

Speech by Jenny Harrington  
Deputy Mayor of the  
Town of East Fremantle  
Saturday 1 August 2020, 10am

Richmond Raceway Public Art Installation

**THANK YOU MAYOR, FOR THAT WARM WELCOME.**

WHAT A WONDERFUL DAY IT IS , TO BE WITH YOU ALL IN THIS PLACE, WHICH IN TERMS OF RACING IS **HALLOWED GROUND.**

**RICHMOND RACEWAY**, A HORSE AND HARNESS RACING TRACK, WAS ESTABLISHED HERE IN 1928 AND RAN UNTIL IT CLOSED IN 1991.

A LITTLE HISTORY OF WHAT IS NOW **RICHMOND RACEWAY**, WHICH HAS BEEN HOME TO MANY ACTIVITIES:

THE AREA WAS A **MUNICIPAL RESERVE FROM 1913 – 1927** AND THE PARK WAS ORIGINALLY KNOWN AS **THE POLO GROUND**, THEN USED AS A **FOOTBALL OVAL**, A GENERAL PLAYING FIELD AND USED BY THE **FREMANTLE GYMKHANA** UNTIL **FREMANTLE TROTTING CLUB** BOUGHT IT IN 1917 AND DEVELOPED IT AS A **TROTTING RACEWAY.**

THE TROTTING WAS ALSO INTERRUPTED FROM **1942-1949** DURING THE 2<sup>ND</sup> WORLD WAR, WHEN **RICHMOND PARK** AND THE EAST **FREMANTLE OVAL** WERE USED BY THE **US ARMED FORCES** AS A GENERAL MILITARY BASE AND BY THE AUSTRALIANS AS AN **ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENCE FACILITY.**

I AM SURE, MANY OF YOU WHO LIVE HERE NOW AND THOSE WHO DID PREVIOUSLY, WILL REMEMBER THE SOUND OF HORSES HOOVES THUNDERING AROUND THE TRACK ON FRIDAY NIGHTS – AS A HORSE LOVER MYSELF, I CERTAINLY DO REMEMBER THOSE SOUNDS.

HOWEVER, NOW IT IS A QUIET PARK SURROUNDED BY TREES AND HOUSES, ONCE A VIBRANT MECCA FOR LOVERS OF HORSES AND HARNESS RACING.

THE ONCE ATMOSPHERE WAS ELECTRIC WITH ANTICIPATION.

IN THIS PLACE, YOU COULD SEE PATRONS POURING THROUGH THESE **TURNSTILES** DRESSED IN THEIR SUNDAY BEST, SPORTING HATS AND GLOVES, WITH FORM GUIDES HELD TIGHT IN THEIR HANDS AND THE PROMISE OF A FUN OUTING LAY AHEAD NO MATTER WHAT THE RESULT.

WOULD THEIR HORSE BE FIRST ACROSS THE LINE?

WOULD THEIR FAVOURITE REINSMEN TAKE HIM THERE?

TALKING ABOUT HORSES ACROSS THE LINE, YOU MAY KNOW WE HAVE DEPICTED 10 HORSES IN OUR ARTWORK ON THE TURNSTYLES AND ALTHOUGH I CAN'T RUN THROUGH THEM ALL, I AM PLEASE TO SAY, WE DO HAVE REPRESENTATIVES OF SOME OF THESE GREAT HORSES HERE TODAY, AND I WOULD LIKE TO INDULGE YOU BY INTRODUCING THEM...

**VILLAGE KID:**

**IAM NOT TOO SURE WHERE TO START WITH VILLAGE KID, IN HIS BOOK THERE ARE 2 PAGES OF WINNINGS AND AWARDS WHICH INCLUDE AN INTER DOMINION, AUSTRALIAN PACING CHAMPIONSHIP, 3 WA HARNESS HORSE OF THE YEAR AND MORE.**

**OWNER/TRAINER OF VILLAGE KID BILL AND NORMA HORN AND DRIVER/REINSMAN CHRIS LEWIS –**

*By the way Chris is still racing at Gloucester park*

**ALSO CO-OWNER OF VILLAGE KID WAS NO LESS THAN GORDON COX, GORDON WAS THE *OWNER AND MANUFACTURER* OF 'BURLEY' FOOTBALLS.....**

## **SAN SIMEON:**

THEN THERE IS THE GREAT SAN SIMEON WHO WON 29 STRAIGHT RACES AND THE INTER DIMINION.

SAN SIMEON WAS OWNED BY LYALL AND FRAN PORTER AND WE ARE LUCKY TO HAVE FRAN PORTER WITH US HERE TODAY AND HIS DRIVER LOU AUSTIN.

## **DAINTY'S DAUGHTER:**

ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S GREATEST MARES, SHE HELD WORLD RECORDS OVER ONE AND TWO MILES AND WAS THE FIRST WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HORSE INVITED INTO THE NSW MIRACLE MILE AND DAINITYS DAUGHTER BECAME THE FIRST MARE INDUCTED INTO THE WEST AUSTRALIA RACING INDUSTRY HALL OF FAME.

DAINTY'S DAUGHTER WAS TRAINED AND DRIVEN BY BERNIE CUSHING FOR HER OWNER/BREEDER JOCK COLEMAN, AND WE HAVE DOT PARKER BERNIE'S YOUNGEST DAUGHTER HERE TODAY ALSO.

SPEEDY CHEVAL'S TRAINER - ROSS OLIVIERI AND I BELLIEVE THE LAST RACE WAS WON BY SPEEDY CHEVAL ON THE 12<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 1991. Correct Ross and did you drive her that day???

DURING THOSE 63 YEARS, THIS NOBLE SPORT BROUGHT GREAT DELIGHT TO THOSE WHO TOOK PART AND THOSE WHO WATCHED IT, AND THIS PLACE DREW PATRONS FROM THROUGHOUT PERTH AND BEYOND.

THIS WAS PARTICULARLY SO IN THE 1950S WHEN THE "SWEEP" TOOK PLACE. OUR HISTORIAN, **ALLAN PARKER** SAID THE SWEEP INVOLVED CHOOSING THE WINNERS OF THE **LAST 5 RACES, AND** IF YOU WON, YOU WON APPROX **£92,000** – A HUGE SUM EQUATING TO MILLIONS TODAY.

ALTHOUGH THE HORSES NO LONGER RUN HERE, THE TURNSTILES REMAIN, AND SO DO THE NAMES OF HORSES RECALLED IN LOCAL STREETS, AND NOW WE HAVE THESE NEW VISUAL RECORDS OF THIS AREA'S RACING HISTORY.

THIS BRINGS ME TO A VEY IPORTANT PART OF THE DAY  
.....ON BEHALF OF THE MAYOR AND MY FELLOW  
**COUNCILLORS**, I WOULD PARTICULARLY LIKE TO GIVE OUR  
THANKS TO **BEN AND TONY JONES** WHOSE PASSION, SKILL  
AND **SERIOUS CRAFTSMANSHIP** HAVE RENDERED THESE  
**STUNNING IMAGES** THAT ARE NOW A PERMANENT FIXTURE  
IN THIS AREA TO COMMERATE **RICHMOND RACEWAY**

WE AREA VERY PROUD OF **BEN'S "CUSTOMISING"** OF EACH  
WINDOW, WITH ALMOST A PORTRAIT OF EACH HORSE,  
DRIVER AND IT'S HISTORY. *FRAN PORTER, ACTUALLY  
MENTIONED TO ME, SHE COULDN'T BELIEVE HOW MUCH THE  
DEPICTION OF **LOU AUSTIN** ACTUALLY LOOKED LIKE HIM IN  
THE PANEL - WELL DONE BEN, THANK YOU.*

ALSO, TO **MATT HASTIE FROM MARGARET RIVER STEEL**  
WHO DID A GREAT JOB WITH THE TRICKY MEASUREMENTS  
AND ACCURATE FABRICCATION OF THEM ALL.

WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK **MILTON JAMES, ALLEN  
PARKER AND ROSS PYKE** FOR THEIR INVALUABLE GUIDANCE  
AND ADVICE ASSITING **TONY AND BEN** IN THE MAKING OF  
THESE PANELS.

THE TOWN OF EAST FREMANTLE IS PROUD TO INVEST IN HERITAGE AND IN PUBLIC ART, AND I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE COUNCIL'S PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE AND STAFF IN THE TIME THEY HAVE ALL PUT INTO THESE ARTWORKS COMING TO FRUITION.

IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES, WHEN WE ARE PLAGUED BY PANDEMICS AND RECESSIONS, SOME MAY ASK WHAT VALUE PUBLIC ART HAS?

WE SAY THAT NOW – MORE THAN EVER – WE NEED UPLIFTING AND ICONIC REMINDERS OF OUR HISTORY.

WE NEED TO BE INSPIRED ABOUT WHAT WAS POSSIBLE IN THIS PLACE, AND A WAVE OF THE WHIP IN THE AIR OVER OUR HAUNCHES TO PROPEL US TOWARDS THE NEXT GREAT ENDEAVOURS THAT LIE AHEAD – DOWN THE TRACK!!!

I INVITE YOU ALL TO LINGER AND VIEW THESE NEW WORKS AND TO SHARE YOUR MEMORIES OF OUR TOWN'S PROUD RACING PAST.

**BUT BEFORE YOU DO ....AND BEFORE I ASK THE MAYOR TO UNVEIL THE ARTOWRKS.....**

AS IT WAS - ONCE ON THIS RACEWAY - YOU COULD HEAR THE THUNDER OF HOOVES, AND ABOVE IT, THE HIGH PITCHED VOICE **OF THE RACE CALLER**, WHOSE FAST-PACED WORDS TOLD THE FATE OF WHO HAD **WON**, WHO WAS *PLACED*, AND WHO WAS **STONE, MOTHERLESS LAST**.

FOR *SOME FUN OF THE PAST*, I WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO OUR **RACE CALLER** HERE TODAY, IN **HAYDEN KING** TO CALL A RACE **ONE LAST TIME** OF THESE TEN **FAMOUS HORSES** DEPICTED IN THE WINDOWS OF THE TURNSTYLES.

THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING TODAY.