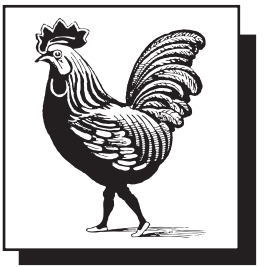


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One in a million



• Ricky Popelier is checked for smoke inhalation by ambulance officers moments after pulling a family from their burning home. Photos by Ange Masefield

“Man, I just ran down there and it’s lucky I did.”

by STEVE GRANT

A HERO tradie who saved a South Fremantle family and their pet dog by pulling them from their burning house on Monday afternoon says the scene has been playing over in his mind “a million times”.

Ricky Popelier was working around the corner on South Terrace when he saw a puff of black smoke coming from the Silver Street home; others reported hearing an explosion.

“I knew it was a house fire, so I said ‘I’d hate for some old lady to be stuck in there’ and I said ‘hey, I might just go and check it out,’” Mr Popelier told the Herald.

“Man, I just ran down there and it’s lucky I did.”

Screams

Instead of an old lady, the father-of-one heard screams from three children, kicking down a side gate so he could pull them through the flames to safety. After helping their mother escape he then returned to the burning building to rescue the family pet.

He says his phone has been running hot since then with friends congratulating him for his heroics and saying he should be in line for a bravery award, but reckons he was just “acting on instinct”.

“When I kicked the door in and heard the kids inside, I just didn’t think twice.”

But it’s what could have happened if he hadn’t reacted so quickly that often filled his thoughts in the days afterwards.

“If I had been there a

minute later, I wouldn’t have been hearing screams for help, I would have been hearing screams of kids on fire.”

Mr Popelier said as he was still working around the corner, he’d walked past the burnt house a day later and saw the family sifting through the ash, but didn’t want to interrupt them.

He reckons he got plenty of heartfelt thanks from the children’s father on the day of the fire.

Mr Popelier says he’s been a bit slow thanking everyone who put up their congratulations on Facebook, but has been really appreciative.

The Chook also checked on his relationship status on the basis a hero with a solid job might be a sharp catch for some lass, and he



• A devastating scene for the family to return to.

confirms he’s single and on the market.

“Definitely, I’m always looking for a partner, mate,” he laughed.

DFES says the fire was the result of “an accident”.

SHEEP SHIP FINALLY BERTHS Full story page 2

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Heat back on live trade

by STEVE GRANT

THE ship at the centre of a controversy over the welfare of 15,000 sheep and 2,000 cattle stranded on board during Perth's heatwave, docked in Fremantle early Thursday morning.

The MV Bahijah had left Fremantle for the Middle East on January 5, but after the vessel's master decided attacks on commercial shipping by the Yemen-based Houthi movement in the Red Sea made that route too perilous, Australia's federal agriculture department ordered him to return.

Since then the Bahijah has been floating off the coast awaiting a decision from authorities on what to do next, while Perth's temperatures continued to climb to an expected 41C on Thursday.

The department said it is prioritising exporter Bassem Dabbah's application to re-export the animals, likely to be the longer route around the Horn of Africa.

"Contrary to some public report, no livestock are required to be offloaded for health reasons," the department said in a release Thursday morning.

"On January 31, two veterinarians engage by the department boarded the vessel to provide additional assurance on the health and welfare of the livestock on board.

"The report from those veterinarians indicates no signs of significant health, welfare or environmental condition concerns with the livestock on board,



• The MV Bahija berthed in Fremantle on Thursday morning, while (inset) a couple of passengers ponder the loading of additional feed. Photos by Steve Grant

consistent with all reports received to date."

The vessel is currently being replenished with supplies.

The Bahijah's plight has stirred the live animal export debate at the national level again, with prime minister Anthony Albanese under fire from WA farmers for not meeting while visiting the state this month to discuss his government's decision to phase out the industry.

But federal Fremantle's Labor MP Josh Wilson said the phase-out can't come soon enough, saying the animals on the Bahijah faced "intolerable heat and

confinement".

"We should have learned by now that the live sheep trade involves unacceptable risks to animal welfare, and sheep can't be long-distance freight to one of the hottest and most unstable parts of the world.

"It's a marginal trade, it's decreased by more than 90 per cent. It's worth less than 1 per cent of Western Australia's agricultural output and that decrease of 90 per cent has come without any decrease in Western Australian sheep flock or any significant impacts on the profitability of Western Australian farms."

Greens deputy leader and animal welfare spokesperson Mehreen Faruqi wants Labor to reject the re-export application and take the animals off the ship.

"Leaving sheep and cattle on the MV Bahijah in the scorching summer heat is animal torture," Sen Faruqi said.

"Sending them back out on another long journey is absolutely unacceptable.

The government already made one gross error by approving this trip through a conflict zone. There is no room to make another mistake when it will be the animals that suffer the consequences."

PACAT founder speaks up

A FOUNDING member of one of Fremantle's landmark activist groups says the sheep aboard the MV Bahijah will be experiencing unimaginable cruelty.

John Spencer was one of an initially small group of Fremantle folk who formed People Against Cruelty in Animal Transport in the early 1990s when the industry was in a truly grim state.

"One precipitating event was when a truckload of sheep overturned near Toodyay and they simply shot them there and then," Dr Spencer recalled.

"This cruel transportation commenced in the paddocks of the state and sheep were herded into large trucks and transported to Fremantle and it was not uncommon to see these over-loaded trucks with sheep; some with their limbs hanging out through the gaps in the slats."

This very visible side of the trade helped swell the organisation's membership rapidly and its protests started hitting the headlines. At its peak, the Fremantle Traffic Bridge would be filled from

• Continued page 3



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PACAT founder speaks

• From page 2

end-to-end with flag-waving marchers.

Dr Spencer said PACAT had some early wins in convincing transport companies and farmers of the cruelty the sheep faced in transit, which resulted in some modifications to the system.

But digging further into what happened after the sheep left Australia's shores, PACAT discovered the cramped and hot conditions they faced on the long journey to the Middle East, which resulted in many perishing along the way. Their bodies were simply hauled overboard.

The evidence PACAT gathered forced authorities to investigate and their reports forced them to impose new restrictions; vets had to accompany the animals on voyages, crowding was reduced, reporting procedures were tightened, trips were restricted to the cooler months in the Middle East, and now the industry looks like it's heading for the knackers with the Albanese government reaffirming its commitment to bring it to an end.

But Dr Spencer can't believe the trade continues despite the growing evidence about what animals suffer.

"Sheep like humans are

mammals, and their brains are 90 per cent similar to ours," he said.

"As such they experience pain, fear, apprehension and anxiety.

"They are sentient creatures and have feelings.

"The live sheep trade is parallel to the 18th century slave trade which we now recall with shame and guilt.

"How long will it be before the people and policy makers of Fremantle and Western Australia recognise the horrors and inhumanity of the live sheep trade and abolish it to history and the annals of our past," Dr Spencer said.

herald letters

Final chapter

FREMANTLE council's cancellation of Australia Day citizen ceremonies marks the final chapter in the city's repudiation of our national day.

That it was an 'administrative decision' - presumably to save money and give the staff a (Australia) day off - shows either remarkable courage on the part of the CEO, or that he was confident he had correctly read the minds of the councillors, and relieved them of the embarrassment of attending such occasions.

It would have been preferable, however, for the elected members to have displayed some courage of their own and openly owned a decision of such significance.

True, there are other days close by and throughout the year when citizenship can be conferred, but the symbolism of becoming a citizen on Australia Day was clearly not lost on the many happy New Australians pictured in the press, proudly holding their certificates.

On any other day it would be, well, just an administrative matter.

The 1997 Australia Day Celebrations in Fremantle involved a reconciliation component for the first time.

Australians for Reconciliation spoke at the ceremony, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists performed.

This practice seems to have continued until 2016, when Council proposed moving the date of celebrating Australia Day out of "respect for the feelings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people".

It's a great shame that



the earlier practice was not continued out of respect for the feelings of all of us Australians.

In 2018 council supported the Uluru Statement from the Heart, including establishing a First Nations Voice to Parliament enshrined in the Constitution, and the establishment of a Makarrata Commission for the purpose of treaty making and truth-telling.

Post referendum the mayor stated that the council remained committed to implementing the statement "in full".

Not having noted any councillor endorsing such a commitment, or indeed referring to any related issues in their recent campaign literature, it would be timely for the present council to publicly reiterate this commitment and to endorse the administrative decision to cancel Australia Day citizenship ceremonies.

Gerard MacGill
North Fremantle

Narrow miss

OVER the past few years, and recently, Main Roads have suggested that Freo's new traffic bridge should be similar to the Perth Narrows Bridge.

With the new rail line running down the middle.

As the Fremantle Harbour and a long length of water going to Perth are a tidal estuary of the Indian Ocean, there should be provision for tidal gates to be used in future for any significant rise in height at this narrow distance.

The proposed new bridge could prove expensive to maintain and looks a lot like the container cranes.

Reg Curedale
Fremantle

The Ed says: We think sustainability guru Peter Newman's with you on that one, Reg; he's long pushed for tidal gates.



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Hulk's toughest fight

by STEVE GRANT

IT'S a bit of a surprise to discover that despite a swag of national and international titles under his belt, retired martial arts champion and Cockburn's new Citizen of the Year, Soa Pelelei, has never really liked fighting.

But the bruising career initially served its purpose for the imposing 1.93 metre super heavyweight known in the ring as The Hulk, helping to keep at bay the inner demons he'd carried from a childhood marked by abuse.

"I competed in UFC [Ultimate Fighting Championship] because it helped me cope with the depression," Mr Pelelei told the Herald.

"I was assuming that if I was to say to people that I was struggling, they would say 'toughen up' and I didn't think there was any support I could reach out to."

He kept his mental health battles to himself, but after he'd become a father the walls around him started crumbling and he contemplated suicide; a frank discussion with his eldest daughter made him realise how deeply he'd sunk.

"I went and saw a friend and had a cry, and he said 'mate, we've got to get you some help'."

Mr Pelelei documented his personal trials in the autobiography *Face Your Fears* and says the book's message is still incredibly important to him: "I wake up every day and face my fears."

The book also propelled him into a new career where he says



• The Hulk, Soa Pelelei has switched from fighting UFC opponents to fighting the stigmas surrounding mental health.

he's found his true calling; helping others with their own mental health struggles.

In 2018 he started Strong Minds, Strong Mines for the resources industry, trialling the 12-month program at ASX-listed company Macmahon where it picked up numerous awards. Mr Pelelei says

they've now condensed it down to eight months and it's already being picked up by other mining companies such as Westgold.

Mr Pelelei says mental health problems are rife in the mining industry.

"It comes down to isolation, being away from family and

friends - you can't just get in a car and pop down to the mall to catch up with them.

"The people who are working FIFO are doing it to give their family a good life or to pay their mortgage, but a lot of people don't come with a plan so they don't have a focus."

Mr Pelelei says each month a new topic such as drugs and alcohol, suicide or finding a focus is rolled out, giving FIFO workers something to look forward to. He says it's important programs aren't just a one-off box-ticking exercise so companies can assuage their conscience - their workers need to know they genuinely care.

A year ago he expanded the concept to create Strong Minds, Strong Schools which was first adopted by Harrisdale Senior High School but looks like being picked up by Lakelands high as well.

Prepared

"The idea is that if you start at the school level, by the time they get to the real world, they have all the skills and are well prepared," Mr Pelelei said.

Born in Newcastle, NSW and from a Tongan background, Mr Pelelei has been living in Cockburn for more than 20 years and in 2021 was inducted into the city's Sports Hall of Fame.

Mackinlee Tibbits was awarded the Youth Citizen of the Year for his involvement in the city's Youth Advisory Council, as well as being a role model at the Cockburn Youth Centre's twice-weekly Dungeons and Dragons program.

He's also been a Coogee Beach Surf Club member for 12 years, having been a lifeguard for the last four as well as taking part in many of the club's outreach programs.

Maureen Stevenson was the Senior Citizen of the Year, while the Active Citizenship Award went to the Historical Society of Cockburn.

Burt St homes delayed

THE WA government has asked for a two-year extension to replace the Homeswest units it demolished on Burt Street more than a decade ago.

Although the Department of Communities and its development partner Element got JDAP approval in December 2021 for a five-building complex with a range of apartments, restaurants and art spaces, in late December it submitted an amended application.

Apart from some minor modification to the original plans Element says won't change the overall footprint, such as adding three apartments through "floor plan efficiencies" and reducing its arts and performance spaces in preference for a "breakout space" for four proposed arts studios, the timeframe for construction has blown out.

"The development approve [sic] is due to lapse in April 2024," the application says.

"Due to the scale and complexity of the partnership project, additional time is required to achieve substantial commencement."

Another modification Element is seeking is to reduce the number of car bays for visitors and the commercial tenancies from 106 down to 62, while the height of three buildings would increase by around one metre if approved by the state JDAP.

Redesigned tax cuts



by Mark Douglas FCPA
Managing Partner of Francis A Jones
www.faj.com.au

As was highly anticipated, the government has now proposed a redesign of the stage three tax cuts scheduled to commence from 1 July 2024. If passed, the changes will mean that a larger number of Australians will benefit from the upcoming tax adjustments. For around 20% of West Australians, the impact will be less favourable than it would have been but for the redesign.

To pass these changes the government will need to move quickly to enact legislation and may need the support of the independents or minor parties to get it through, although the Liberals have softened their language since their initial hostility and may just agree to the amendments yet.

The stage three cuts were first announced in the 2018-19 federal budget to address "bracket creep". Often confused with a crazed carrier of cantilevers, this is actually a term for tax thresholds that fail to keep pace with inflation. The first two stages sensibly took place in 2018 and 2020, but legislating changes out to 2024 was a ridiculous idea. It's little wonder really that Labor politicians uttered a terminological inexactitude or two while they worked out how to deal with this dopey decision.

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They are now proposing a combination of rate drops and bracket changes to essentially reallocate the legislated tax savings away from higher income earners and towards battling households. Regardless of political persuasion it's hard to argue with the general logic of wealth redistribution.

Let's take a look at a few different income earners to see what impact the proposed changes might have on their tax come 1 July (excluding medicare levy and rebates).

John earns \$60,000 per annum. In 2023/24 he will pay \$9,967 in tax (16.6%). In 2024/25, under legislated changes, he will pay \$9,592 (15.6%), and that will reduce to \$8,788 (14.6%) under proposed changes.

Sven earns \$120,000 per annum. In 2023/24 he will pay \$29,467 in tax (24.6%). In 2024/25, under legislated changes, he will pay \$27,592 (23%), and that will reduce to \$26,788 (22.3%) under proposed changes.

“a larger number of Australians will benefit from the upcoming tax adjustments

Nina earns \$200,000 per annum. In 2023/24 she will pay \$60,667 in tax (30.3%). In 2024/25, under legislated changes, she will pay \$51,592 (25.8%), and that will increase to \$56,138 (28.1%) under proposed changes.

Of interest now is to what extent Labor will agree to concessions to get their legislation passed. The Greens are seeking an even bigger allocation to low income earners and dream of an end to negative gearing. The independents would like a broader review of our entire tax system. Personally, I'm happy with anything that gets rid of those bracket creeps. Br-r-r-r!

Property Taxes Back on Agenda

The federal government's revision of the Stage 3 Tax cuts has re-enlivened debate for a comprehensive tax review, with negative gearing and capital gains tax settings once again part of that discussion. The ability for investors to claim property-related expenses against other income (normally their taxed wages) has been a key part of Australia's housing spectrum for generations, underpinning the supply of affordable rental homes for millions of tenants.

Governments, unable to supply enough taxpayer funded rental homes has relied on property investors to supply property to the market at a ratio of 9:1. Calls from teal independents and others to remove negative gearing in order to address housing affordability fails to consider the impact this would have on supply, rents and the budget.

underpinning the supply of affordable rental homes

With 27 percent of all homes in Australia rented, the estimated value of this asset class is \$2.835 trillion; nearly three times annual GDP. The burden on taxpayers in Australia is already substantial (as a measure of overall tax take, only Denmark collects more tax than we do from wages), so without investors supplying the market (which would surely diminish if negative gearing was disallowed) how can government afford to supply the rental homes?

The 2019 election campaign featured proposed changes to negative gearing with then would-be Treasurer, Chris Bowen saying, "Don't worry if your property value falls." I cannot imagine how the community could possibly think such a comment is okay given household consumption makes up about 45 per cent of the economy and if housing values fall, so does their spending and so does, therefore, the economy. Bowen's comment back then is telling because it paints property

These comments are the author's own and may not reflect the opinions or policies of the Real Estate Institute of Western Australia / Australia.

By HAYDEN GROVES
REIA President 2021 - 2023
REIWA President 2015 - 2018

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investors as being aspirational and therefore on the wrong side of certain political agendas. If he'd said, "Don't worry if your rent goes up," he'd have been in trouble, but the brutal truth is that both comments are the same. Abolish negative gearing on established homes and prices will fall and rents will rise.

Any plan to mess with the current negative gearing provisions is fraught because it is so deeply entrenched (it's been part of our tax system for more than 100 years) and therefore interlinked with our vast and complex tax system.

We know about 80 percent of investment properties are owned by mum and dad types who only have one investment property. Proposals to remove negative gearing is hardly taxing the wealthy and ignores the fact that not all investors choose to buy property to avoid tax otherwise payable. A loss is a loss and pressure on families to meet their daily expenses means investors are often attracted to property investments that either break even or are positively geared in order to maintain cash flow.

The last time a government tried to abolish negative gearing it was back in several months later as the voter backlash from soaring rents and plunging property values frightened them into a retreat. If Labor once again wades into the negative gearing morass, the Opposition will be one step closer to winning government.

LAC: Beaches need a rethink

by STEVE GRANT

THE Leighton Action Coalition fears Fremantle's coastal strip became a bit of an afterthought in planning for the city's post-pandemic future and needs more consideration.

LAC organiser Paul Gamblin attended Future of Fremantle planning sessions last year and says while the ambitious project seems to be moving along well, he fears there was so much to consider in other areas that Port and Leighton beaches didn't get the attention they need.

As a result, the three scenarios released by the Future of Fremantle committee in late November were broadly similar and didn't explore possible alternatives, he said.

"They have the same limited setback, and they all have quite significant engineering - groynes and revetments and things like that," Mr Gamblin told the Herald.

"The port area is mainly the concreted, hard stand area, and now we're looking at a dynamic, partly natural coastal environment, which just needs a different mindset and a different approach."

Mr Gamblin said it's becoming more common in coastal planning to look at ways the natural environment can be used to help repair damage and prepare for climate change, and LAC surveys have consistently shown beach users are averse to groynes.

"We've got examples in Western Australia of where coastal infrastructure is credited with the problems that we then chase our tails to correct.

"Port Geographe is one example where that's caused massive seagrass build-up over years and it's been a constant battle.

"Modelling the ocean and ocean dynamics is extremely difficult, and it's very easy to get it wrong."

Mr Gamblin said the beaches had a catchment of 100 suburbs,

stretching to the hills, but there hadn't been adequate study into how they should cater to visitors and urban development, such as with access, parking, recreation needs and setbacks to cope with climate change.

Setback

"Then we'll use that setback, whatever that distance is, to determine what the split between parks or recreations and urban development is."

"Based on our analysis of the area for almost 25 years now, we think that approximately where Bracks Street is now, is probably where you're looking at."

Mr Gamblin also fears the Future of Fremantle committee might have felt constrained by a live amendment to the city's planning scheme, with developers waiting for a decision from the WA Planning Commission on whether a large parcel of former industrial

land opposite the beaches can be rezoned for housing.

"Those are industrial land holdings that date back nearly a century, which was pretty optimistic zoning; in fact it wouldn't really have been a zoning back then, and it's definitely not informed by what we understand of coastal process and climate change."

The LAC put in a submission to

both the Future of Fremantle and WAPC amendment calling for the rezoning to be delayed.

"We are really trying to encourage the planning commission to do what it really should be doing, and I think wants to do, which is to plan in an unfettered manner about what the future of that area should be, unconstrained by the existing land holdings," Mr Gamblin said.

Wastewater upgrade

WORK has begun on a \$238.5m upgrade of Munster's water resource recovery facility.

It's hoped it will set a new sustainability benchmark, converting wastewater into clean water and renewable energy.

Commonly known as a wastewater treatment plant, the Woodman Point Water Resource Recovery Facility treats 150 million litres of wastewater daily from around 900,000 southern suburbs

homes and businesses.

The facility will be progressively upgraded to treat 120 tonnes daily, keeping pace with a growing population as well as catering for future inflows.

Enhanced energy recovery technology will allow the facility to capture and reuse more biogas (mostly methane, which is naturally produced during the treatment process) as a renewable energy source.

The upgrades will reduce

greenhouse gas emissions by around 5600 tonnes CO2-e annually, as less power will need to be purchased from the electricity grid to run the plant, supporting Water Corp's target of net-zero emissions by 2035.

"Nearly half the plant's energy needs will be generated on site, which is another significant step towards Water Corporation's target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2035," said water minister Simone McGurk.

Freo's roads paved with...

FREMANTLE council is \$180 million wealthier this year - unfortunately, it's only paper riches after a revaluation nearly doubled the value of its roads, paths and parks.

The accounting windfall was one of the revelations of the City's latest annual report, which is due to be presented at this coming Monday's annual general meeting of electors.

The audited finances also showed the City has been scrimping to save on its car fleet, having gone three years without purchasing a new vehicle. An insider told the Chook even gearboxes were being replaced in an effort

to squeeze the most of the council's cars.

CEO Glen Dougall said a new fleet reserve was created in the 2022/23 financial year with a \$500,000 budget.

"Other than two e-scooters, the City has not purchased any vehicles over the past three financial years," Mr Dougall confirmed, although he did say the reserve had been used towards replacing the city's fleet.

"The annual budget for light vehicle maintenance is approximately \$200,000pa."

The annual general meeting of electors is being held in the council chambers in the Walyalup Civic Centre from 6pm on Monday February 5.

Have your say



We want to hear your ideas and opinions on some big decisions happening in our community. Have your say and help Freo become the city you want it to be.

Community engagement consultations currently open for comment online

PROPOSED SHARK BARRIER AT BATHERS BEACH

Bathers Beach has been endorsed by Council as the preferred location for a physical shark barrier. The City is seeking community feedback on this proposal and exploring State Government funding opportunities. **Closes Friday 16 February.**

SAFE AND FUNCTIONAL STREETS

Tell us how we can improve road safety and enhance the functionality of our streets by having your say on traffic calming and narrow streets policies. **Closes Friday 16 February.**

NORTH FREMANTLE HERITAGE TRAIL REFRESH

Developed in 1988, the trail's heritage signage and stories need renewal. Help us revitalise and enhance the trail with your stories and ideas. **Closes Sunday 18 February.**

FREO ALTERNATIVE SUNSET CLAUSE EXTENSION

The City is proposing to amend the Local Planning Scheme to extend the Freo Alternative special provisions for a further seven years. Your insights will help to shape the future. **Closes Saturday 24 February.**



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WA 2029

WA's big party

pain is still very deep and real for our Indigenous people, and racism is still prevalent.

The wrongs of the past is what we all share, but we also need to share, acknowledge and celebrate what we have achieved together in those 200 years.

We can not change the past, but we can and should learn from it, and create a better future for everyone.

We have built a wonderful state together, and immigrants have the right to be proud of their contributions to their new country.

The WA government is planning to build an Aboriginal cultural centre on the Swan River foreshore at Perth/Boorloo, to commemorate the bicentenary.

That cultural centre should have been built in Fremantle, but the Perth-centric state government wanted to give us ugly movie studios instead.

An Aboriginal centre on Victoria Quay would have been fantastic for Freo, but sadly that is never going to happen now, although Fremantle council investigated it for a long time.

When Fremantle council built the Walyalup Civic Centre and changed the name of Kings Square to Walyalup Koort, there were plans for a significant artwork in our civic square.

Large rocks from Esperance to Geraldton would be selected by regional elders and placed at Walyalup Koort to celebrate the Whadjuk nation.

It is extremely disappointing the City of Fremantle up to now has been unable to find funding for this amazing artwork, that would deeply acknowledge the importance of our Aboriginal culture and history.

So what else could we do to celebrate our bicentenary in 2029?

What major projects could we start planning for Fremantle, and make sure that the day is not kidnapped away from the port city by the state government?

No re-enactment of the arrival of the first settlers at Bathers Bay please.

Is there a monument/artwork that could be built at Bathers Beach/Arthur's Head, that combines the Whadjuk history and the arrival of the British settlers?

Could it be something as simple as a colourful red, yellow, green and gold beacon shining up into the night sky, maybe even out of the Roundhouse well?

Or might it be one of my big wishes of historic photos projected onto the southern wall of the Roundhouse, or could we re-visit the ocean pool idea, hugging the South Mole? A project like that would not be offensive to anyone.

J Shed sculptor Greg James created a wonderful bronze piano in memory of his family member Lucy Grover, who arrived as a servant in Fremantle on the Marquis of Anglesea.

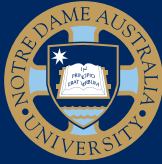
Her piano was swept over board and wrecked in a storm. Could that become a permanent display and reminder of the early settlers at Bathers Bay, to show the hardship and the personal sacrifices they made?

Whatever we might come up with, it has to be something permanent, impressive and significant.

Let's put our thinking hats on, Freo, and start planning soon!

Roel Loopers/Freoview

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NOW we have the controversial Australia Day behind us, it is time to start contemplating how to celebrate Western Australia's bicentenary.

In 2029, just five years from now, Fremantle and Western Australia will be celebrating 200 years since British settlement started and the Swan River Colony was established.

So Fremantle council and the WA government should start planning how we can inclusively acknowledge that historic moment.

There is little doubt that we will be hearing often that the day 400 civilian and military settlers arrived in Fremantle/Walyalup on the HMS Sulphur and Parmelia, was the invasion of the west coast of Australia, according to our First Nations people.

So how can we both commiserate and celebrate, because we can not ignore such a significant time in history.

There are some very black mark in Australia's history, and that needs to be acknowledged and never be forgotten.

Most countries in the world have very dark times in their past, but that does not make what happened here in Western Australia excusable or more palatable.

I agree that we have to move on from that, and we already have done that in many ways, but the

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Time for some swashbuckling mayhem

SEMEL IN ANNO LICET SINSANIRE: Once a year it is permitted to go mad.

Perhaps this Latin phrase best captures the basic idea behind Carnival, the ancient 'festival of misrule' when the world is temporarily turned upside down and ritualised inversion of normal social roles is expressed in masquerade, cross dressing and the mockery of establishment figures and institutions.

First established in an East Fremantle backyard in 2009, Fremantle Carnevale was inspired by a Southern Italian version of this global festival celebrated each year in many parts of Europe, Latin America and elsewhere, but largely wiped out in Northern Europe and Britain by 16th century Protestant reformers.

European and Latin American migrants to Australia have long celebrated Carnival within their own communities, while the Carnival tradition of eating pancakes on Shrove Tuesday (the last day of Carnival) has survived within the wider Anglo-Australian community.

Carnival is sometimes linked to the Roman midwinter festival of Saturnalia presided over by a King or Lord of Misrule, during which slaves were allowed temporary liberty to do as they pleased.

On Shrove Tuesday (just before the Catholic Church's period of Lenten abstinence begins on Ash Wednesday), the 'King' is sometimes put on trial before an absurd Carnival Tribunal, charged with ludicrous crimes and made a

Dr Dodgy Steve is a corrupt Western Australian heritage consultant and board member of the Fremantle Carnival Authority. He is currently advising Woodside Energy, Perdaman Chemicals and Yara Fertilisers on how best to transform the world's oldest and largest outdoor rock art gallery (the Burrup Peninsula) into an industrial wasteland.



scapegoat for causing the uproar during the preceding festivities.

After a mock execution in effigy form in the town square, the King's funeral procession takes place through the streets, accompanied by a heavily pregnant 'Widow of Carnival' (a man in drag), who assures the royal succession for next year's Carnival by giving birth during the funeral ceremonies.

So death is the sad lot of every King of Carnival; in 2010, Wilson Tuckey died from over-indulgence during festivities at Kulcha, while 2012 Fremantle King of Carnevale Twiggy Forrest was sung to death

by a Yindjibarndi sorcerer in Kings Square before a wake at Clancy's.

Although the Fremantle Carnival Authority thought only male public figures like Donald Trump, Alan Jones, Clive Palmer, Prime Minister Scott Morrison and the former Mayor of the City of Cockburn Stephen Lee could meet the stringent silliness required to be King of Carnevale, a newly introduced Carnevale gender equity policy last year saw Woodside CEO 'Methane Meg' O'Neill presiding over festivities as the first Fremantle Queen of Carnevale.

Former Mayor Brad Pettit was

also a focus of mockery during the Weiberfastnacht or German Women's Carnival (adapted for local conditions from the Carnival of Cologne), when the revolting women of Fremantle would arrest him, seize control of the City and cut off men's ties in a ritualised act of castration.

To reflect the 2024 theme of 'Sea Spoils', this year's Ramble will wend its way from Bathers Beach to a Masked Carnevale Party at Clancy's.

Look out for recycled sea spoils, mermaids, Viking raiders, eco-pirates and of course, this year's mystery King of Carnevale

(although a regular fixture at many Greenpeace rallies, Dale the inflatable Whale is a late scratching from this year's Carnevale after suffering neurological damage from Woodside's recent seismic blasting off the Pilbara coast).

In accordance with the Fremantle Carnevale Authority's Carnevale Mask Mandate, participants are urged to maximise their Carnevale pleasure by disguising themselves in their finest mask and costume (in order to be eligible for the 2024 best costume prizes to be awarded by Mayor Hannah Fitzhardinge).
BUON CARNEVALE!

Fremantle Carnevale

Saturday, February 10

• Mask and costume making at the Fib: 10am-4pm, 19 Blinco Street, Fremantle.

• Mystery Ramble Through Freo: Starts at Kidogo on Bather's Beach at 5pm, heading to Clancy's.

• Music, Prizes and Mischief at Clancy's: From 7pm. It's a ticketed event, so search oztix.com for The People's Republic of Fremantle.



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Super Stevens

AFTER working as a nursing assistant for 26 years and a stint up north catering, Maureen Stevens could have taken a well-deserved rest.

But the Success resident has spent her retirement years volunteering in the local community, including the Cockburn Seniors Centre, where she spends four days a week on the front desk or in the cafe.

Her efforts were recently recognised by Cockburn council, naming her 2024 Senior Citizen of the Year.

"I volunteer because I want to help people anyway I can," Stevens says.

"So many older residents are lonely due to different circumstances. Giving them time helps – a cup of tea and a chat can make a difference.

"Put a smile on their face and it

makes them feel better."

With a background in health and safety, Stevens also helps with safety inspections of the Centre and organises displays for special occasions.

After retiring in 2016, she joined the City of Cockburn Age-friendly Reference Group, which meets regularly to improve seniors' services in the community.

"I always wanted to volunteer in my early years, but with working and bringing up a family, I didn't have the time," Stevens says.

"I am fortunate to volunteer – you meet old friends and make new ones.

"Cockburn residents have a great Seniors Centre."

Meanwhile, Paul Ennis was named Perth Senior Citizen of the Year for diligently maintaining the city's heritage-listed Town Hall clock for six decades.

The Ennis family looked after the Perth Town Hall clock for more than 100 years and Paul was the last in the family line to service it.

As a young boy Ennis would accompany his dad when he was working on the clock, before taking on maintenance duties as a teenager in the late 1960s.

The family were all skilled watchmakers back in the day and made chronometers for ships, clocks for the department of civil aviation, and looked after most of the big clocks in the state.

The Perth Town Hall clock was built by London clockmakers Thwaites and Reed and the three bells also came from London.

When fixing the clock, Ennis tried to keep as many of the original parts as possible.

He was amazed by their durability, including a giant suspension spring which had been in-use for more than 50 years.



• Maureen Stevens (far right) and Mackinlee Tibbits get their Citizen Awards from Cockburn mayor Logan Howlett (left).



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• (left) Sometimes the ice isn't thick enough in winter for the Inuit people to travel by sledge and (right) Uncle Nigel has a deep understanding of fire lore in the Tanami Desert.

Poles apart

 arts
STEPHEN POLLOCK

FILMMAKER Adam Sébire saw firsthand the effects of global warming when he spent two months in a remote Inuit settlement on a mountainous island in Greenland.

Previously off-limits to outsiders, Sébire was granted access to the small community of 1000 indigenous Inuits on Uummannaq in winter, when the ocean turns to solid sea ice. Except, it didn't.

Sébire says the lack of solid ice impacted all aspects of settlement

life from finding food to travelling. "Some older Inuit told me how as students they would dog sledge home on solid ice to surrounding settlements for Christmas," he says.

"Nowadays the children must go by boat or if it's just a mess of fragmented floes on the fjord, by helicopter.

"This also makes subsistence living very difficult – the ice in midwinter (December to February) is too thick for hunters' boats but too thin for their sledge dogs, which are another tradition that's disappearing. It's not viable to feed them when they might only get a usable couple of months on the ice."

Sébire says the remote community are now having to import processed food because they can no longer hunt and eat narwhals, a vital source of vitamin C.

"There are other problems, like safety on thin ice, alcoholism among people are unable to undertake their cultural traditions related to ice, and shocking rates of youth suicide," Sébire says.

"I even saw humpback whales around the island; normally they go to the West Indies to mate in winter but lack of sea ice perhaps confused them in 2022."

The Australian-born Sébire spent two months on Uummannaq during the "polar winter" – when there is virtually no sunlight – filming footage for his immersive audio-visual work *Sikujumaataarpoq*.

But the temperature never dropped enough for the ice to stabilise and be safe to walk on, so he started using his drone to film

stunning arial shots of icebergs floating by.

"The locals are very wary of icebergs, which are increasing as glacial melt rises, and which sometimes capsize and create tsunamis," says the award-winning filmmaker who works in the Norwegian Arctic.

"But one stunning, translucent berg in particular I fell in love with, and was very sad when it got swept out of the fjord to its death."

Sikujumaataarpoq is just one of 12 visual works in the exhibition *Polarity: Fire & Ice*, which examines the affects of climate change around the world.

At the other end of the spectrum is the summer bushfires that have plagued Australia in recent years.

Filmmaker Tim Georgeson travelled deep into the Tanami Desert with the Karrayarra people to create his film *Chanamee, Never Die*, exploring their fire lore and traditions.

He says First Nations people should be consulted on major ecological decisions as their fire practices are the "beacon of global sustainability" and they possess crucial knowledge about the environment.

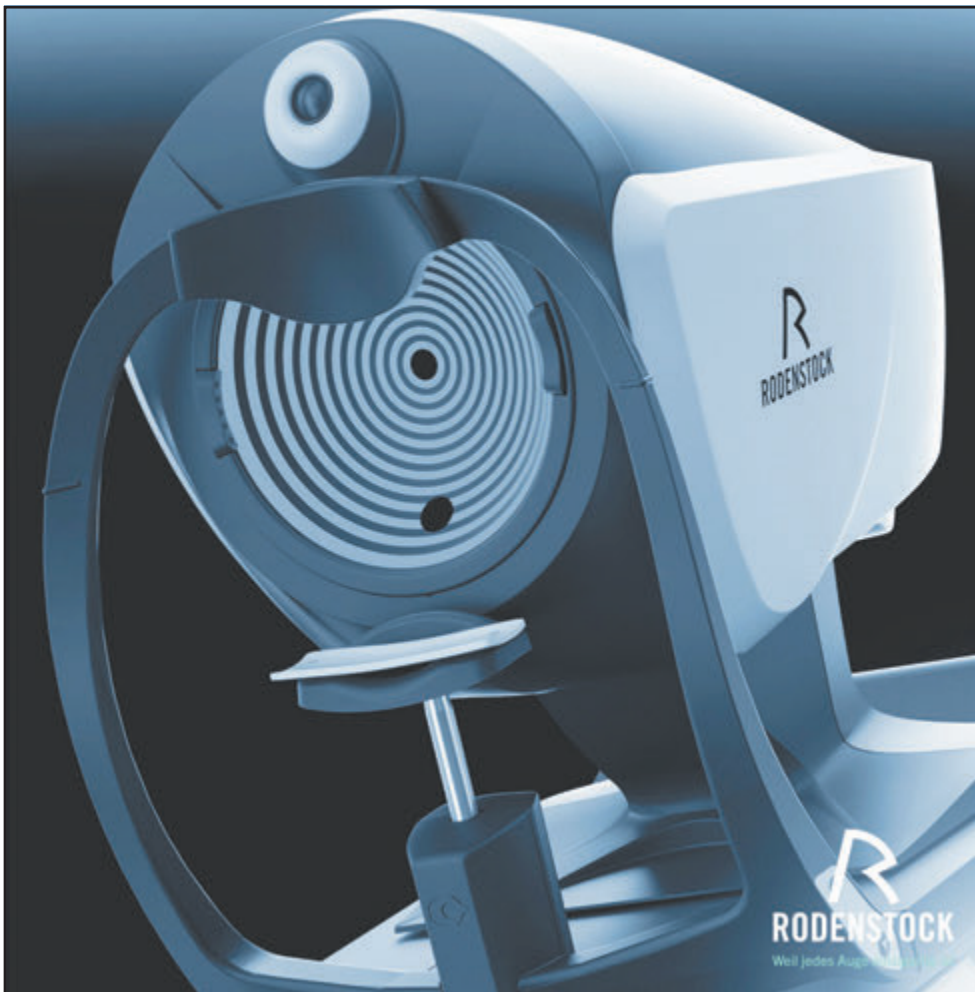
"It was an incredibly powerful experience to be on country with Uncle Nigel and Terrence," Georgeson says.

"I have been on a fire journey over the last four years around Australia filming and recording how different Indigenous communities practice Fire culture.

"I recorded Nigel and Terrence in their Luritja voice talking about the importance of fire, what they were taught and how they continue to practice and teach awareness.

"It's crucial for all of our ecological survival, says Terrence and how important it is to preserve and continue fire lore, especially as our planet heats up."

***Polarity: Fire & Ice* is at the Fremantle Arts Centre from February 10 to April 28.**



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Freo stunner

SOME of the grand rooms in this Fremantle home are like a scene out of Stanley Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon*.

The ornate furniture, chandeliers and gilded mirrors really whisk you back to the Georgian era, and you would feel like aristocracy living in this five bedroom two bathroom beauty.

Painstakingly restored and renovated to heritage guidelines, it's got all the mod cons wrapped inside a vintage bow.

The "Wow" factor starts at the entrance with a sweeping stone staircase and gorgeous courtyard decorated with statues.

The facade is beautiful and includes a vintage verandah adorned with golden cane palms

and potted plants.

The inside is just as stunning with period features at every turn including vintage fireplaces, architraves, ceiling roses, jarrah floorboards and lots and lots of chandeliers – 13 in total (you might need to buy some new feather dusters).

Recent additions include two stunning Carrera marble fireplace mantels from Milan, two French provincial-style bathrooms and a powder room, and a linen room with quarry tile floor.

This limestone, brick and iron home was built in 1896 for William Letchford, a prominent Fremantle cordial manufacturer and his family.

In the 1950s it was purchased by the government and became

the Bundi Kudja Maternity Hospital.

A plaque on the front wall recognises the Aboriginal heritage blessing for the home.

The property includes a walk-in cellar, split-system aircon, rear alfresco with shade sail, wide wrap-around verandas and off-street parking for six cars

Situated on a 784sqm lot on Hampton Road, it's a short walk to all the shops and cafes on Wray Avenue.

Or take a two-minute drive to the South Fremantle café strip, which is packed with fantastic boutiques, cafes and restaurants.

There's also lots of schools close-by including Fremantle Primary and White Gum Valley Primary.

This is a stunning period home that will have you feeling like a king or queen.

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Upon the entry level it is clearly evident the scale and size of the rooms, ceiling heights, natural light and ventilation and attention to detail throughout this home.

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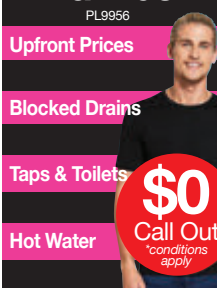


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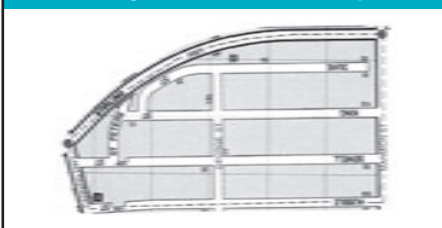
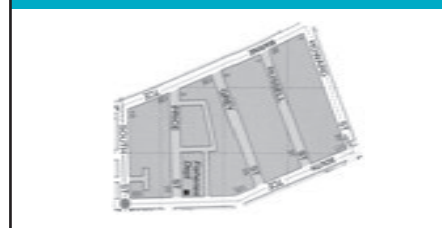






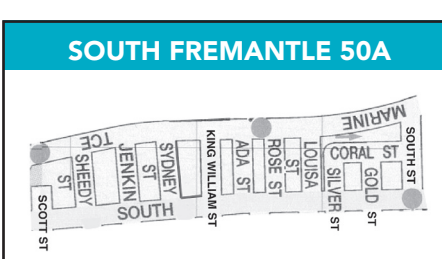


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Astrology with Sudhir

February 3 – February 10, 2024



ARIES (Mar 21 – Apr 20)

Mercury, Venus and your ruling planet Mars, are all in Capricorn. Together they are setting an agenda that is quite different from your normal modus operandi. Your usual approach is to launch into experience and learn from what follows. For now you must structure, plan and build.



TAURUS (Apr 21 – May 20)

The Scorpio Moon is doing it's level best to draw you into emotional whirlpools that may or may not serve you well. The good news is that there are multiple other influences around that are more genuinely supportive. Step back until you can see the easy path, then walk up it with delight.



GEMINI (May 21 – June 21)

Your ruling planet Mercury, is in the pragmatic universe of Capricorn. You have a golden opportunity here to apply your crazy Gemini wisdom to practical matters that have others stumped; and offer unique, innovative solutions. Exercise your brain in fields of play you at times avoid.



CANCER (June 22 – July 22)

The Moon begins her week in Scorpio, spicing up your emotional world and encouraging a willingness to look under the rug. When you feel safe, you are quite the explorer of emotions. This is a powerful time of self-enquiry for you. Make use of every bit of encouragement you get.



LEO (July 23 – Aug 22)

The Scorpio Moon at the start of the week rattles your cage more than a little. Your relationships inevitably bring feelings to the surface that go beyond what you learned at high school. Courage is your superpower. Apply it in the realm of intimacy. Expand your sense of what's possible.



VIRGO (Aug 23 – Sept 22)

As long as you don't take on challenges that are way beyond you, you will find yourself excelling with ease. In other words, avoid hubris at all costs. Venus in Capricorn is fuelling you with affection. Uranus in Taurus is opening up innovative options that will yield greater freedom.



LIBRA (Sept 23 – Oct 23)

While you ponder the meaning of life, life goes on. Your ruling planet Venus is in a strong position in Capricorn, lining up a series of blessings that are so seamless you might not even notice that they are there. Life is supporting you in ways that are so obvious it will take two looks to see.



SCORPIO (Oct 24 – Nov 21)

The Moon begins her week in Scorpio, strengthening your position, reinforcing the feeling that you are on track, and opening up a sequence of events that gives you the sense that life is on your side. When you are aligned emotionally, the results of your actions can be dramatic and practical.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22 – Dec 21)

The Scorpio Moon stops you in your tracks early in the week. Avenues of expansion that you might have assumed would bear fruit, end up being less fertile than imagined. It's time to reassess. The best way to do this is to go back to your friends and allies to get feedback that you can trust.



CAPRICORN (Dec 22 – Jan 19)

Venus, Mercury and Mars are in Capricorn. Venus is having a powerful positive influence. Follow your lightness and your delight, and the results will be powerfully positive. Mercury and Mars are a little less productive. Overthink things, or try to force things, and they will go pear-shaped.



AQUARIUS (Jan 20 – Feb 18)

The Sun is in the 'Crazy Wisdom' part of Aquarius. Let your mind dance it's wildly unorthodox, unwieldy dance. You will cover a lot of ground but the outcome will be creative and positive. With Pluto now in your sign, there is a bigger fish on the barbeque. There's no need to go there yet.



PISCES (Feb 19 – Mar 20)

The Scorpio Moon at the beginning of the week gets you off to a positive start. Emotions are healthy when they are able to flow. You will find yourself able to touch on feelings that have been eluding you. Understanding and ease directly follow. Saturn is keeping you steady, secure and wise.

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STEPHEN POLLOCK

YOU can tell I'm Scottish. I was the only one drinking in Beach St Co at 11:45am on a weekday. There was mitigating circumstances – it was the last week of the school holidays and I felt like an extra from *Apocalypse Now*. "No more Tours of Duty of Adventure World. Please Colonel Kurtz, I beg you..." Situated across the road from the Swan River, just down from The Left Bank, Beach St Co is in a stunning spot with amazing

panoramas of North Freo and all the comings and goings on the river. I must have driven by it a thousand times, but never visited, perhaps down to the lack of parking on that side of the road. The inside was like a sauna-beach shack with a low wood panel roof, but it was spacious with plenty of tables and chairs and a stylish bar/counter. There was an al fresco at the side, beside a grassed area where the kids could run about, and overall the place had a quirky charm (I especially liked the giant photo of Victorian men with twirly moustaches rowing). I imagine it's a popular spot for brekkie and there were a lot of folk finishing off their brunch as

we arrived. The lunch menu was smallish but had a nice range of dishes including moroccan bean tagine, fish and chips, calamari, salmon poke bowl and burrata on toast. There was something for everyone and all the old favourites were covered. You ordered at the counter and the young woman serving me was extremely nice – big smile, friendly chat and full of life. My kids decided to share the Beach St Burger (\$28) and she asked if I wanted it cut in half and an extra plate, which was nice. As we waited for our meal, I slurped down a freshly squeezed apple, beetroot, lemon and ginger juice (\$11). A lovely concoction that was served in an old, heavy decorative glass. Sometimes these drinks can be heavy on the ginger, but this had a nice balance of flavours and was super refreshing. Seated by

the window, it was super relaxing looking out at the river. The joint was busy on a Friday lunchtime, with a healthy dollop of pensioners chewing the fat. It wasn't long before I was tucking into my Thai Beef Salad (\$28). First off, the presentation wasn't the best – far too many beansprouts on top and the bowl was too small, making it hard to eat without food spilling over the side. But the core of the dish, the grilled marinated beef, was spot on – the meat was tender and had traces of pink in the middle. The accompanying asian salad was okay, but it could have done with more dressing and less cabbage. There was an excellent dish lurking in there, but they needed to reduce the bulk. It was still enjoyable and very

filling, but just needed a bit of refining. Across the table my kids were hoeing into their Beach St Burger, which was served in a delicious soft bun. The thick, juicy patty was super filling and the kids struggled to finish even half of it. The accompanying thick chips were crispy and well-seasoned. Overall it was a top burger. Situated in a glorious spot, Beach St Co is a friendly place to go for a casual meal and a drink. They also do dinner and live music, so I'll be back with my wife "Special K" to try a main. Right, time to pick up the kids' stationary from the school. "I love the smell of Naplan in the morning..."
Beach St Co
123 Beach St, Fremantle
beachstco.com.au



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