



FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY

Established 1994

The Secretary, 24 Fothergill Street,  
FREMANTLE WA 6160Summer Edition  
2002

Editors: Anne Brake, Dianne Davidson



O'Connor, his wife, Susan, and their 7 surviving children  
taken in New Zealand before they came to Western Australia (May 1891)  
Courtesy Battye Library

### The Chief's Anniversary!

One hundred years ago, on 10 March 1902, Charles Yelverton O'Connor rode into the sea at South Beach, put a gun to his head and pulled the trigger. In the few short years that he had been in Western Australia, O'Connor had been responsible for the extension of the state's rail services, the building of the Fremantle Harbour and the construction of the Goldfield's Water Supply Scheme (GWSS), infrastructure that allowed the state to expand and develop and all of which continue to operate today almost unchanged since O'Connor's time.

MEMBERSHIP FEES NOW DUE

As well as these three enormous projects, as Engineer in Chief, O'Connor's hand touched all areas of the state as the public works built all manner of public buildings, services and utilities.

It was however, the strong public criticism of him over the GWSS that was his undoing. The *Sunday Times* was scathing in its editorials against O'Connor, implying and outrightly accusing him of all manner of corruption and deceit. *The position has become impossible* - the first line of his suicide note indicates his state of mind.

Despite the myth that has long been perpetuated that he killed himself because the water failed to arrive, O'Connor knew that the scheme would work - *The Coolgardie scheme is alright and I could finish it if I got a chance and protection from misrepresentation ...*

But possibly the most poignant line of the note is the last - *Put the wingwalls to Helena Weir at once* - his commitment to his work was unquestionable.

To celebrate O'Connor's life in the year of the centenary of his death a number of events have been organised including the Fremantle History Society's March meeting at which Tony Evans, author of *CY O'Connor: his life and his legacy*, will talk about the Chief and his achievements (**see coming events**)

### SUNDAY 10 MARCH

#### LITERARY WALK – 7.30 AM

An early morning Literary Walk will be held along South Beach on the anniversary of O'Connor's death on 10 March 2002 starting at 7.30 am. The walk will feature literary readings about

O'Connor's life from (and by) Tony Evans, author of *CY O'Connor - His Life and Legacy* and Robert Drewe's *The Drowner* amongst other works. Meet at the South Beach Café. This event is free.

#### MEMORIAL SERVICE – 2.30 PM

The C Y O'Connor Memorial Service will be held at St John's, Fremantle. The service is open to the public and will be followed by afternoon tea.

During the service the Governor of Western Australia, Lieutenant General Sanderson; the Hon Kate Doust, representing the Premier, the Hon Dr Geoff Gallop; and the Right Reverend David Murray, representing Archbishop Peter Carnley, will each pay tribute to O'Connor's life and extraordinary achievements.

#### O'CONNOR HERITAGE TRAIL, FREMANTLE – FROM 4.30 PM

A guided tour by tram of significant sites around Fremantle relating to O'Connor's life and his works will leave from the Town hall clock at 4.30 and 5.00pm. The tour will be repeated as part of Heritage Week (1-3 June). A brochure for the trail will also be launched during Heirtgae Week allowing people to do the trail independently.

#### O'CONNOR HERITAGE TRAIL, MUNDARING WEIR – 10.00 AND 11.00 AM

Visit the location of one of O'Connor's greatest projects, Mundaring Weir, and learn more about the significance of this engineering site to the history of WA. Guided tours including the wall, the O'Connor memorial and No 1 Pump Station will leave from No 1 Pump Station (formerly the O'Connor Museum). Bookings essential. Ring 9321 6088.



## OTHER EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

### LECTURE SERIES

The Australian Institute of Engineers (WA), the C Y O'Connor Society and Curtin University of Technology will present a series of lectures focusing on CY O'Connor, his life, his legacy and his work. Final dates and details are still to be confirmed.

### LITERARY EVENING

The State Literary Office, in conjunction with the WA Maritime Museum, will be holding a literary evening featuring Robert Drew, author of *The Drowner* and Tony Evans, author of *CY O'Connor - His life and legacy* and focusing on writing historical fiction and non-fiction, using the C Y O'Connor story as an example. The evening will be held on Tuesday 14 May at the WA Maritime Museum.

### FREMANTLE SAILING CLUB REGATTA

The annual P&O Ports Fremantle Harbour Classic run by the Fremantle Sailing Club will be held on 8 December starting at 1.00 pm (TBC). As a tribute to O'Connor's role in the construction of the harbour this year's event will be part of the CY O'Connor Centenary Celebrations.

### FREMANTLE PORT'S PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION, INCORPORATING CY O'CONNOR'S HARBOUR WORKS

This photographic display will be on show in the foyer of the Fremantle Port Authority's administration building on Victoria Quay. It will be open weekdays between the hours of 8.00 am and 5.00 pm from 8 March – 31 July. In honour of the centenary of O'Connor's death, it will also be open on Sunday 10 March between 1.00 – 4.00 pm.

For further information on any of these events please contact the National Trust of Australia (WA) on 9321 6088.



## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### Executive:

Bob Woollett	9335 7451
(President)	
Alison Gregg	9432 9739
(Vice President)	
Alan Kelsall	9336 4573
(Treasurer)	

### Committee:

Elaine Berry	9336 1906
Anne Brake	(wk) 9212 1116
Beres Coley	(wk) 9335 9473
Kristy Bizzaca	9332 7664
David Hutchison	9335 1594
Jean Cecil	9335 2352
Robert Besford	(wk) 9335 9473

### URGENT APPEAL

The Secretary's position on the committee of the Fremantle History Society has become vacant and needs to be filled URGENTLY.

We appeal to any Society members who are willing to take on this task to come forward. Requirements are the ability to take minutes, deal with correspondence and operate (and own!) an IBM-style computer.

**Any potential volunteers please contact Bob Woollett on 9335 7451.**

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 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.



## COMING EVENTS

### Sundowner at the Monument

Sick and tired of the heat we've been suffering from? Join us for our general meeting on at **6pm on Tuesday 26 February** at Monument Hill, Fremantle.

Historian Kris Bizzaca, who worked on the Conservation Plan for the Monument, will tell us about its origins in the Great War as well as relating the history of the various additions made to commemorate World War II and other more recent conflicts.

Bring a picnic and enjoy the sea breezes for a change!

### O'Connor Odyssey

O'Connor fever has hit and the History Society has been lucky enough to secure Tony Evans, author of *CY O'Connor – His life and his legacy*, to speak at our march meeting. Tony's extensive research for the book has at last amplified O'Connor the man as much as the engineer.

Join us for this entertaining evening at the WA Maritime Museum's Cliff St

meeting room at **7.00 pm on Tuesday 26 March**.

### Rock Up at Rockingham

Our April general meeting will take the form of a visit to the Rockingham Historical Society museum, where we will be given a talk and afternoon tea. Members will also have an opportunity to meet the committee and members of the Rockingham Historical Society and learn more about their activities.

Details of this meeting are still being finalised, so a flyer will be sent out closer to the day.

**Mark Sunday 28 April in your diary for this interesting excursion! And please note that transport will be made available to those who need it (see notice below!)**



### Do You Have Transport Problems?

It has been brought to our attention that some members are reluctant to drive in the evenings, or to go out unaccompanied. If you wish to attend a meeting or a function and you live (roughly!) in the Fremantle area, we can usually arrange to pick you up and deliver you back to your door! Should you wish to avail yourself of this offer, ring Bob Woollett on 9335 7451.



## MEETING REPORTS

### Jingle Bells at St John's

We had a very successful Christmas function at St John's on Tuesday 4 December.

**MEMBERSHIP FEES NOW DUE**

St John's archivist Brian Solossy gave members a very interesting talk on the history of the Church, and he was followed by organist Caroline Sherlock, who related the story of the Church organ, as well as providing an opportunity for those present to indulge in some enthusiastic Christmas carol singing, with a rousing accompaniment by the organ.

It was a festive evening much enjoyed by everyone, and concluded with the usual delicious nibbles provided by the Port Café.



### For Your Diary

**Tuesday 26 February: Sundowner at the Monument:** Come and hear Kris Bizzaca tell us all about the history of the development of the Monuments on Monument Hill – bring a picnic and enjoy the sea breezes! **Assemble 6pm at the Monument.**

**Tuesday 26 March: O'Connor Odyssey:** Tony Evans will help unravel the life of CY O'Connor, a figure long shrouded in myth and legend. **WA Maritime Museum's Cliff St meeting room. At 7.00 pm**

**Sunday 28 April: Rock Up to Rockingham:** Visit to the Rockingham Historical Society museum at Rockingham for a meeting with RHS committee and members, a talk and afternoon tea. Transport provided if necessary. More details closer to the time.



## How Would You Describe the Fremantle Coat of Arms?

Well, this is the official description:



### Blazon

*Arms:* Vert on a Pile reversed throughout barry wavy Argent and Azure an Australian Black Swan naiant proper in chief two Bezants pendent from each a cord nowed and tasselled Or.

*Crest:* Issuant from a Mural Crown proper a demi Sea Lion Gules the tail proper crowned with a Naval Crown and supporting a Trident Or, Mantled Vert doubled Or.

*Supporters:* On either side a Sea Lion Gules the tail proper the dexter gorged with a Mural Crown proper pendent therefrom by a Ring Argent a Round Buckle Or the sinister gorged with a Naval Crown pendent therefrom by a Ring Argent a Round Buckle Or each supporting with the exterior paw an Anchor Azure.

*Motto:* Nec prece nec pretio

AND HERE IS THE  
'INTERPRETATION' – IN ENGLISH,  
THIS TIME!!

*Arms:* The Pile (or wedge-shaped area) coloured silver with wavy blue lines alludes to the position of Fremantle at the mouth of a river. The black swan identifies the river as the Swan River, and at the same time symbolises Fremantle's connection with Western Australia.

The Pile divides the remainder of the shield into two triangular areas, coloured green, which represent an open cape, or mantle. The tasselled cords are not joined, and the result in an heraldic pun, viz a free mantle. Such arms are known in Heraldry as 'canting' (or punning) arms.

*Crest:* The crest is reminiscent of the crest of the Fremantle family, except that the Lion has become a Sea Lion and has exchanged his Flag for a Trident, thus echoing the emblem which Fremantle has used for many years.

*Supporters:* The Sea Lions supporting Anchors symbolise Fremantle's connection with England and its maritime and naval interests. The sinister Sea Lion (ie the right hand one in the reproduction) has a Naval Crown around its neck. Naval Crowns are used in the arms of distinguished sailors and naval towns of consequence. The gold buckles occur in the arms of the Stirling family and so commemorate Sir James Stirling, the first Governor of Western Australia.

Two red Lions occur in the arms of a family by the name of Samson; thus a happy allusion is obtained to the Fremantle family of Samson.

*Motto:* The motto, which is also that of the Fremantle family, is taken from an ancient Roman work on rhetoric. The original reads *Nec prece nec pretio...a recta via deduci*; Neither by entreaty nor by bribery...to be drawn from the right path.

The Arms were designed by Conrad Swan Esquire, PhD, MA, York Herald of Arms



## The Fremantle Railway Station

Anne Brake



Fremantle Railway Station, 01.01.1979  
(Courtesy HCWA web site)

The Fremantle Railway Station, built in 1907 by SB Alexander, was given permanent status on the Western Australian Register of Heritage Places in September 2001. It had been interim listed in 1992. The fine example of Federation Free Classical Style had been classified by the National Trust as early as 1974 and was entered on the register of the National Estate in 1978.

Along with a number of other notable buildings, including Phillimore's Hotel (formerly His Majesty's Hotel), Scottish House (formerly the Adelaide Steamship Co), Phillimore Chambers, Dock Buildings, P&O Buildings and Customs House, the Railway Station makes a *positive contribution to the*

early 20<sup>th</sup> century streetscape of *Phillimore Street* and from there to the West End. The imposing nature of these buildings is a reminder of the historical importance of Fremantle as Western Australia's principal 20<sup>th</sup> century port town and was one of several important buildings constructed in Fremantle in the early 1900s as Fremantle began to grow following the development of the harbour.

It is strongly associated with the port and maritime activities of Fremantle and provided a link to Perth. It was also the site of the State Rail Workshops until 1904 when they moved to Midland. Many of the railway workers continued to live in Fremantle and took the train to their new place of work each day.

Although there has been some modernisation, the building and its original detailing remain largely intact. These include the large (and rare) train-hall roof of steel lattice work surmounted by a lantern and skylights, the generous entrance hall with imposing arched windows and particularly finely detailed wrought iron gates.

**(Information from the Register of Heritage Places, Heritage Council of Western Australia, 0974, Fremantle Railway Station, [www.heritage.wa.gov.au](http://www.heritage.wa.gov.au))**



### **Fremantle Streets** (conclusion)

**SOLOMON:** Elias Solomon, who was a merchant in the town, built a house in this street, where he lived. He was a Town Councillor and MLA of the Colony, and also first member for

Fremantle in the Federal House of Representatives. He was Mayor in 1889-1891.

**SOUTH:** South Street formed the southern boundary of the original townsite, beyond which was the suburban area. South Lane was originally portion of Carnac Street. South Mole is self-explanatory. South Terrace takes its name from its direction. Practically all the land on the east of South Terrace, from Henderson Street to Little Howard Street, was Crown property, forming the western boundary of the convict area.

When Presbyterianism was established in Fremantle in 1886, the Church was given a grant at the corner of Norfolk Street, together with 18 acres of glebe land at Bibra Lake, and a manse grant at the Alma Street corner. A warder's cottage was demolished to allow for the building of the Scots' Church in 1890, and the windows from the cottage were placed in a Mission Hall, used as a Government School, at Bibra Lake. This hall was afterwards blown down in a cyclone. The teacher of this school, a Mr Warthwyke, was a finished musician, and he went to infinite pains to train the few children to sing. When the Rev R Hanlin was going on a trip to Scotland in 1892, they invited him out there, and he said it was then he first heard sung *God be with you till we meet again*, it being new to Australia at the time. He had a great affection for the school, and one year decided to holiday with his family in the district. To obtain milk for the children he used to set out every morning on horseback to the other side of the lake, with a bottle slung at his side, after the fashion of John Gilpin. The dairyman thought this was too arduous, so suggested he should

take the cow across, as long as he took the calf with her. This was done, and the milking proved a source of joy to all the onlookers, as the calf much resented the milkmaid's interference, and there was a tussle every morning as to who would be served first.

STEPHEN: John Stephen Hampton, Governor (see Hampton Road).

STOKES: Name of the original owners, who conducted a dairy here.

SUFFOLK: See Essex.

SWANBOURNE: Name of the family home of the Fremantle family. One of the members was raised to the peerage as Lord Cottesloe.

TAYLOR: Richard Taylor was for a long period an officer of the Council.

THOMAS: Captain John Thomas was the owner of the land and one of the pioneers of 1829.

TUCKFIELD: R Tuckfield Goldsworthy, Colonial Secretary under Governor Broome in the 80s. Goldworthy Road, Claremont, is named after him.

VICTORIA: The first wharf in the river, named the South Quay, was opened on December 23, 1896. The name was afterwards altered to Victoria Quay to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of the Queen in 1897. Victoria Quay Road was opened at a much later date, and runs alongside the quay.

WATKINS: Archdeacon D Glyn Watkins, of St John's Church, 1875-

1905. This street formed portion of the Church Lands Estate.

WILKINSON: Cr Wilkinson, Councillor and Town Treasurer, 1916-1923.

WILLIAM: King William IV.

WOOD: Barrington Wood was first Mayor of Fremantle, 1883-1885.

WRAY: W E Wray of the Fremantle Tramways Board was Mayor 1915-1918.

WRIGHT: This is the name of one of the early pioneers of 1829.

YILGARN: Named after the goldfield.

YORK: This street formed part of the Duke of York Estate (see Central and Fifth Avenues).

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



### PLEASE UPDATE YOUR MEMBERSHIP

We have been auditing our membership records. If there is a red dot on your newsletter, it means you are currently unfinancial.

A membership form is attached to this newsletter. If you wish to continue to be a member please fill it in and return it to the Secretary, 24 Fothergill Street, Fremantle, as soon as possible.