municipal Inventory of heritage buildings. This involves in the first instance checking the accuracy of information contained in the Council's files.

The buildings involved are largely domestic dwellings, and the procedures will be simple and easy to follow. It is envisaged that sleuths doing the investigating will work in pairs, and as far as possible within their own areas.

An information and training session for people interested will be held in the Fremantle City Council's Meeting Room on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor (access via annexe stair in Kings Square) on **15 August at 5.30pm.**

**SO COME ALONG AND GET INVOLVED!**



#### **FREMANTLE STREETS (continued)**

**NAIRN:** Major William Nairn, original grantee of the land now known as Grass Valley, east of Northam. He belonged to the 46<sup>th</sup> Regiment.

**NEWMAN:** Edward Newman, of the firm of Carter & Co, whose premises were at the corner of William Street, next to Detmold's, was killed in 1872, this street being named in his honour. In 1870 he was member for Fremantle in the first elective Parliament.

**NORFOLK:** See Essex Street.

**ONslow:** Sir Alexander Onslow was appointed Chief Justice in 1883. He retired in 1901, returning to England.

**ORD:** Major General Sir Harry St George Ord, Governor 1877-1880. Ord Street originally ended at Hill Street, but either the name was euphonious or the surroundings so felicitous that the Council in its wisdom decided to annex that portion of Hampton Road from Hill Street to John Street, with a fine distant prospect of the gaol, and re-name it Ord Street. Governor Ord turned the first sod of the Fremantle to Guildford Railway in 1880.

**PAGET:** Dr Owen Paget was Medical Officer for Health, 1912-1915.

**PAKENHAM:** H Pakenham was Third Lieutenant on HMS *Challenger*.

(From K Caldwell, 'Fremantle Street Names', in *WA Historical Society Journal & Proceedings Vol 1 Part IX. 1931. 45-57*)

Its that time of the year again folks. Fees for the Fremantle History Society are now due. The committee has decided to become GST registered so we can conduct business (like sell our Studies Day Journal and apply for grants). This therefore has an effect on your fees. There has not been an increase as such (as there hasn't been from the very beginning of the Society) the small increase merely reflects the GST component.

As a few of you have been rather lax in paying fees we are going to become tough. A number of people will fall off this mailing list for the next newsletter if they have not paid by that time. If you know you are one of them, reach for your cheque book now or you will miss out on further editions of what has become compulsory reading for ANYONE who lives in or loves Fremantle. Forward your cheque with the enclosed form to the address on our mast head.

# Special Event

The Trial of

# MOONDYNE JOE



**STARRING TED BULL** (as the judge)  
& introducing **ROB BOLITHO** (as Moondyne)  
and **DAVID LEASK** (as defence counsel)

- **Venue: Fremantle Prison's CROWN THEATRE**  
The Terrace, Fremantle
- **Date & Time: Sunday August 13, 7.30pm**
- **Admission price \$20, Concession \$15**
- **BOOKINGS ON: 9335 9473 (early booking essential)**

## THE EVENING INCLUDES:

Introductory talk on Moondyne Joe by Ian Elliot  
(Author of Moondyne Joe, the Man and the Myth)

Unveiling of Police Forensic Imaging Unit's:  
**IDENTIKIT PICTURE OF MOONDYNE JOE**

Display of original **CONVICT RELICS**

Free tour of **MOONDYNE JOE'S CELL**

Light supper & refreshments

