

**FREMANTLE WORKERS SOCIAL AND LEISURE CLUB**

*Statement by Member for Fremantle*

**MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle)** [12.53 pm]: Last weekend, the Fremantle Workers Social and Leisure Club closed its doors for business at its Henry Street residence—a residence that it had been operating out of since 1956. I would like to acknowledge the rich history of the workers club, which this year celebrated its centenary. I recently attended the launch of a book to acknowledge that occasion. I was happy to be able to give some financial support to the publication of the book, and in a small way show my support for the club and the social connection it has provided for its members over the years.

The story of the Fremantle workers club over the last 100 years is in many ways a story of Fremantle. At the outbreak of the First World War, the club convened a few doors down from its recent Henry Street location as a place of community for its members and their families. The club's story at times has reflected the social prejudices of the times, but mostly it has been a place of social connection, good cheer and at times fiery debate for its members. The club has been nothing if not tenacious in ensuring that it stays the course and that its doors stay open for its members. The club closed in May 2011 and was almost wound up. Thanks to the hard work of the president, Don Whittington, and others, it was able to reopen in 2012. Recently, the club voted to embark on a new course—this time in shared facilities with the Fremantle tennis and bowls club. It did this even though the number of members had climbed exponentially over the previous two years. It was clear that the overheads of operating alone in a venue meant that the club was not financially viable over time. Its location may change, but the spirit of responsibility that the club has to existing and potential members has prevailed.