

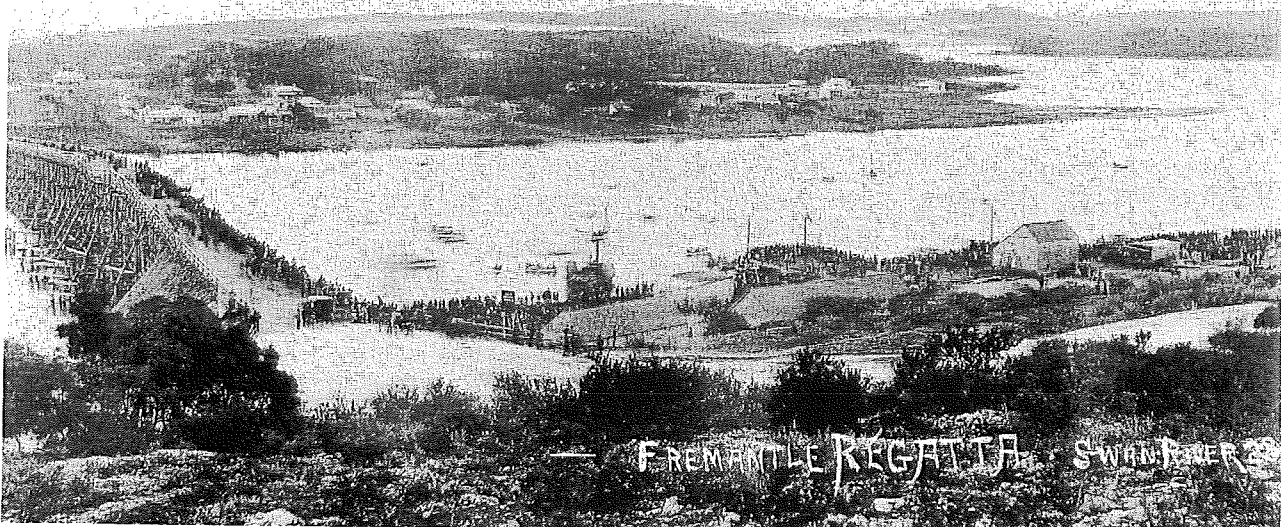


FREMANTLE HISTORY SOCIETY

Established 1994

The Secretary, PO Box 1305,
FREMANTLE WA 6959Summer Edition
2004

Editors: Ron Davidson, Anne Brake



Fremantle Regatta, 1888

Courtesy Fremantle Local History Collection
(and featured in *Old Fremantle* calendar)

FREMANTLE/FREEMANTLE REVISITED

Bob Woollett

A phone call from a resident of Port Hedland recently prompted a visit to the Local History Collection to research the correct spelling of the name of the port city. On a visit to Mundabullariana Station some 20km west of Port Hedland, the caller had come across a cast iron stove bearing the inscription 'King of the West. William Sandover, Freemantle, 1885' and wondered if this spelling was correct at the time. I knew there was some controversy about the correct pronunciation of the name, but was unaware that there was ever an issue with the spelling.

However, according to the information in the Local History Collection's file No 910.104, entitled 'Origin of Places/Names', there has been considerable controversy on the matter over the years, and many examples of both versions exist, some in official publications. But it seems that there is ultimately no doubt that the single 'e' is correct, as that is how the family of Captain Charles Howe Fremantle, after whom the place was named, have always spelled it. This was confirmed by David Fremantle, a senior living member of the family, in a letter to Ruth Marchant James in September 1983, which was reported in the local press. He praised Australia for spelling it correctly, but the pronunciation was a

different matter and he pointed out that the family had always said Freemantle with equal stress on the first two syllables and rather less on the last.

The confusion about both the spelling and pronunciation may well have arisen from the fact that Freemantle with a double 'e' is an ecclesiastical district near Southampton in Hampshire and a number of families in south east England spell their name that way. It appears that both versions of the name have their origin in France and are anglicised forms of Fremontelle. The pronunciation of Freemantle with a double 'e' is obvious, but when it is spelt with a single 'e' it is perhaps logical to assume, as Major W F Sampson did in a letter to the *West Australian* in January 1953, that it was a short 'e' which is what happens in a word like 'frenetic'. But, however we pronounce the word, it is surely preferable to the increasingly popular abbreviation 'Freo' which seems to be regrettably moving beyond its colloquial origins and is now too frequently found in newspapers and other forms of writing.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Executive:

Bob Woollett (President)	9335 7451
Kristy Bizzaca (Vice President)	9361 9915
Beres Coley (Treasurer)	9335 9473
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
Lisa Williams (wk)	9430 7966
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

WANDER AROUND WOODMAN'S POINT

We start the year's meetings doing what comes naturally in this part of the world – enjoying the great outdoors. Join us on a visit to Woodman's Point. Tony Edleston, a CALM staff member, will give us a talk on and tour of the site including the former Quarantine Station Buildings. This will be followed by a BYO picnic – BBQ facilities are available.

How to get there: drive south along Cockburn Road past the Woodman Point Caravan Park. Turn right into O'Kane Court and drive approximately 500m to the gate to Woodman Point Recreation Camp. We will meet at the gate.

Tuesday 24 February, 6pm

MANY YEARS A THIEF

A talk by committee member and long time researcher and promoter of Fremantle history, David Hutchison titled 'Many Years a Thief: the story of John Gavin'. The meeting will be held at the **Education Centre, Maritime Museum, Cliff Street** on **Tuesday 23 March at 7pm.**

LEIGHTON BATTERY VISIT

Visit Leighton Battery, Mosman Park and hear a talk by a member of the Artillery History Society with an exclusive tour of the site. Meet in the **car park off Boundary Road**, which leads off Stirling Highway near

the Wellington Street junction. A charge of **\$7 a head** will apply – pay on the day.
Sunday, 18 April, 10am.

Note: For the visits to Woodman Point and Leighton Battery it may be possible to arrange a lift for those without transport. If you would like a lift or are willing to offer one, please contact Bob Woollett on 9335 7451.



MEETING REPORTS

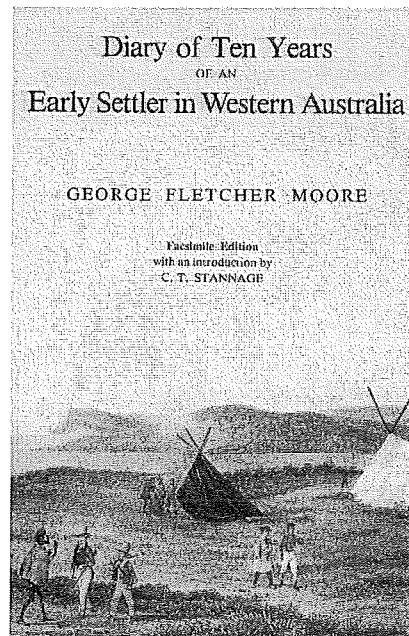
CHRISTMAS CAPERS

Some forty members and friends gathered at the Fremantle Tennis Club in Parry Street on the evening of Tuesday 2 December for the Society's early celebration of Christmas. After a welcoming glass of champagne, we were entertained by an informative talk from our Vice President, Kristy Bizzaca, on the history of Fremantle Park, and then invited to partake of a sumptuous barbecue – sizzling sausages and delicious salads followed by strawberries and ice cream. The President's challenging Christmas quiz produced a mixture of anguish and merriment, and this was followed by a programme of readings, also organised by our President, by members and friends, centred on the theme of Christmas and ranging from excerpts from the works of Charles Dickens, though a selection of poems by Walter De La Mare, Clement Clark Moore and Banjo Paterson, to extracts from the diaries of George Fletcher Moore describing how the early settlers in WA celebrated the event.

Here are some examples from George Fletcher Moore's *Diary of Ten Years of an Early Settler in Western Australia* that has been described by Tom Stannage as 'an immensely valuable social document'. Moore was a lawyer, poet, explorer, farmer and, after his arrival in Fremantle in 1830, a recorder of Aboriginal languages. Two examples of his wide-ranging observations of early Christmases in the Swan River Colony follow:

December 25, 1830

'About Fremantle, where I am now sitting, in my tent, the land is mere sand; but we must not judge this by similar-looking places at home, for all the vegetables flourish on it and cattle thrive on the herbage, scanty though it is.



Cover of George Fletcher Moore's classic *Diary of ten years of an early Settler of WA*.

'Until you have gone above Perth, the ground is of the same nature: it changes to alluvial flats, and the higher ground consists of sandy loam of different qualities. Brick and pottery clay is abundant, and they are making bricks in many places, which will soon supersede wood as a material for building. I saw a wooden house burn down some nights ago and have therefore a dread of one - a mud edifice for me. The great mistake made by settlers has been bringing too many articles of machinery and implements which are not necessary, or suited to the soil. Some ploughs, cars (sic), saws and mill machinery are lying even yet on the beach.

'If I were coming again, I should content myself with grubbing hoes, felling axes (mine are too long and narrow), spades, some kitchen utensils, plenty of provisions, and a hammock.'

Next year the Christmas comments are more festive.

'Christmas-day; this morning I received a letter from Mr *** saying that another mail had been discovered on board the vessel from Sydney, and I got no less than seven other letters and twenty-seven newspapers. This is a Christmas box indeed, and a Christmas trick too, or rather a frequent and inexcusable one, to keep back the mail until the cargo is disposed of, lest something might appear to spoil the market. I am quite bewildered to know which letter I shall attend to first...

'After service, I went to Mr F's to eat Christmas dinner; there were Mr and Mrs Shaw, Mr E, Messrs Burgess, and your humble servant. I have heard the *Jolly Rambler* has also arrived from Sydney - there may be more news for me - what a glutton I am becoming.'

A more contemporary note was introduced in a report by the Chairman of the North Pole Company, defending its policy to downsize and in particular its decision to reduce the wasteful number of creatures involved in the Twelve Days of Christmas Department. Our thanks to the 'volunteer' readers who delivered their pieces so expressively, to Ken Hopkins and brother Geoff for their sterling work as chefs, to Geoff Higham for his dapper management at the bar, and especially to Social Coordinator Judy Cecil for her acquisition of the barbeque ingredients and together with her friend Tseu Lin for the decoration of the tables and preparation of the salads.



FROM THE LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION

Loretta O'Reilly

After a very welcome Christmas break we are now back to work!

In December, the Kwoborup Group of about ten elderly indigenous people attended the LHC. They listened to a talk given by staff and interviewers explaining to them the aims of a programme developed to train Aborigine youth on how to interview and

record the story of these senior members of their society. Emphasis was put on the need for 'their' story to be told as a further aid to understanding and the reconciliation process. The idea of Aborigines interviewing their own people has proved to be very successful and we now have several interviews in our collection. This is a unique programme between the Walyalup Reconciliation Group and the Fremantle Library. The result was a fascinating morning of stories and reminisces as the group talked freely about their experiences as part of the stolen generation. Some told of the difficulties they experienced in trying to get access to their original papers resulting in their long lasting struggle to find out who their parents were and to which family group they belonged.

The training was carried out in Local History by Marnie Richardson who had been involved in the 'Bringing them Home' programme. The training and interviewing came about through the auspices of a grant of \$3,300 given to the group by the Department of Indigenous Affairs. Two girls, Turid Calgaret and Cally Wachla, were chosen to conduct the interviews and they have since interviewed several people resulting in many tapes now deposited in our collection. This is aimed at redressing the balance of our Oral History programme (we had over 400 interviews and only two from local Aborigines)

To fulfil the dictates of the Disaster Plan prepared for the Local History Section of the Library, the staff has been busy packing and preparing the master archival copies of all their material for off-site storage. This entailed the playing through of all the 760 tapes (at normal playing speed!) to prevent the 'bleeding' of the tapes from one side to the other, and various other checking, packaging and labelling chores. The idea of off-site storage is that should a disaster occur there would always be the certainty that material could be copied and reinstated into the collection.

There are several large research projects on Fremantle which are now currently being researched in the Local History section.

Local History has always welcomed volunteers to assist us in the many tasks required for the smooth running of our section. Now that the Volunteers Centre has been officially established we ask future volunteers to register with the centre and then they will contact us. This is a guarantee for the volunteers and the organisation both that everyone's welfare is ensured.



ADVANCE NOTICE

The Historical Records Rescue Consortium (HRRC) is pleased to advise that we have received a small grant from Lotterywest. The grant has enabled the HRRC to engage consultants, Rona Chadwick and Tricia Szirom of Success Works, to assist them to garner broad based support and develop a comprehensive application to Lotterywest to fund a major preservation project.

The major project will aim to:

- target and preserve at risk materials in the Battye Library; and
- facilitate greater access to the preserved records to the wider community.

The application to Lotterywest must be finalised and submitted by 1 June 2004. However, success is not assured. The application for funding will only be successful if the HRRC can demonstrate broad community input, involvement and support. This is where your assistance is greatly needed.

There will be opportunities for you and community members to comment on and provide advice and support that will strengthen the HRRC application for funding. Your contributions will ensure that, if successful, the final project will achieve its aims. Over the next few weeks, the

consultants and HRRC will be developing a process of community engagement and publicity that will include among other things:

- Developing an online questionnaire and supporting material. This will be up by the end of February (go to successworks.com.au and follow the links)
- Having a pool of speakers available from March 2004 to come and speak to groups about the proposed project.

Further details will be circulated as they become available.

This is a very exciting project and we hope that you will be involved.

Ed's note: This is welcome news following Ronda Jameison's presentation at our Fremantle Studies Day last year. Many of those who attended were disturbed by her report and we are sure will be keen to assist in appropriate ways. We will keep you up to date through the newsletter.

For those who would like further information contact out Vice President Kris Bizzaca.



FREMANTLE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

Bob Woollett

Along with its neighbour the Fremantle Bowling Club, the Fremantle Lawn Tennis Club, whose premises were the venue of our 2003 Christmas festivities, is among the oldest sporting clubs in Fremantle. The present Clubhouse itself (facing Parry Street) is not old, having been built in 1970 and replacing a landmark wooden pavilion which stood on the western side of the Bowling Club for many years and which many FHS members might well remember.

The Club grew out of the St John's Tennis Club which used to play at the turn of the 20th century in the grounds of the Rectory in Cantonment Street. It was officially formed on 10 October 1921 at a meeting in the

Cabin Tea Rooms in High Street, and its base moved to the present site in Fremantle Park where six grass courts were constructed. H D Beard became its first President and Charles Hudson, described by the *Western Mail* as 'the leading spirit in Fremantle' was its first secretary. Hudson was also instrumental in forming the Fremantle Tennis Association which arranged a competition between local clubs in the area from that time until well into the 1950s.

From the outset the Club was a keen and successful participant in the various divisions of the WA Lawn Tennis Association's Shield Competition, but its heyday was probably in the late 1970s and early 1980s when, with the help of such players as Chris Johnstone, Roger Grant and Rob Casey, it twice won the Men's A Grade Shield and with the support of Christine Dorey (nee Mattison) and Denise Shevlin (nee Cole) won the Ladies' A Grade Shield on no less than eleven occasions. A highlight of the Club's calendar for many years was the City of Fremantle Open Championships which next to the WA Open probably became the State's most prestigious tennis tournament, attracting players from interstate and overseas, including Frank Sedgman, Peter McNamara, Darren Cahill (now coach of Andre Agassi) and, in 1991, the members of the Belgian Davis Cup team.



FREMANTLE AS A STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Ron Davidson

Fremantle as a stream of consciousness was the title of my talk at the Edith Cowan University's Landscape Institute conference **on the beach** which, as the name suggests, centred on early days in Fremantle. The conference was multidisciplinary and wide-ranging with an emphasis on literature and the Fremantle environment, and my talk owed a lot to our History Society's Studies Day.

It was the 1999 Studies Day at Fremantle Prison and members may remember that one of the speakers fell ill at the last minute. I filled in with a paper which was an unadorned string of verbal snapshots of Fremantle places and people. It seemed to work and was later published in *Fremantle Studies, Vol 2*.

The conference paper described how the technique, with visual images added, has been used to produce a book which hopefully captures Fremantle essence. Fremantle Arts Centre Press have scheduled the book for publication.



CALL FOR MORE WEST END VOICES

The Fremantle History Project, *Voices of the West End*, has put out a call for 'your stories'. The project will be lead by distinguished historian and the Chancellor of Murdoch University, Geoffrey Bolton, who heads an interdisciplinary team of ten academics from four universities as well as a partner investigator from the WA Maritime Museum. Each of the investigators brings a special perspective to the project.

The project is backed by a substantial grant from the Australian Research Grants Council as well as community groups like the Fremantle History Society, Fremantle Society, Fremantle Wesley Methodist Mission and the Basilica of St Patrick.

The aim of the project is to assemble and interweave the past and present voices of up to 96 different nationalities in the port city. A central component of the project is the production of a quality interactive documentary designed to give viewers a 'virtual tour' of the West End and its past, as told by members of the Fremantle community.

Those with stories to tell can use an e mail form on the project's web page at <http://www.scase.murdoch.edu.au> or contact Associate Director, Jill Soderstrom, at Murdoch University on 9360 7494.



Many of the Fremantle History Project's *Voices of the West End* will come from the members of the old Fremantle Lumpers Union and its successors. Here lumpers (wharfies), complete with coats and hats, wait on the cross-harbour ferries to get to their ships. The photograph, from the Fremantle Local History Collection, is one of those used by John Dowson in his large-format book *On Fremantle*, which was a big seller in bookshops over Christmas. The book is to be reprinted.



FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 24 February, 6pm: Visit to Woodman's Point. BYO picnic – BBQ facilities are available. Drive south along Cockburn Road past the Woodman Point Caravan Park. Turn right into O'Kane Court and drive approximately 500m to the gate to Woodman Point Recreation Camp. We will meet at the gate.

Tuesday 23 March, 7pm: Many Years a Thief: the story of John Gavin'. **Education Centre, Maritime Museum, Cliff Street.**

Sunday, 18 April, 10am: Visit to Leighton Battery, Mosman Park Meet in the **car park off Boundary Road**, which leads off Stirling Highway near the Wellington Street junction. A charge of **\$7 a head** will apply – pay on the day.



YEAR OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The built environment means buildings, places and structures in which we live, work and play.

The Western Australian Government has proclaimed 2004 as the Year of the Built Environment.

This Western Australian initiative has gained the support of the Federal Government to make the Year an Australia-wide event.

It's about the environment that has been created, modified, constructed, developed, arranged or maintained by humans - that's domestic and public buildings, infrastructure, landscaping, and other man-made features of our communities.

The aim is to encourage Western Australians to understand how the quality of our built environment makes a vital contribution to lifestyle and well-being.

The Year is one for all Western Australians to appreciate the structures that create our built environment and to focus on the future and what we want in our buildings to create the kind of environment we want for ourselves, our children and future generations.

Patron of the year's celebrations and activities is the Governor of Western Australia, His Excellency Lieutenant General John Sanderson.

Housing and Works Minister Nick Griffiths is the Minister responsible for the Year. Nick Griffiths has appointed a State steering committee chaired by Mr Warren Kerr, the chair of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects WA Chapter.

This State steering committee will plan the celebrations and encourage community, industry and Government involvement.

Over the coming year, we will keep you informed of the various aspects of Fremantle's built environment. This will usually focus on historic places and related activities, but other issues may also arise.

Fremantle will be participating in the events of the year by hosting the following:

International Cities and Town Centres conference

In August 2002 the City of Fremantle successfully bid for the rights to host the 2004 International Cities and Town Centres conference (ICTC). This conference is held every two years and covers areas such as town centre re-vitalisation, urban design and economic development. It attracts Elected Members, Local Government officers and a variety of other interested parties from throughout Australia and New Zealand with a small number coming from further afield.

This is an ideal opportunity to showcase what is happening in Fremantle to a wider audience. The conference will be held from the 5th to 7th May 2004 and is expected to attract approximately 350 delegates.

For further information on the year of the Built Environment go to their web site at www.builtenvironment2004.wa.gov

Over the year the newsletter will feature extracts from the signs that have been going up all around the port city. But firstly, an explanation of what is out there.

CITY OF FREMANTLE'S PUBLIC SIGNAGE PROJECT

The City Of Fremantle is progressively implementing a system of public signage around the city. The signage program was developed to give visitors to the city a readily accessible system of wayfinding as pedestrians, as well as additional information to enhance their understanding and appreciation of the city. The sign panels have been specially designed for Fremantle and can be mounted on existing

streetlight poles where space is limited in the city's often narrow footpaths.

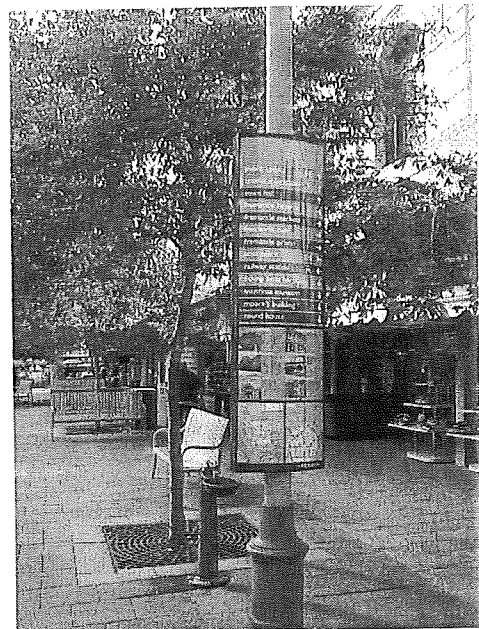
The signage system provides 3 types of information:

Directional - providing the fundamental directional information for pedestrians - High Street Mall, Markets, Public Toilets, etc.

Informative - providing an increased level of information regarding places of interest and location maps. The maps are presented at two scales to show the city region and the area within general walking distance around the sign.

Interpretive - providing a greater depth of understanding for a particular site. Historical photos illustrate how the view from each site has changed over time, and associated text provides facts and items of interest to enhance the story told by each series of photos.

To date, 19 sign panels have been installed at key locations around the central city. The next stage of the project involves expanding the system to include the major parks and reserves throughout the broader municipality.



The following are just the text from a several of the signs you will find along High St - photographs are not included. You are encouraged next time you are in the city to go and investigate the signs for yourself.

**location: High Street / Kings Square
facing west**

photo: High Street 1916-1928

All buildings in this photo remain in what is now the High Street Mall. The Atwell Buildings (to the right) were built 1893-1912 and the arcade was constructed in 1929. The Manning Chambers (to the left) were built in 1906 and replaced single storeyed shops. The Majestic Picture Theatre (now the Manning Arcade) was built in 1916.

This section of High Street was closed to traffic in December 1973 on a trial basis and permanently closed in January 1975. In 1976 it was paved with Donnybrook flagstones recycled from the AMP building in St Georges Terrace, Perth. Since then the mall has been repaved and refurbished in 1981 and again in 1999.

**location: High Street / Kings Square
facing east**

1833 map

The first St John's Church was built in the centre of King's Square in 1843. It was demolished in 1882 to make way for the extension of High Street through the middle of the square and the construction of the Town Hall. The site of this first church is marked out in cobblestones between the present church (built 1879-82) and the Town Hall.

Photo: Fremantle Town Hall c1888

The Town Hall was opened in June 1887. Designed by architects Grainger and D'Ebro and constructed by Edward V. Keane, it contrasted sharply with its much smaller scale surroundings. The opening ceremony was followed by a day of sport and a grand ball in the evening. A children's fancy dress ball held the following evening was marred by tragedy. During the night Councillor Snook, Mr Gliddon (Town Supervisor) and Mr Solomon refused entry to a group of unruly men, one of whom was William Conroy, the licensee of the National Hotel.

Conroy later returned and shot Councillor Snook who died several months later. Conroy was tried and had the tragic distinction of being the last man to be hanged at the old Perth Gaol.

photo: Town Hall c1920, photographer Arthur Saxon

The shops in High St beyond the Town Hall, known as "Central Buildings", were demolished to make way for the Council's Exhibition Hall (now a cafe, children's library and currency exchange on the ground floor) opened in 1966.

On the right are Manning Chambers (1906) featuring Samuels (tailors) and the Grand Shoe Arcade (which remained in business until 1991 when it closed as Ezywalkin).

photo: Town Hall 1970

The fountain, designed by artist Howard Taylor, was built in 1966 when this section of High Street was closed to traffic. The fountain was removed in 1984. During 1985-86 a Federal Government grant enabled the restoration and renovation of the Town Hall (including the original colour combinations and stencilling inside the hall) and the upgrading of King's Square. Further restoration in 1995 included the repainting of the facade in original colours and the replacement of missing decorative urns on the parapet.

photo: Lumpers Union meeting May 1919

Over the years the Town Hall has been the venue for many civic, cultural and political events. This union meeting was held after the "Bloody Sunday" conflict on the wharf on 4 May 1919. The conflict was sparked by the employment of non-union labour by ship owners to unload the "Dimboola" before it had been properly quarantined for the spanish flu. Thomas Charles Edwards died from injuries received during the conflict.

photo: Proclamation of the City of Fremantle, 1929

Performed by His Excellency the Governor Sir William Campion on 3 June 1929.

Despite unfavourable weather a large crowd gathered to watch proceedings.

To the left is High St and the grounds of St John's Church. The post and chain fence replaced a tall iron picket fence when the grounds were opened to the public in the early 1920s. Most of the Moreton Bay fig trees were planted around the church in the 1890s.

location: High Street / Roundhouse facing west

photo: The Roundhouse

The oldest remaining building in Western Australia. Designed by HW Reveley, the colony's first civil engineer, and built in 1830-31. The Roundhouse had eight cells and a gaolers residence which all opened into a central courtyard. The tunnel underneath the Roundhouse was built by the Fremantle Whaling Company in 1837 to provide whalers with access to the town from the jetty and beach at Bathers Bay.

location: High Street / Roundhouse facing east

map: part of 1844 Snell-Chauncey map

High Street was named by Surveyor General, John Septimus Roe, who followed the English custom of giving this name to the main street of a town. Roe envisaged High Street becoming the main retail and commercial street, however for many years Cliff Street was more important. Until the opening of the harbour in 1897, ships were unable to enter the river mouth due to a rocky bar, so cargo was unloaded at South Bay and hauled along Cliff Street to local warehouses or to the river jetties located just inside the bar. Similarly, passengers would walk along Cliff Street to seek accommodation at one of the numerous boarding houses or hotels.

photo: High Street 1890

High Street in 1890 had a compacted soil and limestone roadway, however the footpath on the north side was paved in Yorkstone pavers brought from England as ballast in the 1850s. These flagstones can now be seen outside the Maritime Museum in Cliff Street and St Johns church in Kings Square.

The Town Hall is a well known landmark looking east. When it opened in 1887 it contrasted with the plain stone walled and shingle roof buildings around it.

The rail line in the foreground ran to the ocean jetties in South Bay.

photo: High Street looking east from Cliff Street c1904

In the 1890s and early 1900s, new businesses, hotels and banks were constructed along High Street and its importance gradually increased, to be strengthened by the introduction of trams in 1905.

Bicycles were a popular mode of transport to and from work and for office boys delivering messages and parcels. The Hotel Fremantle (1898) was distinctive in that it was one of the few hotels in Fremantle built without a verandah.

photo: High Street 1939

High Street in the West End in the 1930s was characterised by hotels, banks and various retail establishments. Trams and verandahs were also a feature of Fremantle at this time, but have since been removed, although verandahs have been recently reinstated to a number of buildings, including the P & O Hotel, the Orient Hotel and the Union Stores.

The West End of Fremantle was included on the National Estate heritage register in 1980.

(Many thanks to Ian James of the City of Fremantle for his prompt and generous assistance in bringing you this information on the sign project)

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