



Fremantle Studies Day 2019

1.30 -5 pm Sunday
27 October

MUA Headquarters
Corner Kwong Alley and Queen
Victoria Street, North Fremantle

This year's Studies Day focusses on Labour History in the port city, ranging from the history of a former industrial site, the Chinese sea-going workforce in Fremantle, industrial action in the 1930s and finally the Patrick's strike of the late 1990s.

Registrations open at 1.00 for a 1.30pm start

Price: Members: \$20, Non-members \$25

Bookings essential: secretary.fhs@gmail.com ; www.fhs.org.au; Facebook/fremantlehistorysociety

Programme:

Welcome, acknowledgements and announcements.

Two papers will be presented followed by afternoon tea. Two further papers will be presented followed by the launch of volume 10 of *Fremantle Studies Journal* and drinks.

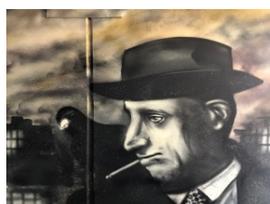
1. ***The State Implement and Engineering Works, North Fremantle*** Cate Pattison
2. ***The History of Chinese Seamen in Fremantle*** Charlie Fox

Afternoon tea will be served, providing an opportunity for discussions and a tour of the MUA's historic photograph collection and a viewing of the colourful, historical murals in the basement of the building.

3. ***Harbouring Discontent: activism in 1930s Fremantle*** Paul Reilly
4. ***It wasn't just about Webb Dock: the 1998 War on the Wharves in Fremantle*** Bobbie Oliver

Following the four presentations, *Fremantle Studies* Vol. 10 will be launched by the Mayor of Fremantle Brad Pettit.

Please join us for a drink or cup of tea at the end of the day's proceedings.



Abstracts:

1. *The State Implement and Engineering Works, North Fremantle - Cate Pattison*

Established in 1913 to support the growing agricultural sector in Western Australia, the 'Imps' in North Fremantle developed into an important resource for the State's growth, with a workforce of 400 highly-skilled tradesmen and apprentices. The Works provided essential support during WWII, serviced the State Ships and produced a vast range of engineered products for the public sector and private industry. Closed in 1986, the site was then cleared and redeveloped. This presentation draws on the content of over 20 interviews conducted to gather memories of the SEW's history and the trades taught there for nearly 75 years.

After a career in media and market research in the UK, Cate began working in the area of social history in 2013. She has conducted oral history projects for the Grove Library and has produced five compilation recordings on a range of topics, including the industrial sites of Rocky Bay. Cate was the recipient of the Fremantle History Research Scholarship in 2018. She is hoping to continue to deepen her knowledge and skills in the field, with dreams to one day give up her day job as a research assistant at UWA's Business School to properly pursue her passion for WA's history.

2. *The History of Chinese Seamen in Fremantle - Charlie Fox*

This paper will discuss the history of Chinese seamen in Fremantle, from the early days of Fremantle Harbour until 1942, when four striking seamen were killed, two by Australian troops stationed on the wharf and two by Dutch troops from a nearby minesweeper. Their crimes were to take part in industrial action on their ships, which had sought refuge in Fremantle from attacks by Japanese warships. The background to and the competing accounts of the killings, the consequences for Chinese - Australian relations and the implication of the killings for changes to Australian laws affecting Chinese seamen will be discussed.

Charlie Fox taught Australian history at UWA before retiring in 2011. His main research interests were the history of work and unemployment, intellectual disability and radicalism in Australia. His last publication was *Radical Perth, Militant Fremantle*, which he edited with Bobbie Oliver and Lenore Layman and which was published in 2017.

3. *Harbouring Discontent: activism in 1930s Fremantle – Paul Reilly*

The 1930s was a decade of momentous financial and political instability with the Great Depression affecting all western economies and the rise of European Fascism leading to the Second World War. Western Australia has been viewed by historians as a relatively peaceful backwater during this time and there was little written about Fremantle's experiences. In this paper activism in 1930s Fremantle is discussed including successful community and industrial action during the Depression years and vigorous anti-fascist activism in support of Spain's Republic during the Civil War. This evidence points to a well-organised class-conscious movement, influenced by left-wing unions such as the Lumpers and activists within the Communist Party and Labor Party within the Fremantle Trades Hall.

Paul Reilly graduated at Notre Dame University, Fremantle, in 2018 with a Masters of Philosophy. He has lived in Fremantle since 2002 when he emigrated from Scotland. He has been a Registered Nurse since 1985, specialising in Mental Health and Substance Use. In his spare time, Paul hosts a radio show on Radio Fremantle, supports the Dockers and Glasgow Celtic, plays the drums and makes his own beer!

4. *It wasn't just about Webb Dock: the 1998 War on the Wharves in Fremantle – Bobbie Oliver*

On the night of 7 April 1998, in ports around Australia, Patrick Stevedores sacked their 2,000-strong workforce and attempted to replace them with non-unionised labour. While much of the media attention centred on Webb Dock in Melbourne, this talk is about the equally dramatic events in Fremantle, where picket lines prevented trucks from entering the wharf and police used their tactical response group to intimidate workers and their supporters. The ultimate victory, although a compromise, proved that the MUA was, indeed, "here to stay" at Fremantle and other Australian ports.

Bobbie Oliver is an Honorary Research Fellow in History at UWA. Formerly she was Associate Professor of History at Curtin University. Bobbie has written extensively on trade unions and their struggles to obtain and maintain decent pay and working conditions.

Note: All the illustrations on this flyer appear on the walls of the basement of the MUA building in North Fremantle