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A community-driven initiative by WA journalist Carmelo Amalfi, *Street Wise* attracts thousands of readers interested in news, the arts, food, film, history and tourism. *Street Wise* stands out for quality and affordable rates, producing high quality content and images to boost your profile and online presence. So advertise your business, people and special events. Contact 0468608503 or melnet@westnet.com.au.

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THE 23rd edition of *Freo Street Wise* celebrates food, art, history and the special events which define our port city. Supported by sponsors and local businesses since its launch in 2015, Fremantle's independent print and online publication features efforts by *Street Wise Media* to put on public display in WA English buccaneer William Dampier's historic ship bell. Discovered by a WA Museum team in 2001, the damaged artefact was found 300 years after Dampier's *Roebuck* sank at Ascension Island in 1701 on the voyage home from the west coast of Australia where Dampier named Shark Bay, collected plants and animals and described the indigenous inhabitants of WA's North West coast.

Street Wise checks in on the latest legal developments in the botched 2023 local government elections. Former Labor MP and columnist Larry Graham's raises serious questions over why the WA Government 'suspended' local government laws to prevent an elected council (Nedlands) to make decisions about its financial future. The move has implications for Fremantle. As will plans to 'renew' historic Fremantle cemetery. Our '*Street Wise Features*' also includes a tribute to our Diggers and plans to bridge the 3.2km strait linking Sicily to the Italian mainland. Enjoy.

Carmelo Amalfi

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Street Wise also is available at www.streetwisemedia.com.au.

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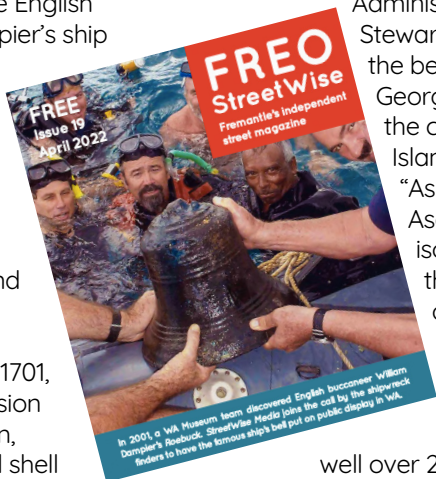


SHIP BELL SITS TIGHT



Image: Carmelo Amalfi

ONE of the most valuable maritime artefacts in Australia will remain on remote Ascension Island after a request by its WA finders to have English buccaneer William Dampier's ship bell put on display after a WA Museum team discovered *Roebuck* in 2001, more than 300 years after Dampier visited the unexplored west coast in 1688 and 1699, having collected and written about the plants, animals and indigenous peoples he observed. In 1701, *Roebuck* sank at Ascension on its way back to Britain, Dampier's botanical and shell collection buried in the seabed at Clarence Bay.



On February 18, *StreetWise* wrote to Ascension seeking, "permission to have the historic bell displayed in WA". Administrator Siobhan Stewart told *StreetWise* the bell was stored at Georgetown museum in the care of the Ascension Island Heritage Society. "As you can imagine, Ascension is a very isolated location and the ability to ship items off the island is very challenging due the limited number of aircraft and lack of ships. The bell weighs well over 25kg and is also quite fragile and has sustained some damage in the past."

ELECTION CHALLENGE

MATTERS of mathematics and due process (democracy) will be tested in the magistrate's court in June following a directions hearing over the botched 2023 local government elections in Freo's central and coastal wards. On April 12, lawyers for the WA Electoral Commission, Greater Fremantle Community & Business Association, former south ward councillor Marija Vujcic and counsel for coastal ward councillor Jemima Williamson-Wong appeared before Magistrate Trevor Darge and made submissions concerning the mix-up of 12,000 ballots in Fremantle's new central and coastal wards. The City of Fremantle did not attend court.



Magistrate Darge presided over the Serpentine-Jarrahdale election re-run in 2021 when the court ruled results in its north ward invalid. The WAEC produced a 146-page investigation report in April 2022 and two people were charged.

FREO FIG FURPHY

FANCY using a fig tree to forge the forces of woke and former mayor Brad Pettitt's 'green' agenda. Owners at 195 High Street say the City of Fremantle abused its powers when it placed the 135-year-old fig bearer on a tree register without their consent in 2018. Council agreed and on February 14 de-listed the tree from the 'significant' register. Two weeks later, in the face of Pettitt pressure and coordinated protests by DesignFreo, the City overturned its decision and re-listed the shady Moreton Bay. Some of the six councillors who voted to re-list it also attended the February 22 photo shoot in front of the tree.

This is despite the City having received legal advice and arguments presented by Cattalini family members, including Pam whose late husband John was mayor of Fremantle. They said the City revoked a lawful resolution to correct an unlawful act because of pressure from individuals or groups and accused it of "committing an offence of dictation". Brad? The decision could impact private landowners with significant trees on their land. The City has now decided to restart the registration process. [Additional fig tree stories at www.streetwisemedia.com.au](http://www.streetwisemedia.com.au).

Competition

Fremantle Ports *Manjaree* Indigenous Art Competition 2024

Categories:

Open and Youth (under 18)

1st Prizes \$3000

Runners Up \$1500

Artworks completed since 1 Jan 2020 are eligible for entry

Entries close 26 June 2024

**ALL ENTRIES DISPLAYED
DURING NAIDOC WEEK**



Scan the code to enter,
for conditions of entry
and advice for artists

Manjaree is the Whadjuk name given to the gathering place around Fremantle Port where locals and visitors engaged in trade and cultural exchange



ANY TAKERS?



THE City of Fremantle should take stock of the Nedlands dispute in which council hired a financial expert to fix the books after it received a damning auditors report, only to have the local government department step in when the external forensic auditor was refused entry to Nedlands council. On April 4, WA political columnist Larry Graham writes Nedlands council did the right thing, and questions why “the department objects to this”.

The former Labor MP says the issue raised serious questions for local governance. Who is responsible for finances of a local government? How would we know who that is? How would the department know? And importantly, what is it that this council did wrong to warrant such intervention? Mr Graham says a good place to start looking for answers is the Local Government Act. Section 2.6 states the elected council is the governing body; s.2.7 states councils govern their affairs and are responsible for performance of the functions of local government; and s.2.7(2)(a) states council oversees the local government finances.

Importantly, s.5.45(2)(a) empowers a council to use people other than the CEO to assist it to perform its functions; which is what Nedlands did. “So why would any department interfere in a council properly doing what the law not only allows it to do, but also requires it to do what they did?” Hired forensic ‘gun’ and Fremantle resident Craig Ross (below) told *StreetWise* the situation at Nedlands was extraordinary: “This is a fight between the councillors and administration staff. I’m in limbo at the moment.” Councils are supposed to be autonomous entities which ultimately are responsible for their operations through democratic processes. Why then Mr Graham asks is the department attempting to prevent what it claims is an autonomous elected council from getting independent advice on a failed audit of its finances?

“Is anyone else thinking maybe, just maybe, after all the tinkering and spin doctoring that has been going on now for over five years, local government reform is in a bit of a mess and it needs a good competent minister to step up and properly fix it and its department. “Any takers?”



PORTOROSA BELLA

WOOD-fired pizza, pasta, chill mussels, espresso martinis, gelati and la dolce vita is yours at Portorosa Fremantle. Salute!



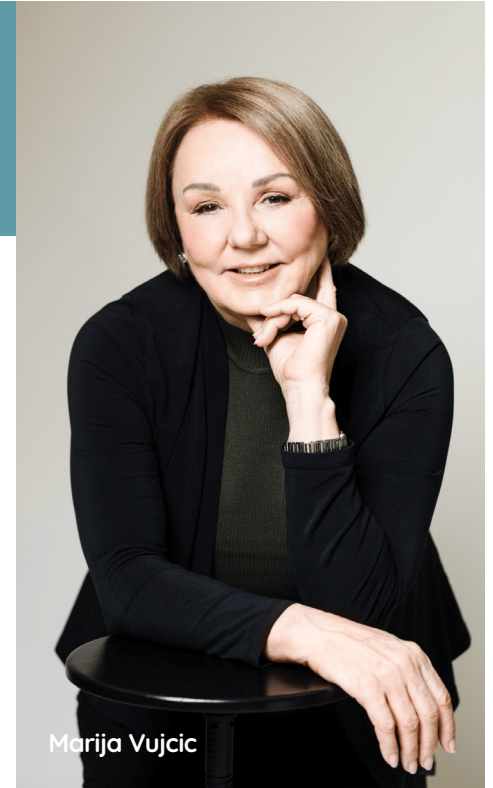
FAMILY friendly service. Classic Italian favourites celebrating the best in European food and wine. Wood-fired pizza, fresh pasta, seafood and exquisite desserts. Outdoor dining with a view of Freo's Cappuccino Strip. 85 Market St, Fremantle www.portorosa.com.au or 0894306126



DEMOCRACY ON NOTICE

A MONUMENTAL stuff up by the WA Electoral Commission in coastal and central wards at last year's local elections resulted in a 12,000-ballot mix up. Fremantle voters in coastal got ballots meant for central and vice versa. The sensible approach would have been to rerun the election. Instead, WAEC went into reputational damage control and opted to fix the error, only to compromise the integrity of the ballot crucial in elections to ensure fairness, accuracy and trust in the democratic process.

As a coastal ward candidate, I've encountered voters who were confused and disappointed by ongoing issues with the process despite WAEC assurances the stuff up was fixed. By the second week of October, it was evident to me the reported corrections to the daily ballot tallies and cumulative totals lacked reconciliation and resulted in the omission of hundreds of ballots. On November 16, 2023, I lodged an invalidity challenge for the coastal ward election. The Greater Fremantle Community and Business Association also lodged for both coastal and central wards. The first directions hearing was held in February in the Fremantle Magistrate's Court. Cr Jemima Williamson-Wong, winner of coastal ward, appeared with legal counsel. The matter was moved to the Perth Magistrates Court on April 12 when it was adjourned to June 28.



Marija Vujcic

The WAEC is represented by State solicitors and Cr Williamson-Wong by Hammond Legal. My motivation to challenge the coastal ward election was not because I lost the election. Maintaining the integrity of the ballot is essential for upholding democracy and ensuring election outcomes are legitimate and representative of voters' choices. It helps prevent fraud and manipulation and ensures every vote counts. Without reconciliation of the tallies in the first and second round of ballots, it is my view, the WAEC final ballot numbers support a narrative of, "nothing to see here", which is at odds with its stated values to, "work to the highest standards of being ethical, accurate, reliable and efficient".

Marija Vujcic

CEMETERY 'RENEWAL'

I HAVE visited Fremantle cemetery since the early 1980s. Fresh cut flowers and prayers for my father Frank, buried here in 1971 just a few steps from the final resting place of AC/DC frontman Bon Scott who was buried in 1980, today one of Australia's most visited graves. No complaints about the noise or JD tributes left by fans everywhere. Only silent notes etched in the walkway leading to his commemorative plaque. A place of reflection and rich history reflecting the development of Fremantle since 1829. Opened in 1898, the cemetery covers nearly 50ha of land in Palmyra bounded by Leach Highway and Carrington Street and Sainsbury Road. More than 40,000 burials and 66,000 cremations have taken place at the historic burial site.

The first official burial took place July 2, 1899, the unfortunate entrant Beaconsfield resident George Davies, 51.

Fremantle cemetery contains war graves of 120 Australian defence force personnel who served in WW1 and 21 who served in WW2. On January 23, 1900, the trustees of the cemetery board were granted freehold title and a caretaker's lodge built from limestone in 1901 and which today serves as the admin office. The 10 members of the board held their first meeting on June 24, 1898, in the Fremantle Town Hall. On October 28, the Carrington Street site was declared a cemetery. Today, visitors can share the cemetery's history and stories of its 'residents' on the Heritage Trail near the caretaker's house. The walk takes about one and a half hours and signs have QR codes visitors can scan to access further information.

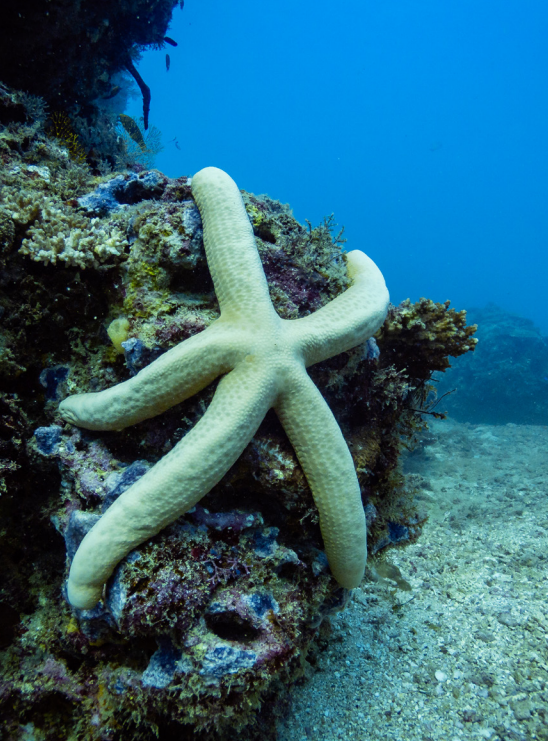
Carmelo Amalfi



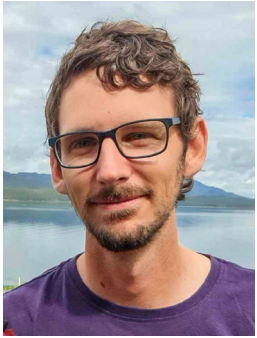
*'The Angel that presided
o'er my birth
Said, 'Little creature,
form'd of Joy and Mirth,
'Go love without the help
of any Thing on Earth'
- William Blake 1757 - 1827*

HEADSTONES could be removed from graves at Fremantle cemetery within the next five to 10 years, according to documents sent to *StreetWise* by Saving Family Headstones at Karrakatta. The community group says the Metropolitan Cemeteries Board plans to expand its Karrakatta 'renewal' program to Fremantle as part of the its "medium-to-long term asset investment plan". "Renewal is not beautification," the group says. "Rather, it is the mass removal of headstones, grave surrounds and plot numbers to make way for new graves. "The headstones are either moved elsewhere in the cemetery, drilled into walls or entirely destroyed." The group says few people in WA are aware they do not 'own' a grave. All graves are subject to a 25-year lease known as a 'grant of right of burial'. Thousands of graves had their tenure cut on July 2, 2012 when all 50-year, 99-year and perpetual grants were extinguished. Headstones may be removed from graves without current grants.

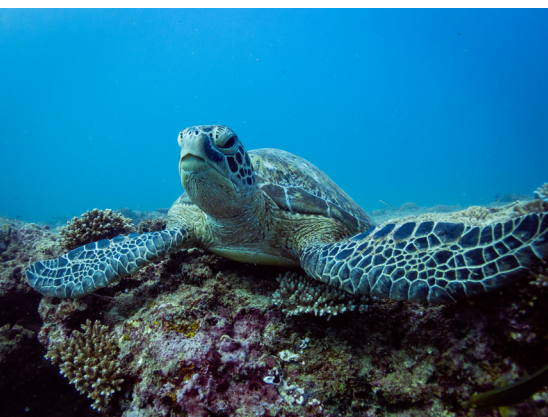
Representative Shane Becu told *StreetWise* the MCB has not announced redevelopment plans for Fremantle: "However, we are informed by a reliable internal source that, as part of its 'medium-to-long term asset investment plan', the MCB will begin redeveloping existing burial areas at Fremantle within the next five to 10 years." The MCB told *StreetWise* it has no plans to expand its renewal program: "We can confirm Fremantle Cemetery has land available to meet the predicted demand for burials for the next 30 years." *StreetWise* sent MCB a copy of its own plans under 'Future asset network - Years 5-10', which states: "Renew burial land in Fremantle." No response from MCB, which posted the denial two hours after it was contacted by *StreetWise*. Families with information about the MCB plans can contact *StreetWise* at 0468608503 or melnet@westnet.com.au.



UNDERWATER
photographer
Rowan Dixon
says he is lucky
to have lived in
Exmouth most
of his life. The
28 year old told
StreetWise:
“Living here
has been great
for my hobby
of photography which eventually
evolved into a hobby for underwater
photography along with scuba diving.
“Nearly all of my underwater photos
were taken locally in the Exmouth Gulf
and along the Ningaloo Reef.”
The images here were captured with an
Olympus TG5 underwater camera.



UNDERWATER WONDER



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STREET FEATURES

BRIDGES and bombs. Anzac legends and images of streetcars for charity. Italian migrants in WA will also relate to news (heard too often before) that the world's biggest suspension bridge (3.2km) will soon link Sicily to the Italian mainland. Meanwhile, down under, work has started on Freo's new traffic bridge (about 200m). While the replacement link has attracted criticism, the multi-billion-dollar Italian crossing has received mixed reactions. Many believe the price tag and corruption on both sides of the Strait of Messina will sink the link, ending up like many bridges, incomplete, left partly built, abandoned. Hundreds of homes will also be resumed. Most welcomed the Sicilian connection as it was better than the time it took to drive or take a bus onto ferries to get to work or visit family and friends (approximately half an hour one way).

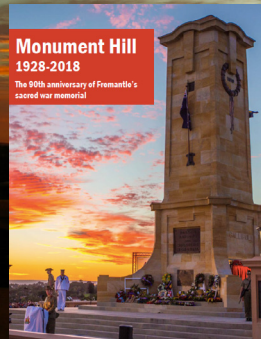
Tolls over and above what the ferryman charges also are foreshadowed. Do the bells toll too for Freo's new crossing? They wouldn't dare. On April 25, Australia paused to reflect on Anzac Day. Pages 14-15 include images from *StreetWise's* archives honouring those who have served, died and kept the peace for the past 125 years since the Boer War (1899-1902). Lest we forget. Humbling was the turn out at the 9th *Freo StreetWise* Charity Car Cruise in March. Thank you Freo, sponsors and supporters of the annual streetcar spectacle. In 2025, classic and vintage car owners are expected to converge on the port city to raise funds for cancer care and research. At *Freo StreetWise's* 10th anniversary charity cruise. Beep beep.

Carmelo Amalfi





LEST WE FORGET



MILITARY memories, local veterans and war memorials honouring Fremantle's Diggers. April 25. Anzac Day.



Ode of Remembrance

*"They shall grow not old,
as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them,
nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun
and in the morning,
We will remember them."*

- Laurence Binyon, September 21, 1914



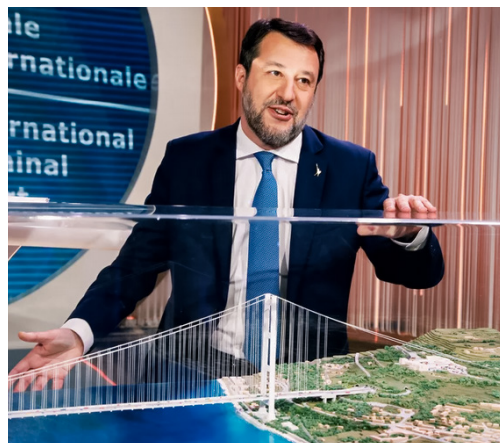
CONNECTING SICILY

THE dream of a bridge linking Sicily to the Italian mainland dates to 252BC when, according to Roman writer Pliny the Elder, a 'string' of boats, wooden planks and empty barrels was assembled across the 3.2km Strait of Messina to transport to Rome 100 elephants captured in Palermo.

It has been a long road, but in March the Italian government resurrected ambitious plans to build the longest suspension bridge in the world. The price tag is an estimated \$20 billion over 15 years, according to deputy PM Matteo Salvini (pictured below).

In the first modern engineering study into a crossing in 1866, engineers proposed an underwater tunnel as a bridge was not feasible and too expensive.

In 1876, then minister of public works Giuseppe Zanardelli declared: "Above or below the waves, Sicily must be united to the Continent."



'We have been talking about crossing the Strait of Messina for decades ... We finally intend to move from words to deeds' - Italian deputy PM Matteo Salvini

A tunnel was shelved and instead a ferry service that continues today was launched in 1896.

A definitive design for a new bridge surfaced in the 1990s when former PM and media mogul Silvio Berlusconi made it a core election promise. Elected in 2001, Berlusconi had the project approved and financed, only

to have it shut down by left-wing opponents when he lost the general election in 2006. Berlusconi was re-elected PM in 2008 and revived the project, which was approved three years later. After Berlusconi

lost his majority and resigned, his successor, Mario Monti, cancelled the project in 2013.

In media reports since the latest announcement, Berlusconi, 87, states: "They won't stop us this time". The Strait of Messina sits along a fault line where a 7.1 earthquake in 1908 killed more than 80,000 people and spawned tsunamis that devastated the coastal areas on both Calabrian and Sicilian sides of the Strait. It remains the deadliest recorded seismic event in Europe to date. Winds also can reach up to 250kmh with currents turbulent enough to rip seaweed off the seabed. A suspension bridge would be safe, according to University of Catania geologist Giovanna Barreca.

"There is a fault line here, making Sicily and Calabria move away from each other by 3.5mm a year," he says. "The project is doable."



THE design for the crossing is a single-span suspension bridge with a length of 3300m. The 1915 Çanakkale Bridge in Turkey presently holds the record since opening to traffic in March 2022, with a span of 2023m. With pylons towering up to 380m, the bridge would be the world's tallest by structural height. It would carry 6000 road vehicles an hour and 200 trains a day. As the bridge would be 65m above the water, maritime traffic would be able to pass safely. The bridge connecting Torre Faro in Sicily with Villa San Giovanni on the Italian Peninsula would have three vehicle lanes in each direction (two for traffic and a third for emergencies plus one for rail). It is expected to support the crossing of six million vehicles and 60,000 trains a year, bringing Sicily's five million inhabitants, "closer to the rest of the continent".

In Fremantle, Main Roads WA has started work on a new traffic bridge to replace the timber crossing opened in 1939. MRD says Queen Victoria Street including the bridge between Swan Street and Canning Highway will close lanes intermittently from this month. The earlier bridge at this site was built by convict labour in 1866, the same year Italian engineers drew up plans for Sicily's planned link to the rest of Italy.



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