

TRANSCRIPT

This is an interview with Anne Brinkworth for the Bassendean Memorial Library, held at the Library on Monday 28 May 2018. The interviewer is Heather Campbell.

Anne, you were interviewed by Maxine Laurie in September 2007, and that interview covers much of your life in Bassendean and your involvement with the community¹. For this interview I'd like to focus on your time as a councillor for the Town of Bassendean, particularly over the last ten years. First of all could we start off with your full name and your date and place of birth, please?

BRINKWORTH: Anne Ivy Brinkworth [birth name Rakich], 2 March 1938 and I was born in Midland, WA.

HC Tell me a bit about our family background and your childhood.

BRINKWORTH: I was the first child born to a migrant family. They lived on a fourteen-acre property in Caversham. As a young child - because my parents didn't speak very good English - I had to learn very quickly the English language, from my neighbour who was wonderful, and translate for them. Also we had Italian and Dutch people close by and believe it or not in those days I could speak that language and translate also. So as a six-year-old, when I went to school, I could speak four languages. Now I can't speak any of those languages except English. It was a very hard time because they didn't have flowing water. I remember carrying buckets of water from down near the river where the big well was. My mother lost a nine-month-old child soon after I was born and then there was a big gap to my two brothers. I really was the main one to keep my parents connected with the community. Everything was all right until... then my young sister was born sixteen years later - I was delighted after having two brothers. But sadly I contracted TB at the age of sixteen and a bit, which was very sad, because it meant I had no contact at all with my sister for two years. It was a very difficult time because as TB is, as most people know, in those days there was really no cure for it. So we were definitely guinea pigs - there was a wonderful scientist that had some trials and we were guinea pigs. The treatment didn't actually work with me, so I had to have surgery, which was, in those days a big thing. Is that enough about my childhood?

HC Yes, if that's all you want to say about it. There was one plus about the TB and being up at Wooroloo - you met your husband² up there, didn't you?

BRINKWORTH: Yes. He was actually a patient there, but I didn't like him.

HC Oh!

BRINKWORTH: Because I and my friend, after we'd had our operations, we were like little usherettes and we'd go around and speak to the people who were lonely. We went into his room, down the men's dorms, and he had this big thing over his legs. I said, "Oh, what have you got wrong?" He said, "I've got TB in my foot." I came back and told the nurses who I was very friendly with and they said, "No, it's not, he's just had a toenail thing

¹ Bassendean Local History Collection, Interview with Anne Brinkworth (nee Rakich) [sound recording], conducted by Maxine Laurie. 2007. OH82.

² Alan Courtney Brinkworth.

done,” or whatever. I went marching down, I said, “You’re a fibber and I’ll never talk to you again.” And I didn’t.

HC You must have eventually, Anne. [Laughter]

BRINKWORTH: Well that was after we were out and met years later.

HC That’s a lovely story. You came to live in Bassendean, after you married.

BRINKWORTH: We were actually married in 1959 and my parents had a house across the road from where they lived, they rented to us. Then we built our house in ’61, so it was two years after. Alan had actually already brought that block before he’d even met me. He must have wanted to live near his parents because they were at number ten³. I was more than happy to go there, and I was lucky, I had a wonderful relationship with his parents. Then we built across the road because it was too small for four boys who wanted to study. In those days the bank didn’t want to lend money to you if you were extending, but they would lend it to you if you wanted to build a new house. In a way it worked out wonderful for us because we were able to have a second bathroom and a family room, etc.

HC Can you remember what your first impressions of Bassendean were?

BRINKWORTH: Oh as a teenager, when I worked at the travel service in Boans, in Perth, we used to go past. It looked terrible because it had all the industrial area and we were going in on a steam train. I thought oh heaven forbid, I’ll never live there! In fact my father was quite upset that we were going to live there because he thought it was very damp and with our past condition [TB] you can’t live in a damp area. So he desperately wanted us to move to Morley, but we stuck out to it and we’ve been happy every since.

HC You married Alan Courtney Brinkworth. I wondered what sort of man he was.

BRINKWORTH: He was an ordinary man. Loved dancing, which is where we met. He worked at the WAGR, then did a short stint in the Navy, for National Service. That’s where he was picked up with TB. When I met him he was a very kind, generous person. Up to then I’d met some men that I wasn’t comfortable with. With him I was always comfortable. But it took me a long time to love him. I was not that way inclined. So he had to pursue me and ask me three times.

HC And it paid off because you had four sons.

BRINKWORTH: It sure did.

HC I wondered how he reacted to your wish to stand for council and your commitment to council over the years.

BRINKWORTH: He pushed me to go to be quite honest. He was very concerned with another friend up the road. They said, “Look we’ve got to get someone else on the council. They actually got me into it and backed me. But the idea was the other person was

³ Ida Street, Bassendean.

supposed to get in and I was there just to support this person. Closer to the election I realised that this other person wasn't doing much and they were tricking me. I won very well so I was happy then.

HC Your father-in-law, Eric Courtney Brinkworth, was on the Roads Board from 1947 to 1956 and I wondered what sort of man he was.

BRINKWORTH: Oh he was a gorgeous man. Very family orientated, believed in the right things. I didn't know him while he was on council. All I can remember him saying was the reason he got on council was because... We had open drains then, in front of the properties, and he was upset with the council that they weren't spending enough money on roads and things and that was his passion, which he did achieve.

HC In the nine years he was there, did he ever mention anything else he'd achieved?

BRINKWORTH: No.

HC Did his service influence you to stand for council at all?

BRINKWORTH: No, no.

HC You first stood for West Ward in 1988, tell me about your campaign.

BRINKWORTH: Oh gosh, it was very robust. I think I had five people going against me because there was a big issue, the Greenies were coming in to take over and there wasn't a good mix. It got quite nasty actually, but I just did my own thing. I was advised by a lot of ratepayers to not get involved with the nastiness, just do my thing. I doorknocked extensively, and I got a really good response, especially from the migrant women... [They] surprised me – and I should have known – but they kind of believed, or are made to - to vote the same as their husbands. They actually said to me, "Look we'll be voting for you; we know our husbands won't." That really made me spur on because I wasn't being a feminist or anything, but they thought it was time to have more females on.

HC Were there any females on the council at the time?

BRINKWORTH: Two.

HC Were there any particular issues that were really the reason you stood for council, apart from being tricked into it; was there anything that particularly motivated you?

BRINKWORTH: Well the lounge-room episode when we built our house and we couldn't have a sunken lounge. I just couldn't understand that completely, whereas now they build houses down on the roadside. That was one policy I thought was just not going to ever happen again. Little did I know that it wasn't up to me anyhow, it was up to nine councillors to vote on it.

HC You did say in your interview with Maxine that there were a few issues and I think you did mention the sunken lounge room.

BRINKWORTH: Well that was one I could really remember. Also West Ward and North Ward were well and truly neglected I felt – not just me, the ratepayers as well – because the shopping centre... Unfortunately the railway line and Guildford Road do divide us and you can't get away from that. They felt during budget times that they were being neglected, so I tried, and I was able to convince councillors that it should be equal, be it parks, be it roads, be it footpaths, whatever.

HC At the time did you think you had anything in particular to offer as a woman; did you think it was time for another woman to be on council or was that not in your thinking?

BRINKWORTH: Probably not. Our council, I've got to admit are very family orientated, be it men or women. I was always made welcome. There was no 'you are a woman' or anything. A lot of the councillors that were on there – men that were on there – their wives came on council or vice versa. It was a good mixture. I really don't think it came into effect, it was just overall needs.

HC When you were doorknocking, what sort of reception were you getting from people?

BRINKWORTH: I was getting a very good reception because – I am not sure, but most of these people, especially down at Ashfield – which was a low socio area – they reckoned that nobody had ever had actually been and doorknocked. Whether that was true or not... I tried to explain to them maybe you weren't home or whatever. I remember coming home and saying to my husband, "Oh God, that's a poor area, I've got to really look after that if I get in." Yes, that was one of the things that I saw. Elderly people, they were just wonderful. In fact it got to a stage one ratepayer said, "You mustn't talk too long because you've got to get right around." I thought, oh are they deliberately talking then? He said, "Well I'm just leaving it to you."

HC Did you do advertising in the paper, or circulate leaflets or anything like that?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, definitely circulated leaflets and advertised in the paper. It was a very important time because my husband and his friend were going to meetings and asking questions and I actually built on that. It was a town planning issue which was unfortunate, but it was a big thing then. The people felt we couldn't afford a Town Planner and they didn't want it. That was the issue I got in on. I was going to get rid of the Town Planner.

HC So had there been a Town Planner for some time.... It was a new Town Planner?

BRINKWORTH: He was only for three months trial, but obviously once it's a trial then it stays on.

HC So were you against that to start off with?

BRINKWORTH: I was.

HC What made you change your mind?

BRINKWORTH: Oh as soon as I got in on town planning, I thought oh boy, I don't know anything of this, of course we need a Town Planner. Then I had to run around and explain to the ratepayers why I had changed my mind. It took some persuasion. In those days there was no zoning and all this. I said explained this would be coming up. I honestly said, "I don't understand it, and it's going to take a lot of work." They accepted it at the end of the day.

HC That sounds like an awful lot of work in your campaign; did you have a team to help you?

BRINKWORTH: My husband helped me. I preferred to do it myself because I know I'd helped people previously doorknocking – and even with Alan they would say, "Well where's Anne, why isn't she here?" So I felt better... They helped me put out the leaflets and all that sort of thing. In those days we had polling booths so from eight to six we were out at five different schools, handing out leaflets on voting day, or picking up people to make them vote. It was a lot of work. Yes, I did have a lot of support.

HC How did you feel when you knew you'd won?

BRINKWORTH: I was shocked because I didn't expect it, I really didn't. In fact the kids... I don't even know whether I had any food for them at home that night. The next thing unbeknown to me everyone's coming with drinks and things. They were there until about 1 am in the morning celebrating. I said to them, "I just want to go to bed." No, I was shocked and delighted.

HC With subsequent campaigns that you must have had later because you were there for a very long time, did they follow the same format, doorknocking and leaflets and that sort of thing?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, but it was easier then because you'd already been on. Then actually the questions were, "Well what have you done for us?" I'd have to explain the system, that it wasn't up to just me, I had to convince four other councillors to vote the same as me. In fact if they didn't accept it I used to ask the residents to come to our full council meetings to see what is going on. I think that helped easily, it was just no problem, so I was accepted.

HC Then once you were on, was there any induction given, you know, this is what you do when, this is what meetings you have to go to; was there any sort of induction?

BRINKWORTH: You were expected to go to all those things and they put a list up on the board and you would actually tick which committees you'd like to be on – or a deputy. It was very fair. You could go to that committee as an observer, but you couldn't speak unless you got the permission of the chairperson and you couldn't vote, naturally. But you had a good understanding of what was coming up at the full council. So I found that helpful.

HC Had you had anything to do with local government, or anything like that before?

BRINKWORTH: Not a thing. That was a big step. I took every training course there was.

HC What sort of training courses were there, Anne?

BRINKWORTH: Responsibilities, what's expected of you... There were so many. The main one – I used to shake my head about – was the financial interest. It was stuck in my head, if I get a bouquet of flowers, I have to declare that, even though I was told you don't have to declare until it's \$200, but I was still very particular about that. The training was really wonderful; it gave me an insight, scared me a bit because I realised I'd got more responsibilities than I thought. But they were very valuable, and I don't understand councillors who don't go to those trainings, how they can get through with it.

HC They were provided by the council?

BRINKWORTH: Yes. Every councillor was allowed a training allowance. I think mine was \$1 500 – in those days they weren't so expensive, where now one would be \$1 500. You went to them and reported to council that you had been.

HC After that initial burst going to those training courses did you feel the need to go back to them again when you got voted in again?

BRINKWORTH: Later on, probably ten years later because things were changing, the Act was changing, I did then. You have to update and it's weird but each speaker gives a different meaning to different things. I remember once saying, "Oh is that what he meant that time," which was something I wasn't really sure of, but I felt a bit silly to ask a question. So definitely. You can never learn too much.

HC What sort of reception did you get from the other councillors?

BRINKWORTH: Oh it was really good, yes, no problems.

HC And from the staff?

BRINKWORTH: Well actually most of them were delighted because I was always one of those people that got on with staff and got on with people and never caused them problems. So they were quite happy, or they said they were anyhow.

HC Do you have any memories of your very first council meeting?

BRINKWORTH: Oh God, yes! I just went there and I just listened. I remember the Mayor saying, "You can speak Councillor Brinkworth." I said, "I am listening." Yes, it was, it was quite cumbersome.

HC Tell me about the preparation you have to do for a council meeting.

BRINKWORTH: Read a lot. That's why I was so glad I worked in a library and read. It was so important. I'd read, when we first got our mail on a Friday night. Then on a Sunday I'd probably re-read it and then on the Tuesday before the meeting I'd read it again because there are some things you missed, or you might have had to ring the staff on the Monday to just clarify some of the position.

HC So this was the minutes of the previous meeting...

BRINKWORTH: And your agenda.

HC Were there attachments that...

BRINKWORTH: Yes, lots of attachments, especially when it got to Town Planning. You just had to get your head around it. One thing, because I knew the district well, I knew where every street was, so I knew everywhere they were talking about. I'd go down in the car, go to that street and have a look and decide what's going on. I always made sure I went and had a look before...

HC You were very conscientious, Anne.

BRINKWORTH: I was. I had to be. People had put their faith in me; and I enjoyed it. I wanted to know what I was talking about and I was sure I was going to say something if I didn't like it.

HC Was there any particular mentor you had, that you could go to if you had a question you wanted to ask?

BRINKWORTH: Probably Tina Klein⁴ and John Cox⁵ and the ex-mayor, John Paterson⁶. He, I found very helpful, for me. If I didn't want to involve present councillors I'd go to him and he would guide me.

HC Because he was no longer on council at the time?

BRINKWORTH: No, that's right. He would give me both sides.

HC And allow you to make up your own mind.

BRINKWORTH: That's right, where the current councillors naturally are going to give their view and I needed to see the other view, yes.

HC What sort of time commitment was this, to read all the agendas and the minutes and prepare for the other committee meetings.

BRINKWORTH: Oh at least twenty hours a week, at least.⁷

HC You must have had very little other free time then.

BRINKWORTH: Well you don't, you don't. I had a part-time job; unfortunately I had a shift-worker husband and I had sons going to university. Every Tuesday it was a bit pot of

⁴ Tina Klein OAM, was elected to Bassendean Town Council in 1986 and before retiring in 2009 had served four terms as deputy mayor and six years as mayor. She served on, and chaired, numerous committees.

⁵ John Cox, OAM, JP, was first elected to Council in 1975 and during a 20-year term as Councillor, served as Mayor from 1984-1988 and from 1989-1995. He was made a Freeman of the Town in 1996.

⁶ Dr John G Paterson, was the first Mayor of the Town of Bassendean from 1975-1984, and a Freeman of the Town.

⁷ See Attachment Two following this transcript for a record of formal meeting attendance by Anne Brinkworth in her time as a Bassendean Town Councillor.

spaghetti bolognise that was cooked in the morning and it was left there and they just helped themselves.

HC How did they react to your new-found interest?

BRINKWORTH: I think in the beginning they felt a bit... you know they'd lost their mum a little while. But I noticed that they'd be interested and sometimes they'd read the agenda and say, "What are you going to do about that?" So they were interested and very supportive, otherwise I couldn't have done it.

HC Was it the subject of discussion at mealtimes?

BRINKWORTH: No, no. Our emphasis was to talk about them.

HC The running of council meetings, was that harmonious or contentious?

BRINKWORTH: Very contentious.

HC In what way?

BRINKWORTH: Very diverse councillors. I can remember once saying to Bevan Carter⁸, when he and I had a bit of a spat, I said, "I can't believe we all live in the same little district and we've got such different ideas." Yes, different ones have their different agendas I thought. Trying to get through that it got quite nasty at times.

HC What, personally nasty?

BRINKWORTH: Sometimes, but it was everyone trying to prove a point, or trying to gain marks. But the best thing was – I remember John Cox saying to me, "You have to go back into the committee room, after the meeting has finished, and have a drink and don't talk about council in there. That was the best advice I ever had. I know some councillors don't do it now, but I wish they would because you've aired your grievances, get on with it and don't have any hate.

HC Yes, very good advice. I'd like to talk about the mayors, because they ran the meetings. Just a word picture of them and their management and leadership styles. I did make a list of the mayors that I thought you might remember – any aspects of their administration or any significant changes they might have made. The first one was Paul Bridges, who was Mayor from 1988-89, have you any memories of him?

BRINKWORTH: Definitely. He only came in to be mayor because of the controversy. He and his fellow councillors were getting rid of the Town Clerk, Clarrie McCreed⁹ when I first got on council. I wasn't part of why they did it, but John Cox refused to be mayor because he knew he would have had to sign off Clarrie McCreed, who he supported. So Paul virtually had to take it on that year. He was very supportive of me. He took time to explain things, but he was very controlling I thought and certainly made the debate go the way he wanted, which in my mind, being president of a Red Cross thing, I was always told that you

⁸ Served on the Bassendean Town Council 1991-2005, including as Mayor 1997-2001.

⁹ Town Clerk 1975-1988.

chair, and you listen, but don't control. I found that hard to take, but that was the way it was and no-one questioned it. Paul and I are still friends. We have our differences. He certainly sorted out the staff, if you could say... he did a good job for the twelve months he was on.

HC He was in fact followed by John Cox, wasn't he, from 1989-1995; what about him, what was he like?

BRINKWORTH: Oh he was a different sort of person, he liked to listen. He would only add into the debate if he thought differently or to guide councillors. I and John got on very well, had no problems. He listened to all sorts of people in Bassendean, not just one area, whereas that's where Paul was really. He was well-respected.

HC He was followed by Vicki Philipoff; that was 1995-96, just for a year. What was she like?

BRINKWORTH: I had no problem with Vicki. I got a shock that she wanted to be mayor.

HC Why, Anne?

BRINKWORTH: Well she'd only been on council a short time and... yes, I just didn't actually think she would go for it. She was running a business, had two very young children, but as far as I am concerned she did a good job. I never had a problem with her, in fact she was probably more laid back than any other mayor than I've ever known. If I'd ring her and say, "I need to give drinks to this committee meeting I'm having, is that okay?" She'd say, "Yes, whatever." There was no... she was very good, but she was only there for the year and made her mark.

HC What was her management style?

BRINKWORTH: She didn't really... I am trying to think. She was very good and she was very good to the staff and made her point. She would listen to reason.

HC She was followed by L G Fisher, from 1996-97.

BRINKWORTH: Les was a different person again. I found it hard in the beginning because he was our best friend, our personal friend, so he was up there. Obviously it's difficult for them because they've got to control you and you've got to take the friendship away. Sometimes I think that two of us used that and got on each other's nerves because of it. The only time I did have really friction with him was when he was bringing in the computers and I refused to have it. He said I would have to otherwise I'd have to leave council. So I rang the LGA up they said, "No, if you're Italian, you get it in Italian; if you're blind, you have it in Braille, they can't force you." So I went and explained that to him. He said, "Oh there's no doubt about you!" No problems after that. He changed a few things around that he wanted to do. I thought he did it too quickly, got furniture and things, but that was Les.

HC How did you cope with computers eventually?

BRINKWORTH: I didn't. To this day I still don't.

HC And the council staff made allowances for that?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, because LGA said they had to. The funny thing is with that, I notice they all had computers, but they didn't bring them to council meetings, they also wanted a hard copy. I used to go on about that, I said, "Well you've got your computers, why do you want a hard copy?" "Well you get it." I said, "I didn't cost the council any money." That was quite a thing. That went on for years because it's easier to read from paper and turn the pages over, it definitely is.

HC I agree with you. He was followed by Bevan Carter from 1997-2001; what was Bevan like?

BRINKWORTH: He was a different personality – a very well-liked person. Very laid back, but when he meant business he meant business. Used to ride a bike around to see the ratepayers. The only problem I ever had, he was sometimes brought Aboriginal issues into council when I felt it wasn't a council issue. On the rest he was really a popular mayor.

HC What was his management style of the meetings?

BRINKWORTH: They were good. I never heard any complaints. We don't really get involved; the Mayor and the CEO are the ones that talk about it.

HC He was followed by G K Peterson from 2001-2003, two years.

BRINKWORTH: Yes – actually twice. Greg went against me in council. Very professional, but also interested in the area that they lived, which I found a bit hard to cope with.

HC What with - in his ward do you mean?

BRINKWORTH: In his ward, yes. Trying to get through that could be difficult, but he was very fair. He was actually the one that got us to get this library up.

HC We're going to talk about that later – so he was a mover and shaker behind the library?

BRINKWORTH: Well it had been going on, but he was the last one that really pushed it through. That is to say, "Look we've had this for years, let's do it." We only just got through with five/four, so yes.

HC W G Klein¹⁰ 2003-2009, that was quite a long tenure, that one.

BRINKWORTH: Yes. She was a very strong person. Sometimes maybe put her views across too much, but she certainly got things going and checked on things and put her heart and soul in it. She was a driving force probably behind the new railway station. She was very involved with the senior people. She did a good job.

HC When you say 'senior' people, do you mean as in the aged or...

¹⁰ Wouterine Godeliva Klein, known as Tina.

BRINKWORTH: Aged, yes.

HC Seniors, yes. Lastly John Gangell from 2009, the most recent one we can talk about.

BRINKWORTH: John, when he got on I thought oh God, being young... He was the youngest mayor ever. In fact he and I did have a few issues. I called him a bully once, but after I got to know him and his ways and his performance, I was very impressed. In fact I would probably say he was the best as far as I was concerned. He was a real mover and shaker and didn't like things being rejected. He did a lot of work behind the scenes to find out if this was possible and that. But he always thought of the ratepayers and the expense it would be on them.

HC What sort of changes did he make in his time?

BRINKWORTH: Well he definitely got the Burswood movies, because he actually had a connection there. When he found out that they were looking for an area to have some movies by night, he convinced our council and us that we had to go for it. I believe it's been very successful – and that was mainly from his doing, bringing it to us. The underground power in Ashfield. That had been a contentious item for a long time because of the cost and because we wanted to do the whole district obviously. A proposal came from the energy department that they were willing to do a small area and John was the one that actually came up with the staff that Ashfield was the ideal area, it just fitted in. So we were able to get underground power for them at quite a modest amount, which they paid over five years. It's proven to be... I mean Ashfield was just transformed from that day. That was my ward, so I was really proud of that.

HC Anything else?

BRINKWORTH: Oh during the local government amalgamation he and the CEO just spent so many hours going to meetings with ministers and fighting on our behalf, so we weren't amalgamated with Bayswater. It's not just him but I think it's all the other mayors and their persistence, as a group, that that was dropped. But yes, definitely that.

HC What was your personal view of that amalgamation?

BRINKWORTH: I didn't like it. I just couldn't see the benefit of it because everything was working well as it was. They claim it would be a cost benefit, but I am not sure whether it would have. I know it would have been a lot less wages, but it was going to be trauma for staff. Maybe in the country. That's where I think it should be done, but obviously in the city I didn't believe it should be done.

HC What sort of impact would it have had on Bassendean?

BRINKWORTH: I don't think we'd lose our identity like some people said because Bassendean I think has got its own identity like Guildford has with Swan. But we would have been controlled. One of the issues would have been the library, even though I'd been told they would leave this library here, it would be in safe hands and things. But other things where we think we would have not benefitted, that's our reserves, the Swan Districts Football Club was a worry. One of the things would have been the committee buses that

take the elderly out to different things. Where Bayswater charge \$10 I think, when they take them to shopping and that, we supply a free service. There were quite a few things. I remember putting them down, that I think would have impacted. I think we are better on our own. I think this way it's up to the staff to make sure those things are done.

HC Was the community generally not in favour?

BRINKWORTH: It was 50-50. I know people in the North Ward didn't really care because they lived probably closer. They do their shopping mainly in Morley anyhow, just crossing over. The only thing I could get when ratepayers told me they preferred to go with Bayswater was the fact that they had those free bins, four free bins during the year. That was all that actually came – the benefit.

HC Before we leave John Gangell, what about the Old Perth Road Markets; did he have anything to do with those?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, he and a couple of other councillors felt the need – and this had been going the whole time I was on council – Old Perth Road here, trying to revitalise, it's just hopeless. We've tried many, many things and that was one of the things they thought that would work. It certainly has but it might be time to rethink it now. The Night Markets definitely work. I think that is because there is so many markets around; Maylands have their festivals now and you've got your Beaufort Street... I think you can have too many markets. Our problem, I feel – I come over regularly and all I really get is a meal because there is so much art and craft. We visualised it would have been fresh produce, but that hasn't attracted those people. It could be because the Midland Markets are close by. Occasionally you'd get a guy that would sell oranges or eggs, but the people really wanted more produce, but you can't force the vendors to come.

HC They wanted a farmers' market then?

BRINKWORTH: Yes.

HC I'd like to talk about the councillors now. I do have this great long list of councillors, but I thought it might be better just to ask if there were any councillors over the years, that stand out in your mind.

BRINKWORTH: They all had their different character.

HC So would it be better if I just read out a few names, Anne?

BRINKWORTH: Yes.

HC R W Wishart, who was there from 1988-91.

BRINKWORTH: Rick and I actually got on council at the same time together, so even though we had different views we were kind of locked in together going to training courses. Rick was very kind, he would take me, or I would take him. So we had a good connection. I found him a very fair councillor and was delighted with him and sad to see him actually go, because he had a lot to contribute. He only did one term.

HC D J Woods, 1989-92.

BRINKWORTH: Dennis was a friend. His dad had also been a councillor previously. Very outspoken, very much for our ward, our side, but sometimes grappled to get his thoughts through, but a fun guy.

HC Fun in what way?

BRINKWORTH: You never knew what he was up to.

HC J M Van Hoek, 1990-96 – any memories?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, he was also in my ward and we supported each other. He's very much involved with the Ashfield Soccer Club. A lot of people thought that maybe he was only there for that reason. I didn't have a problem with that because he had started a soccer club and he was really keen that amateur sport was given a go by council and yes, he was a fighter for them.

HC J E MacDonald, 1990-93.

BRINKWORTH: Jim knew all about figures. He was an older person. He and I got on, but I don't think Jim, in that time, there was much contribution really.

HC I S Hislop from 1990-93.

BRINKWORTH: She was on a short period too, one term. She gave a lot, she had some excellent ideas and gave clues to staff, where to get different things. In fact one of her things is still going on, yes, she was a good contributor.

HC R J Van Delft 1991-94.

BRINKWORTH: Oh Ron, yes. Our ward, but a real, real greenie. He and I really, we'd clash in a friendly way, because every tree I wanted to save he didn't want to save and it was vice versa. But he made a lot of very good... He ended up being a staff member down at Gosnells I think, or Armadale. Yes, he was very involved in everything, yes.

HC K R Conway, 1992-95.

BRINKWORTH: Ken, yes, he was a great guy. He was more for fighting for the working person, even though he lived in the section that we... the green belt, he thought that they were going too far in not letting enough houses... and reclaiming a lot of land for the wetlands. So even though he lived there he could see both sides, so he was really valuable.

HC M J Archibald.

BRINKWORTH: That's Peterson's wife. Yes, she was in for a term too, also belonging to that section of wanting to save the wetlands. It seemed to be, with some of them, that was always their main issue and to block anything that the others tried to get, yes, but she was very valuable.

HC J De Tastes, that's 1995-1997.

BRINKWORTH: Yes, she was a countess. Actually I supported her getting in, but then sometimes I wondered. Very outspoken, very flamboyant, had a lot of good ideas but she got the staff up the wrong way.

HC An English countess?

BRINKWORTH: French.

HC E A Giles, 1996-99.

BRINKWORTH: Ann. She was excellent. She was the daughter of Pat Giles, the member of whatever she was, in the Federal Government¹¹. Very professional and listened and came up with ideas. She was very good.

HC P G Pearson, 1994-1997.

BRINKWORTH: Peter Pearson. He was the one that actually beat me that year in a nasty campaign, but it wasn't him. Believe it or not he and I ended up being excellent friends much to the disgust of some people. Even though he beat me when I came back that following year¹² he was more than supportive, he was helpful.

HC So there was no animosity.

BRINKWORTH: None at all.

HC J A Fox, 1997-2007.

BRINKWORTH: A different character again. Very flamboyant. He had different ideas; sometimes I couldn't work it out. I think in all of them, they bring something to the council that you either reject or pass, but it makes you think. He was one of those.

HC R A Clarke from 1999-2003.

BRINKWORTH: I've gone blank.

HC Never mind, if you think of something later. Elgar, M A Elgar, 1999-2003.

BRINKWORTH: Mary is mainly from that wetland area, very outspoken, came up with some wonderful ideas. She had a way of making you listen – even if you disagreed with her at the end of the day you'd say, "Oh yes, you've got a good point there." No, she was a very good councillor.

HC You've mentioned the wetlands several times, were they quite an issue?

¹¹ Patricia Jessie Giles (née White) AM 1928-2017. She was an Australian Labor Party Senator for WA for 12 years and was an activist for women's rights.

¹² According to the *Eastern Reporter*, 2/6/2015, p 5, Anne Brinkworth said she was "'thrown off" the Council in 1994 by environmental groups who campaigned against her because they thought their interests were not being looked after.' She returned to Council in 1995.

BRINKWORTH: Yes, continually, still is.

HC In what way?

BRINKWORTH: Well there's a big area down there that they've made bigger. They called it Wetland and when they were opposing me that's where they said... Because I had passed a motion that a particular builder could build some units on a place and they claimed it was wetland. I claimed it wasn't wetland. So they're very much protecting an area down there and it's just gone too far I believe. But they're really into it and they always made sure they had two or three councillors representing that group, that's why there's a lot of short-term councillors because they always had someone else ready.

HC Did they belong to a particular group?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, the Preservation Group.¹³

HC Is that a Bassendean in particular society.

BRINKWORTH: Yes.

HC Tesnear, F C Tesnear 1999-2005.

BRINKWORTH: Fran was excellent. I wished I could have been like her; she would listen and then she would come up with something and never lost her temper or anything. A great person and had great ideas, in fact I wanted her to continue, but she wouldn't.

HC J M Collins, 2001-2005.

BRINKWORTH: Jenny. Another flamboyant one. Had a lot to say. Had wonderful ideas and very mindful of indigenous people. She was a teacher, a younger one, so she was very supportive of me with the youth services and that. She was a great contributor.

HC M W Devlin, 2003-2007.

BRINKWORTH: Oh Mark. He was a person that you wouldn't think would be a councillor and yet I had a fondness for him. I used to sit near him.

HC Why would you say that?

BRINKWORTH: I don't know. He had some strange ideas and it was well-known... I see him now and then and we joke about it, but to me he still did a good job and was there, but sometimes he would say things which sometimes I thought he's not listening and I would kick him (he had size 16 shoes) – I would kick him and he'd say, "What did you do that for?" I'd say, "You're talking rubbish!" He was fun.

HC M S Stubbs 2003-2011.

BRINKWORTH: Oh very... she was into it, into social issues. Sometimes she took things too personally; I tried to get that out of her. But she had great ideas. Wanted to start the adventure playground down at the Sandy Beach and someone that did her homework.

¹³ Bassendean Preservation Group Inc. For further information see the group's website at <https://bpginc.info/> and their facebook page at www.facebook.com/bassendeanpreservationgroup/

I'd say she spent 40 hours a week on council. She really did her homework on everything. She was well-prepared when she came to council with her motions and that and debate. Yes, I wish sometimes I'd been like her.

HC E J Sutherland 2003-2007.

BRINKWORTH: Yes, he was an older person. Very interested in seniors, still is. Yes, he gave a good view, because he lived up at Success Hill, he actually gave a lot of rundown of what was neglected up there on the reserve, so he was very good contributor.

HC R W Dunkerton 2005-2007.

BRINKWORTH: Ross. He went into it for the wrong reasons and then hated it.

HC What were the reasons?

BRINKWORTH: Well he had an issue down near the river and he didn't realise that he still had a conflict of interest. He said to me, "I am going with you in West Ward." "No, keep away from my ward, you're East Ward." But he still went my ward. He just won. I mean I got in, but I think he got more than me. It was all because he was a racing car driver, so the name¹⁴. He hated it, because he realised that he had to declare a conflict of interest whenever that issue came up.

HC What was his conflict of interest?

BRINKWORTH: It was on the riverside, the river and there were people parking their boats and fishermen on his banks. He was trying to get rid of it, to change the law, but he couldn't.

HC But it wasn't land he owned?

BRINKWORTH: Some of it was because they'd been pretty awful to his wife, so there were issues. But I tried to tell him that he couldn't do it. So he off. He wanted to pull out and I said to him, "Well you're going to cause by-election, it's going to cost money and people are going to hate you." He said, "Okay." So he just put up with it.

HC C J Merfield, 2005-2008.

BRINKWORTH: Excellent. Very fair I found. A bit like Fran¹⁵, he could see both sides of it, even though he worked for politics and that, he never kind of bought that in. I found him a very pleasant councillor and he contributed a lot.

HC L Butler 2007-2011.

BRINKWORTH: Yes, she was also in my ward. She did a lot for Ashfield, with the problems of social housing, the way that people neglected... got involved with the police

¹⁴ Ross Dunkerton (b 1945) was a successful Australian rally driver over many years. He moved to Cairns in far North Queensland with his family in 2007.

¹⁵ F C Tesnear, Councillor 1999-2005.

because she was near the IGA store which has a lot of problems. So she was certainly there for the area.

HC S M Piantadosi, 2007-2010.

BRINKWORTH: He was great. He represented our side which was good, so we had someone to push our side. Because he'd been a politician¹⁶ previously he knew some of the ways you did debate, but he used to get very emotional about things. He was very good.

HC When you say, 'push your side', what was your side?

BRINKWORTH: Well that side of the line, that side of the line¹⁷. They just don't have anything. That's the reason they shop at Morley. Even right now somebody's come up and said, "I know you're not a councillor, but can you help us." They need bus stops. They seem to be the last of the list, whereas this side – which is a horrible thing to say – but that's how it is, they seem to get it.

HC Is there rivalry between those two sides?

BRINKWORTH: Not rivalry, there's just an acceptance that they're the poor side and the better side.

HC A bit like country towns.

BRINKWORTH: Yes, yes.

HC G A Pule from 2007.

BRINKWORTH: Oh very a conscientious councillor. He was always prepared. Went to every training, everything that was on – conferences and... Got carried away sometimes but he was a very good councillor.

HC D Yates 2008-2011.

BRINKWORTH: Oh he was a very controversial one.

HC In what way?

BRINKWORTH: He knew everything – and he did – but it was the way he portrayed it. Every meeting he would come with something that he'd invented and we'd think 'here we go'. I felt people and staff just went against it because he just brought it up, which was a bit unfair sometimes. He couldn't seem to... He was too clever for council really, for that type of thing. He just pushed also, his side of things and was very passionate about that. He was a popular councillor with staff.

¹⁶ Samuel Mathew Piantadosi (1946-2010) joined the Labor Party in 1968 but resigned and became an independent in 1996. He was a member of the MLC for North Central Metropolitan Province from 1983-1989 and for the North Metropolitan Region 1989-1996. He contested Yokine as an Independent in 1996. He was a Councillor for the Town of Bassendean 2007-2010 and was Deputy Mayor from October 2009.

¹⁷ North of Guildford Road and the railway line.

HC K L Collins, 2009-2013. [long pause] Not to worry. You may remember something later¹⁸. M F Lewis 2009 onwards.

BRINKWORTH: Oh yes, another strong supporter of the north side of Bassendean and very supportive of small business because he was a small businessman. He happened to get Poppy's here¹⁹, very strong for the markets and whatever was going on and gave that perspective to us. Yes, he was a very good councillor.

HC H D Benz 2010-2011.

BRINKWORTH: I felt he only came on council because he was a bike rider, was pushing the bike issues – which was good, because we need to do bike tracks and that. So he was very concerned with that and safety for children at the school. Had a lot of good ideas. His problem was... I don't remember what country he comes from; it was hard to understand him sometimes because of his accent. He was very good a promoting safety issues.

HC The last one I have got is Jennie Carter, Bevan's wife.²⁰

BRINKWORTH: Oh Jennie and I... she's fabulous. Very fair and will listen. Knows everything about Bassendean, even though she didn't live here. I have a lot of support for Jennie, she and I are dear friends.

HC I'd just like to have a chat about the staff of the council – some of the Town Clerks that you were associated with. C McCreed 1975-1988.

BRINKWORTH: He was sacked as soon as I got on.

HC Oh yes, you did mention that previously. S Goode 1988-1992.

BRINKWORTH: Very professional. I liked him a lot, he gave me a lot of advice, which showed both sides. I had a lot of time for Steven.

HC S Smyth 1992-1996.

BRINKWORTH: Oh a wonderful female – the first female Town Clerk. We had her and the first female mayor at the same time and that's when we had a majority of female councillors. I'll always remember this Vicki²¹ ringing me up and she said, "Oh the newspaper wants to do a big article about us." I said, "Well I don't believe in it, just because we're women, don't make a big deal." She said, "Good, I agree with that." So it was good. Because there was five of us and the Town Clerk, we didn't make a deal, it was all the same.

HC But Anne, did it make a difference having such a large number of women in those sort of positions?

¹⁸ Anne Brinkworth speaks of Kara Collins at the commencement of the second interview session on page 22 of this transcript.

¹⁹ Red Poppy's Café, 10 Old Perth Road, Bassendean. Knitted and crocheted red poppies were made to mark the centenary of the First World War. Anne Brinkworth later recalled, that on occasions, knitters would meet and work at Red Poppy's Café.

²⁰ Jennie Carter was a Councillor from 2011 but lost by a single vote to Ren'ee McLennan in October 2015.

²¹ Probably Vicki Philipoff.

BRINKWORTH: I think so. She had that understanding, but she is a very understanding person and we all liked her very much. Because she'd worked professionally later in life I think that makes a difference – a bit like teachers – I think if they've had their children they're better teachers in some areas. She was more understanding about different issues.

HC Do you mean they are better communicators.

BRINKWORTH: Yes. And understanding. That's my belief.

HC What, understanding the issues?

BRINKWORTH: Yes and understanding how if the two of you have got different opinions how that could happen and how to try and sort it out, resolve it.

HC CEOs.

BRINKWORTH: They changed the position of Town Clerk to CEO, so S Smyth became CEO, the same person.

HC G MacKenzie 1997-2001.

BRINKWORTH: Oh a lovely guy; he was there quite a while. Very fair. I found him very good with the staff and that's what I like because sometimes CEOs are not mixing with the staff, but he was, and I was really sorry to see him go.

HC G Evershed 2001-2008.

BRINKWORTH: Another very professional member; very fair also and a lot of fun. He would come to the committee room and talk with us and make jokes of what happened and that, which I think is good because quite often CEOs don't come in and just go, but he was always part of it.

HC R C Jarvis from 2008.

BRINKWORTH: That's the one now. I like him. I think he is fair. I don't see a problem with him at all. I know some of the councillors now do. I don't know what their issue is. The only weakness I find with him, is probably that he's not strict enough at times and maybe too nice for his own good. But, yes I got on very well with him.

HC Are there any other staff that come to mind that you'd like to mention – any of the clerical staff or...

BRINKWORTH: Oh Sue Perkins, an absolutely wonderful secretary. And before her there was a Laura – I can't remember her other name. They were just exceptional secretaries to the CEO and they were to the councillors as well and went beyond their duties to help. Library staff I've always got on with. They are great communication people with everything. Well respected. Another one we've got at the moment is Ken Cardy who works for the outside staff – well he's in charge I think now. Just a wonderful guy. You ring him and you've got this problem which normally would take weeks to resolve. He'd say, "Oh I'll just send my guys down, Anne, and fix it up." Down to earth, not having to go through the books. Rangers also, I've got on with so much. They are so helpful, even if it's a silly little

thing, like my dog got caught in the dog trap and I had to ring them. They are really wonderful and the people really appreciate that. Oh there's many probably that are gone.

HC Now you mentioned ratepayers – were you ever a member of the Ratepayers Association?

BRINKWORTH: No.

HC Did you go to the meetings at all?

BRINKWORTH: No.

HC Was that on purpose?

BRINKWORTH: Probably.

HC Did they ever raise issues with you as a group or as individuals?

BRINKWORTH: Oh yes, yes.

HC What sort of issues would they raise?

BRINKWORTH: Oh gosh! Whatever council was doing wasn't going their way I suppose. Most of them were actually... You had the preservation group and then you had the ratepayers which I felt were just about rivals. The Bassendean ratepayers were mainly for the river, in fact I think they've changed their name now, Foreshore, they're called. It was their issues on the river – and there were many issues. My view was that there was nothing council could do about it because the river is really the Swan River Trust. To me you're just beating your head against a wall. All the erosion – it's up to Swan River Trust to stop the boats racing. Do you stop the fishermen coming there and making holes in the thing? There was a time where a local member was going to have it fenced off. That raised a lot of problems. Now, as they sell they're properties they actually lose that frontage to the river, which I don't know whether is fair or not. I don't think it is because my cousin lives at Mosman Bay in Saunders Street and she's got river frontage and they have their own boat there. I don't understand that, so I used to keep out of it.

HC So the ratepayers' issues were generally to do with the river?

BRINKWORTH: Yes.

HC Do any of them individually stand out in your mind – any of those ratepayers?

BRINKWORTH: Oh Ian Veale – oh there's quite a few but they're elderly now unfortunately, but Ian Veale is the one that's kept it going and got all the documents and everything.

HC So he obviously feels quite strongly.

BRINKWORTH: Very strongly.

HC Now we've talked about the achievements of the mayors, but were there any achievements by the council as a whole, over the years, that stand out in your

mind? The Reconciliation Action Plan comes to mind for me. Would you consider that an achievement of the council?

BRINKWORTH: Definitely, but I actually had no part in that at all. It took so long and so much work was obviously put into it, but they certainly achieved a lot because it was an area that needed to be focussed on and some resolution made. I think they did a very good job.

HC Any other achievements of the council as a whole that stand out in your mind?

BRINKWORTH: Not off hand.

HC The developments by the council – you mentioned several in your interview with Maxine. Now there seems to be a policy for increased housing in proximity to transport infrastructure like train lines. How has that made a difference to Bassendean?

BRINKWORTH: Well I think it will do. I was against high rise. I think you don't need to go more than three storeys to be quite honest. But definitely these ones that John had a lot of part in – in the development of the two down here – or three now. A lot of people were against it, the same as they were against it going on Swan Districts Oval.

HC Is that the one down Old Perth Road, on the corner of Whitfield Street?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, yes. There's two, one across the road from the other.

HC Yes, multi-storey.

BRINKWORTH: But I've got to give it to the developers, they've done a good job. A lot of work was done with councillors and staff to get what we think was a nice development. Because we had this policy that they have to give so much to urban art, I think that makes a difference, so it's not stark.

HC What about the development of Bassendean Oval?

BRINKWORTH: I am not sure on that. I wasn't on council when that all started. When I finished council we were supposed to go down to Claremont Oval and have a look at how it looked down there. That never eventuated. I am not really sure... I can't see what the problem is to be quite honest, as long as it is not more than three storeys. I think they're talking about seven storeys. That is far too high. Three storeys I can understand, but no more. This is a problem with the developers they seem to want to add more, add more.

HC Well one project that's not going ahead, Landcorp did have plans to develop the BIC Reserve.

BRINKWORTH: Oh God, yes!

HC Were you around then?

BRINKWORTH: Yes. But I couldn't see how they were going to do it. It's wet underneath so... The last Town Planner, she was looking at Ashfield Reserve, well that was a tip you know, you just don't build there, so I can't see how they could have done the BIC.

HC So you are happy with urban infill as long as it doesn't go higher than three storeys?

BRINKWORTH: Exactly.

HC I'd like your comments on the impact of the State Government's Joint Development Assessment Panel when it overrides the local government plan.

BRINKWORTH: I don't like it. It's unfair because they have three of their members and council only have two. It just doesn't work.

HC Have there been examples of that happening in Bassendean?

BRINKWORTH: Oh there have. One was down in Anzac Terrace. Bevan Carter and Tina Klein were on that committee and they had to go to court because they built six, I think, units down there and it wasn't zoned for that. Council opposed it but was overridden by the Joint Committee. So we lost that, which cost us money going to that. The other one - I was actually in it - in First Avenue. The people there didn't want the development next to them - it was about two storeys but eight... It shouldn't have gone there because the zoning at Anzac Terrace, and this was down towards Walter Road. I couldn't understand how it was allowed, but it was. We went to the court hearing, but the trouble is with the developers I find - well in this one that I went to - she was a Town Planner, but you could see she was a lawyer as well. As soon as I met her I said - Paul Bridges was with me - I said, "Paul, we've lost this." He said, "Why do you think?" I said, "She's much cleverer than our staff, full stop!" Our staff couldn't say anything because we didn't have a policy set in and we've been saying for years you've got to set policies that fit in and we hadn't, so that was overridden. So there are big problems. I mean I am going to have fourteen next to me and I don't even have a say.

HC So the process is if you go to that committee you're overridden because they have three people on it and the council has two.

BRINKWORTH: Exactly.

HC Then do you have a right of appeal?

BRINKWORTH: No. Nor do the owners, nor do the people opposing.

HC So the community doesn't get a chance to...

BRINKWORTH: No. That's why they are trying to force the government to get rid of it.

HC Is there a council committee that deals with issues such as this - planning?

BRINKWORTH: Not that I am aware of. See some of them now - if they go over three million dollars I think it automatically goes to those committees. It doesn't even go through council.

HC So you can't win really if you object to it.

BRINKWORTH: This is what the Western Suburbs are having problems with.

END OF FIRST INTERVIEW SESSION

SECOND INTERVIEW SESSION

HC This is the second interview session with Anne Brinkworth held at the library on Tuesday 5 June 2018. The interviewer is Heather Campbell.

Anne, you've remembered Kara Collins from last time, who was actually on the council from 2009-2013.

BRINKWORTH: Yes. I can't believe I missed her, but it was Kara Collins, a very young with-it girl. Very professional. She brought a lot of ideas to the council and was very intelligent – someone that I've probably looked up as one of the young ones that had so much to offer and I was very sad when she decided not to renominate because she had a young family and was very involved with her professional life.

HC What was her personality like, Anne?

BRINKWORTH: Oh she was a go-ahead person. Didn't stand any nonsense and she would say so too. She was so knowledgeable, she really was.

HC That's lovely, it's good to have that. We were going to start off this time by discussing a couple of the controversial issues that you were involved in. The first one is the relocation of the Bassendean War Memorial. I understand there was quite a bit of dissent about that. Tell me about it.

BRINKWORTH: There certainly was. To begin with, when it was mentioned many years ago, I remember saying, "Over my dead body," because it was so important that it stayed where it was because it had already been moved from this library site to there. Then later, as I've been on council, at every Anzac Service I could see the crowd getting bigger and it was really awkward. People just couldn't hear what was going on. I remember speaking to the secretary, she's saying, "I just can't organise this any more. We've got to move." So we decided on the BIC and then there was a group that started and called many meetings against it. Trying to really get around them was very difficult and at the end we just had to make a decision that that's what we were doing. Thankfully most of them who were against it, now say it is lovely. They claimed the main objection was it was the way we did the communication with the community. I honestly thought we had communicated well, but that was their main beef. Now everyone seems to be very happy and we have thousands there. So we got around that one.

HC Did it cause any lasting division in the community?

BRINKWORTH: Yes. I've lost a couple of very dear friends because of it, to this day. Yes, it was very nasty – very nasty and I think councillors had a very difficult time, even those who... There were a couple that didn't want it moved and Paul Bridges actually made quite a statement out of it. In fact the day of the first Anzac Day service we had down there, he dressed in army uniform and stood at the old spot, which upset us all and came to his

first meeting in the army uniform. So he had his supporters and they made it very difficult and uncomfortable, but at the end of the day that's what we had to do.

HC What was the attitude of the local RSL?

BRINKWORTH: They actually wanted it. I thought they would have been against it, but they realised it had to be moved. That was a stage, just before the 100th anniversary, they were redoing Albany Memorial, so they were more than happy if councils and governments were going to give them money and do an improvement. So they were all with it.

HC Looking at it in hindsight is there anywhere better than BIC it could have been moved to?

BRINKWORTH: No. It's absolutely wonderful there. I use a taxi a lot and they go past, they say, "Oh that looks so lovely." It's well respected. We all had this horrible feeling that it would get vandalised, but it hasn't. Dog walkers go past there and it's really, up to now, been wonderful.

HC Another controversial issue that we've identified is the library, the new library – the library we are actually in at the moment.

BRINKWORTH: Well the funny thing about all this is that it's the same people that were against this as well. Looking back in my twenty odd years the same people have always been against most things.

HC Against change then.

BRINKWORTH: It's against change, yes. They claim wasting ratepayers' money. The objections to the library were just ridiculous. Anyone who used the library could see it was not functional, it was not going anywhere. Technology was coming in. Working in a school library, which was a new library, I for one could see the benefits, so I really was keen to have it and any opposition I would really explain to them. It took us years and at the end we had to make a decision. One of the problems was where to locate it because no-one wanted the old one pulled down. So that took another year or so to work out where it was. All the time I said it should be pulled down and this one done. Eventually that's what happened - and it was just by a five-four vote that we got it through. So that was a very close one. But people still kept going on about it. Fortunately the Mayor of the day, Greg Peterson, he was very staunch about it and didn't enter into any of these arguments, he said, "It's going to be done, it's going to be done," and it was. I don't know if those who were against it use it or not, but it's definitely always full to capacity I think.

HC Having worked in a library, which you did, were you able to make any suggestions about what to include and what not to include?

BRINKWORTH: We had a committee meeting and there was an overseer – I don't know what you call them - some guy we engaged. He was like our consultant. He worked between the council and the builders. We were lucky we had wonderful people who were doing the building. It was a builder who only does one project at a time. This was a very keen thing for him - to prove that it was a good job. The man that we had, he would come to

us and say this... I suppose some of the things that I noticed that I'd wished I'd had in my library was washbasins and things, and to have everything close by where you're working that's a bit dirty, that you need to clean. Yes, I suppose that was most of it that I could do. Yes, it was well-organised.

HC How do you think it's been received by the general community?

BRINKWORTH: Oh wonderful. We've had many wonderful comments on it, yes.

HC That sort of leads me on to the Local Studies Management Committee, which is one that you were on, were and are, on I think. You've been a keen supporter of the Local History Collection.

BRINKWORTH: Definitely. When it was first established by Allan Caddy, he came to council and wanted to start this committee and put his ideas. That was one of the reasons I really wanted a bigger library, because of all his ideas. Where do we store all this information? That was one of the arguments I used for the larger, newer, library. I was interested because I know, even though I wasn't born in Bassendean, but marrying a Bassendean boy and having a family that has had many years in Bassendean, there was so much historical material here. My mother-in-law joined me in Red Cross immediately. These were all older people. The stories they had were just wonderful and I thought these have got to be remembered by somebody or something. So when it was started and council did decide they'd have this committee I definitely put my hand up and have been on it ever since. I think we've achieved a heck of a lot. I am sad that they don't have it at the moment, it's part of a people's committee now. Luckily Jennie Carter²², who is in the Historical Society, she is on that committee, but I don't know how much input she can actually put in on behalf of us all. I'll be watching that well and we'll maybe get it back again.

HC You talked about what it had achieved, tell me some of the things that you're proudest of, that it achieved.

BRINKWORTH: Look we got volunteers to go through all the rate books – I mean what a mammoth job. Stories that... well Michael Grogan²³ was one of the members there. I don't think anyone's got more knowledge than him, of Bassendean. Being in the real estate he kept it. In fact it worries me what will happen if he goes – there's all that gorgeous stuff he's got. Everybody had something to tell or they could find out about it. There was so much information and the staff were then able to collate things and they've had exhibitions of different things and with Janet²⁴, "Every day," she said, "there's something comes up and it clicks with something else." We were trying to... with families, especially when they come in to find out about their granddad or great-granddad, she tries to get it built up for them. I just think that's wonderful.

HC Are there any personalities on that committee, over the years, that stand out in your mind?

²² Jennie Carter, Town of Bassendean Councillor 2011-15, is also the author of *Bassendean a social history, 1829-1979*, Town of Bassendean, Perth, WA, 1986.

²³ Bassendean Local History Collection, Interview with Mr Michael Grogan [sound recording], conducted by Heather Campbell, 2014, OH94.

²⁴ Janet Megarrity, Local Studies Librarian, Bassendean Memorial Library.

BRINKWORTH: Well definitely Michael Grogan, Paul Bridges, Jennie Carter.

HC What are they like; tell me about how... ?

BRINKWORTH: Well they are very passionate about it. They're on the Historical Society – they always want me to go on it, but there's no way, I haven't got any more time. They are so passionate about it, about the heritage buildings. That's another thing we've got, we've got the local history of the heritage buildings, trees. That was a mammoth job, where they went around and put them on their list.

HC A heritage inventory?

BRINKWORTH: Yes. And suggest to the government which one we thought was State heritage. Michael has just got so much information that it's just mind-blowing. You just mention a name and he knows it. If he doesn't, he'll find out from someone. Paul is really interested in the archaeology part of it, but he sometimes goes overboard with it. I think God, he's got so much information, but I can't take it all in. Jennie, well Jennie's Jennie, you know. She's an historian and she's just fabulous and the way she relates it – it's excellent, yes.

HC Thinking about the Library and the Local History Collection, you've mentioned Allan Caddy and Janet Megarrity, what have been the personalities in the library and the Local History Collection over the years that stand out in your mind? Tell me about Allan Caddy for a start.

BRINKWORTH: Oh Allan Caddy! He's just a wonderful guy. Doesn't take nonsense. Sometimes there'd be a particular councillor that wouldn't agree with him on something. Allan would just say, "Well this is how it's going to go." Then the councillor would say, "Yes, well we've got to agree with it." They'd have a bit of a clash but it always worked out. He had a lot of humour, but he was very passionate about Bassendean for many years and had a lot of humour. A real go-ahead guy. As far as I know all staff just loved him.

HC Was he the head librarian when this building was being built? ²⁵

BRINKWORTH: Yes. He was so delighted, was so overjoyed to be having it. I remember going to a meeting. We'd go up the stairs next to the admin, and we'd look in through the window and he'd be there, and he'd say, "I can't wait, I can't wait for it to be finished." He was just so delighted.

HC You mentioned Janet, Janet Megarrity.

BRINKWORTH: She came a bit later. I can't remember the lady's name that we had.

HC Carol?

BRINKWORTH: Carol²⁶ was here. All our local studies librarians have just been wonderful. Carol went up to Wanneroo. She was excellent. She came up with some very

²⁵ The new library was officially opened on 27 July 1972, with Allan Caddy as inaugural librarian. [*Bassendean a social history 1829-1979*, p 276]

²⁶ Carol Leigh, who became the Community History Librarian, Heritage, Museums and Arts for the City of Wanneroo.

good ideas. Each one – that was one of the things the Local Studies Committee tried to do, we tried to get more hours. I think originally they probably only had four hours a week to work on local studies, which was just ridiculous. So every budget time the councillors on that committee would try and sneak in another two or three hours. Eventually we have got a full-timer – it's taken 26 years to get it.

HC So did Carol do part of her work in local history and part in the general library?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, that's right.

HC And was she your first local history librarian.

BRINKWORTH: No, there was another one – I can't remember who.²⁷

HC Tell me about Janet, when did Janet come?

BRINKWORTH: A few years ago. Very full of life. Any ideas – she gets so excited about everything. She's a delight. I've referred a few residents that don't even live here, in Bassendean, and they come to her with things that they know about Bassendean. She's so full of enthusiasm and takes everything in. She's a dream.

HC Any of the other staff here or any of the volunteers that come in that you'd like to mention?

BRINKWORTH: I don't really know to be quite honest because I wasn't on that part. I don't have anything to do with volunteers; I know that she had quite a few.

HC Was there a separate committee like Friends of the Library, or was the Local History Management Committee the only one that related to the library?

BRINKWORTH: As far as I know, yes. The volunteers probably did have their own meeting time. They'd have to, I suppose, to know what they were doing, but I was never involved with that.

HC The 2001 Town Centenary Celebrations, I think you were involved in those.

BRINKWORTH: Yes.

HC Does anything stand out in your mind from then?

BRINKWORTH: It was a full-on thing. There was a committee of quite a few of us, about fifteen I think. It was promoted also by the State Government, so we got funding. We had meetings every month. The residents took that very well. We had actually Rolf Harris over for a concert. We had many things going; it was a wonderful affair. A lot of work on the committee, not so much with me, because being a councillor there's only so much you can do, but I know a lot of the others did it. Tina Klein was chairman. Then we got Megan Silver as a co-ordinator. She was just fabulous because she comes from a background of craft and

²⁷ Paul Kelvin.

all that, so she organised workshops that involved volunteers making banners and all sorts of things. It was a wonderful event.

HC When was the committee formed?

BRINKWORTH: It would have been formed the election before that because most committees are formed when the new councillors come in, so it would have been formed the previous election.

HC A long time in the making then?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, yes. Well I think council used to be three years then, so it was probably three years.

HC Any particular celebrations stand out in your mind?

BRINKWORTH: Oh, it was so long ago!

HC Never mind. The Cyril Jackson Recreation Committee. I think that was a facility that was shared by the local council with Sports and Recreation of the Education Department.

BRINKWORTH: That's correct. So part of that agreement is that a councillor and someone from the community and someone from the campus were on it. We met I think, bi-monthly.

HC Was that all through your council career, Anne?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, the whole time. That was an interesting committee because, to me, education and council don't really go together, but it did work well. You could see that side, but because we only shared the hall, that was all we were interested in, and trying to keep that going. So the committee came up with what they felt was needed. Obviously the teacher on that committee would tell us – because they were the ones that knew – and it would normally be the phys ed master because he also worked with the community, with some different event. They would ask us... we had it repainted, with the floorings done. Quite a massive job and then it was trying to work out how much council paid and how much the Education did. That was a big thing to try and get the Education Department to spend money, because they're not well-known for spending money.

HC What would you say was the role of that committee was then?

BRINKWORTH: Just to oversee it, to make sure that the money was well spent because it was a community facility as well.

HC So was there a budget for it?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, definitely. The committee was in charge of the cleaner at that stage. Its role was quite large. Everything had to come through that committee to do anything with that hall. One of the things that I was always interested in was the outside of it. I can remember having an art exhibition there and the outside was just terrible. It took me a while to get the staff, the outside staff, to come and clean it up. I said, "Just put

compost or anything on it, just to make it look better.” I nearly died! They charged the committee for that – I remember me blowing my top about that.

HC Any personalities from that committee stand out in your mind?

BRINKWORTH: Not really.

HC Other council properties, like any other halls or sporting grounds or reserves committees you’ve been involved in?

BRINKWORTH: I was involved with the Ashfield Reserve Committee. It wasn’t for too long. The council decided that seeing that we had three reserves, like Jubilee, Swan Districts and Ashfield, that we should be more involved in it, rather than the coaches, or whoever was managing, coming to us or to the staff all the time. So we did have it and actually it worked very well because with the Ashfield one they had a few clubs that used the reserve. So we tried to get one from each club, like your netball and whatever. Actually I enjoyed that committee, I was chairman for a while and I found they had a lot to offer and we could go to council and suggest different things. So we certainly made the Ashfield Hall a lot better; we got the grandstand going. The fire brigade volunteers used it as well. So it was a very useful committee to get things going. Usually only councillor on it – you have one councillor and a deputy and then community members from the different sports and someone from the club.

HC Any personalities stand out on that committee?

BRINKWORTH: Oh God, yes! With sport I just found it mind-boggling. They really own their own... We had John Van Hoek, who was just soccer mad, soccer mad. Then we had this other guy, he was grid-iron and he wanted his side. Then somebody else. Trying to manage them sometimes... But it was always in good fun and they always, at the end, were happy, but it was very awkward to satisfy all of them. Remember you’ve got to have timings, time slots. The time slots. Parking was another issue, because the parking was terrible down there. Then we had this issue with the dog-walkers. Then we had the issue with the people across the road who reckoned the soccer balls were going in their windows. They also had a bar in there – a soccer thing – and there was controversy about that. So, yes, there were personalities but they all got on.

HC It sounds like as chair you had to be a diplomat as well.

BRINKWORTH: Well you do because you can see all sides, it’s just making them think all the same.

HC So they were able to book the ground for a certain period of time?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, and that’s done early in the year through our Recreation Officer, it was all booked, yes.

HC And one of your passions, I think, now – the Community Policing which subsequently changed to Safer WA. I believe you are quite interested in community safety.

BRINKWORTH: I started off – before council – I was on Neighbourhood Watch. Then I got to be a Neighbourhood Watch leader, of my area. The idea was that you found people, hopefully one in every street, but that didn't eventuate. I had about ten or twelve wonderful people. The idea was they go around and doorknock and introduce Safety Watch. We included School Watch as well because I was very passionate about that, working in a school. I knew a lot of children went home and didn't have anyone at home. So we had what we call the Safety Houses. It was the only problem with it, they just kept changing. Every time a new government came in they changed it. Then eventually it was changed to Safer WA. I was voted as a delegate from our council, got very involved in it – ended up being a chairman of that for many years. I think we achieved a lot. We were under the Midland one, because you went in regions. I was also a delegate on the State Council, where you went in and you were actually talking with the Commissioners and all these things. We actually achieved a lot in our Midland division because we were very friendly with the Bayswater ones as well, so we actually funded an American policeman, Richard Amundsen to come over and talk to us – our districts, and he actually went in the country. He was doing a lot in his area. So that was a really big thing that we did. Did lots of activities. Went out with police, doorknocking at night. That was one of the reasons when we were out doorknocking, I said to one of them, I said, "I'm scared, there's no street lights." He said, "Well Councillor, you've got to get your street lighting in." I remember thinking, oh God, this is going to be hard! Even though there were street lights they were actually under trees and things, so you couldn't see anything. That's actually how I started on with my street lighting which took me years.

HC But I believe in the end you successfully secured all-night lighting in the Town of Bassendean.

BRINKWORTH: I did, I did. That was, I'd say, one of my best achievements. Now to my horror on the weekend I see in the paper where one of the ministers, or politicians, is saying that street lighting all night costs a lot of money and he's urging councils to stop it.

HC When you got the street lighting up and running Anne, did it make any difference to the crime rate or anything like that?

BRINKWORTH: It did, because unbeknown to me, even though I had a son who was working at the Casino... He was coming home at 3 am and I remember him saying, "You go through Bayswater, there's lights and you come to Bassendean – dead! It's actually scary." There are a lot of shift workers; there were people actually happy to walk at 2 am or 3 am, with their dogs, where they can't walk in the day because of their shifts. I suppose they were eyes on the street. The police did say that there was definitely less crime at night. When you look at the statistics now, there's actually more crime in the day time, so I think it certainly did help.

HC What sort of reputation did Bassendean have as far as being secure and safe and the crime rate in those days?

BRINKWORTH: Well you always got the negative side of it because you always heard of someone being robbed or something. I got a lot of calls when the street lighting did come on, mainly from people living on their own, because they could look out and they could see something. I can remember in those days the milkman used to go around and he said how

much nicer it was. The newspaper man said how much nicer it was. So that proved that they were out and they would see something was going on. That was one of the reasons Bassendean never actually went onto Security Watch, which some other councils do. They have 24-hour security. We have never found that it's necessary because of... obviously the robberies aren't as often, but most of the robberies are actually around the train stations, there's no doubt about that.

HC So by security, you mean they employed a security firm.

BRINKWORTH: Yes.

HC What was your relationship with the local police?

BRINKWORTH: Mine was excellent. We just got on.

HC Any personalities in the local police that stand out in your mind?

BRINKWORTH: The one from Chidlows – Steve Bowman - he ended up being a Mundaring councillor. He was really a card. If you ever got into trouble or anything with the police, doing something, he'd say, "Well just ask Anne, she'll sort you out." No, we did, we had a good relationship. They would tell us if there was a problem around the area. We also had an Aboriginal Liaison Officer, a wonderful lady, Georgina Boddington. She was one that actually helped me a lot. Ashfield had a very bad name at that stage, being low income and State Housing. So they had lots of problems there and there were definitely robberies there. And an Aboriginal problem, which was just... and I kept saying to the police, "What can we do?" They said, "Well it's really up to Homeswest to sort it out." So when Georgina was our Liaison Officer she would find out what families were coming from another bad area to our area and let me know. Then I would have to beg the Homeswest people not to put them so close, to put them in another area, so that the families are not squabbling. Midland and Ashfield weren't far enough for me, they just got on the train and moved to them.

HC What other problems did you have to sort out like that, Anne?

BRINKWORTH: That was a big problem. All sorts of things, neighbourhood things.

HC What, neighbourhood disputes?

BRINKWORTH: Yes. Somebody's throwing cans over on their side, or their tree clippings.

HC Well what could you do about that?

BRINKWORTH: I'd just report it to council and get them to sort it out. I seemed to be the go-between. That was the good part of speaking with me. People related to me, where they felt stupid to ring up council, or they didn't want to be identified – it was probably both. I would work out which staff member to see – not make a big thing of it – and usually we'd come to some solution. It didn't always work out.

HC I can totally understand them finding you more approachable, but that must have put you in...

BRINKWORTH: Well it did. It did. But I just took it on. I suppose I thought oh well at least they've got someone to talk to and it was a joy when you sorted it out. You just felt whoopee, that's another one gone!

HC You've done a lot of work with seniors too, haven't you? The Senior Citizens' Committee, which runs Meals on Wheels, I think you were on.

BRINKWORTH: Yes, that's right.

HC Tell me about that.

BRINKWORTH: Oh gosh, if you talk about personalities, that's where you get personalities. Oh God! It's a wonderful committee, all volunteers, but very much, this one's doing such-and-such, you don't go to that area and you don't go to that area. They were very much in control and let you know if you're stepping outside the boundaries. But the committee was really good. I was never chairman of that – I refused to be chairman because the personalities were too hard, I thought let them go! They did wonderful things with the Meals on Wheels. There was a lady who used to come at 7 am in the morning to peel potatoes and everything. I was just gobsmacked at what they did, so I was sorry when it stopped because at the end of the day it worked out they couldn't do it. But I do recall Tina Klein, when she was Mayor, was called to... somebody couldn't deliver and she said, "Oh please will you come, Anne. I'll do the driving and you just do the deliveries." Okay, so I go there. I come home quite upset because these poor old dears were there waiting for their meal. Often it was, "You're a bit late aren't you?" or something else, or you have another dear old man there, already set up and he'd say, "Oh can you talk to me for a while?" I said, "I can't sweetie, I've got to deliver that..." I couldn't keep doing it because I felt lost, I felt these poor people are waiting for someone to talk to and it really affected me. I just realised what a wonderful job Meals on Wheels was. But somehow I think they needed something else. So in a way I wasn't sad when it stopped because at least these people would probably get to socialise more now.

HC So what's replaced it though?

BRINKWORTH: Well they had a dining room, so those who could, could come down there for meals. The others, well I don't know. I think we were getting it from Stirling. I don't know how they deliver them to be quite honest now, because I wasn't on the committee. I did hear rumours some people weren't happy that they'd stopped the volunteers, but that was because they didn't have enough volunteers. You needed a driver and a runner and some cooks.

HC You talked about the committee and you made it sound really quite lively, what were the issues that used to animate the committee?

BRINKWORTH: They'd blame each other if something went wrong.

HC What the food burnt and things...?

BRINKWORTH: Exactly, or something was lost! You get it now, I know you get it now in different things. They haven't put the plates in the right place, or they haven't done this and they haven't done that.

HC So it was more procedural issues.

BRINKWORTH: Exactly, exactly.

HC Did the Seniors' Committee organise any social activities for the seniors; it sounds like some of them were lonely?

BRINKWORTH: Yes. In that time we decided to have a co-ordinator and we actually asked council in the budget we got, to pay a co-ordinator. Originally a facility was supposed to have gone down there – Disabilities I think it was – and somehow it didn't work out and it went to St Mark's, so there was some money available. We hired Mimi Pule as our co-ordinator. She got the membership up to nearly 200 because she was from an Egyptian/Maltese background, she got them all in there. It was absolutely wonderful while she was doing it, so when council stopped it, it really went downhill.

HC What sort of things did she do?

BRINKWORTH: Oh she organised bus trips; she had sewing. Every day there was something involved. If she knew who was good at such-and-such, she would involve them with that. She made a big fuss of them. They were always going out. I said, "You've got such a good life." Those who were lonely or didn't get much social life, she made sure there were events that they come to and arranged transport to pick them up. That was the other big issue, we had to have transport to pick these people up, so she had to get volunteers to do that. She also suggested we put in for funding for a bus, which we did, so at the moment we've got two. That helped. People went around and picked them up. There was always something and she was the one that actually organised the meals in the dining room. So those who could come came there for lunch and maybe in the afternoon they had games. But she had something on all the time.

HC So what happened when she stopped coming?

BRINKWORTH: Well then it was left to volunteers only to look after themselves.

HC Hers was a paid position then?

BRINKWORTH: Yes.

HC Why was it discontinued then, Anne?

BRINKWORTH: Probably lack of funding I would say. That's what it would have been, lack of funding, because we would have had to get that from somewhere. That's why the Meals and Wheels has stopped now, and the seniors really are battling, I feel, at the moment. I said many years ago I think it will fold up eventually – I hope not. They are trying now – they've called it Seniors Over 55 Club, but I don't think it's made any difference to their thing. It's a shame, but there are lots of programmes out there for seniors; I didn't realise how much there is. There is a lot. A lot of it is trips and that, but they do cost the people a fair bit of money to go on them. So I feel sometimes it's still... There's a shortage for people who can't afford to go on the trips, that's why I think there should be some more...

HC So people could be poor and consequently lonely as well?

BRINKWORTH: Exactly, because they can't afford to go out. Especially now with the fuel going up, I can see these bus trips doubling in price, that's my fear. The Seniors is a really great avenue for senior people.

HC So generally speaking do you think the Town of Bassendean has been good to its seniors?

BRINKWORTH: Excellent – and I've heard that from everywhere else, you hear it all the time. In fact Bayswater have closed a couple of theirs down now because of budget constrictions. We luckily, have still got out Ashfield and there's one here. People say, "Oh we love Bassendean because of what they do for their seniors."

HC The Technical Services Committee – and there was also a Community Services Committee.

BRINKWORTH: When I first got on council there was Technical Services, Planning, Finance and then your full council. I went on Technical Services, only because no-one else wanted to go on it – I think I was put on it. I had no idea what I was in to. That's actually more with footpaths, roads, drains, something I really wasn't interested in, as long as they got them done. I learnt a lot from that, I had to. Yes, it was good, but I was quite happy when that committee finished, actually. They just incorporated it with something else.

Community Services is a bit different. The seniors are under that. We had a Director for Community Services, which that all came under. You have a Director for Technical Services, outside staff and all that.

HC I thought actually when I read it that Technical Services might be something to do with computing.

BRINKWORTH: No, it was roads and drains. [Laughter]

HC The Nomenclature Committee, you were on that.

BRINKWORTH: Yes, I was on that. That was interesting.

HC What was involved with that?

BRINKWORTH: Well not much at all; it was just... We were starting to get new streets and that and it was important that we named... Well we were expected to name the streets - the councils were. But unfortunately then it went on to another committee and they would either accept it, or they wouldn't accept it. Then you'd have to go back to the drawing board. The main reason I went on it was because I know that a lot of the parks and reserves didn't have names and I know then they were starting to name some reserves. I wanted to make sure that the people who they were named after were the ones they should be named after. That was one of the reasons there. Also we brought in that... well I think it was a government thing, that the people who they were named after shouldn't be alive if you named them. That was another difficulty, waiting for someone to die, so you can name after them.

HC Did that tie in with your work on the Local History Committee then?

BRINKWORTH: Kind of, yes, well it did. Like the May Holman Reserve because of the historical side, well we knew all of that, you know, so she ended up having a road and a reserve named after her. Different ones for different reasons. You still get people who say, "Well why?" I know one of them, the John Smith Reserve, up in Eden Hill, people have no idea why it's named that. I'd say, "Well I do." They say, "Well how?" I said, "Well he happened to be a Fire Brigade officer with my husband and he lived in the street and used to go over and clean it all the time. Well when he died the people said, "Why isn't it called after him?" The committee had no idea of any other names, so that's why they put it there, but it's not really put down why it is.

HC So there is no record of the reasons why?

BRINKWORTH: Well they have now.

HC So how would that work. There'd be a new subdivision or something like that and you would be presented with five or six streets to name, how would that committee go about it?

BRINKWORTH: Well that was the difficult part in a way because they started to do it... a particular one like in Ashfield, that was Jennie's [Carter] idea that it should be marked with Aboriginal names. Then you had to work out who to get. That was one of the things that I was concerned about because there's quite a bit of animosity amongst their families too. But Jennie and Bevan [Carter] were very good and they knew which one had done what. So we had that mostly Aborigines. Like some districts have... I know Kiara's got bottlebrush plants. When we got out – the Eden Hill one, at the tavern, I don't know - there wasn't a committee - how they named that, but I know the subdivision near me, because it's near the railway line and it's do with rail things, like you've got Prospector Loop.

HC So it's thematically named and maybe saying something about the locality?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, which is a good idea.

HC Excellent. The Wind in the Willows Childcare Centre Committee sounds an interesting one.

BRINKWORTH: It was.

HC It operated over two locations I believe.

BRINKWORTH: At the end. In the beginning it was just down there. Actually my friend, who was the first female councillor, Beattie Chape²⁸, she started that. She actually named it as well.

HC Why did she start it, Anne?

BRINKWORTH: Because there was just nothing in the area and many people -- this is a long time before I got on – asked her about it. So she pushed. In those days it was very

²⁸ Mrs Beatrice Chape was the first woman Councillor on the Bassendean Shire Council, 1973-1975 and was also a member of the Bassendean Town Council from 1975-1979.]

hard, councillors actually had to do all the work, they had to go and get the funding themselves from government. She and... Dudley Robinson²⁹ was the other councillor, they went out and put a lot of effort into it and started it eventually, a long time before I came on, and it's been going ever since. When I started a councillor was asked for - I said I'd like to go on it, just to make sure that it kept going. In the meantime there have been different ones wanting to change the name and I make sure it's not, because I made sure they knew the history of it, blah, blah, blah! So it's retained. I think we did a lot because the supervisor then, she was very keen on getting parents involved, so we had parents on the committee as well. They could see what needed doing. Funds were very low so you had to make sure whatever was put there was for a good use. So that was a very worthwhile committee and I think we did a lot for them.

HC Did the parents have to pay fees for the children?

BRINKWORTH: Yes.

HC Did it break even, or did it...?

BRINKWORTH: You had to, you had to. We were under the Mundaring Childcare... whatever they call themselves. Yes, you had to break even. You didn't make a profit.

HC So did the council help with the superstructure, getting things off the ground and from then on it had to pay for itself?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, yes. Actually council were lucky, St John Ambulance had two blocks there, so they bought the block off St John that they were utilising and that's where they put the Wind in the Willows, which is still there. The reason it is over here at Ashfield as well – the numbers were very high. It's a very popular one, very well known. I know there's been councillors that have wanted to close it, reckoned we shouldn't be in that business, but my argument was that if there's a need... I know people come from other districts to there. There's a long waiting list all the time. So there was room at Ashfield, so we put the bigger ones there – in fact my neighbour's little grandson goes there, he's in the 'Big Willows' (as he calls it). They have the little ones down there. That seems to be working very well.

HC So the council maintain the buildings?

BRINKWORTH: Yes.

HC So they've still got some outlay for no return.

BRINKWORTH: Oh yes, like air-conditioning. Anything that needs... Every budget time there's quite a lot of allocation towards Wind in the Willows.

HC Any issues come up while you were on that committee?

²⁹ D W Robinson, member of Bassendean Road Board 1960-1961, Bassendean Shire Councillor 1961-1963 and 1966-1975. [Jennie Carter, Bassendean a social history 1929-1979, Bassendean Town Council, 1986, pps 266, 308.]

BRINKWORTH: Not really. I think we were all so eager to get it going. It wasn't a big committee, there was only about five of us. Everything worked well, we just had a wonderful co-ordinator, so we did everything to support her.

HC Do you know why it's called *Wind in the Willows*.

BRINKWORTH: After the book *Wind in the Willows*.³⁰

HC Now that's all the committees I've got listed for you, were there any that I've missed?

BRINKWORTH: I have no idea! [Laughter]

HC Were there any of those committees that we've talked about, where you felt it was particularly useful to have a female point of view?

BRINKWORTH: I'd say all of them. Yes I do. You need both sides, definitely.

HC In most of those committees what would be the representation of women – was there a good representation of women?

BRINKWORTH: Actually there was believe it or not, yes there was. But most of the times I've been on council we've just about equal representation.

HC Now you decided not to stand for re-election and you left in October 2015, why was that?

BRINKWORTH: I am too old; I'd had enough. I'd just lost my husband and I had a big back operation. I knew it was going to be difficult, I wasn't able to drive then. I thought this is just going to be too hard. Yes, I was, I was too old and I'd done enough; it was time someone else did it. They talked me into the previous four years - I was supposed to give up then. Then somehow I got talked into it. I said then this will be my last term.

HC So when you stopped going to all those meetings Anne, did it leave a bit of a hole in your life?

BRINKWORTH: It did. On a Friday night I missed the ranger coming for the mail bags. I needed to know what was going on, which I still do. I didn't so much miss going to the meetings, I missed not knowing what was going on.

HC What committees are you on currently in retirement; are you on any committees or working for any organisations?

BRINKWORTH: Not at the moment, no. I don't think I am. The Library one has finished. No. Except Red Cross.

HC We're going to talk about awards next and you've got your 50-year service with the Red Cross – I don't quite know how you had the time to go to Red Cross, but you obviously did. I'll put a list of awards attached to your transcript³¹. You received

³⁰ *The Wind in the Willows* is a well-known children's novel, by Kenneth Grahame, first published in 1908.

³¹ See Attachment One following this transcript.

some awards from the school and you also got the 1990s Lions Club International Exemplary Award for 'a quarter of a century of a wide range of activities and organisations.'

BRINKWORTH: That was so funny. I had no idea of it, never even heard of it and our Red Cross girls said, "Oh let's go down to the Lions meeting". I said, "What for?" They said, "Oh they've invited us." I remember thinking, 'Who did they invite? I am in charge; they didn't invite me'. I remember thinking this is weird. Anyhow off I toddled down there. I get there and there's my husband there and a daughter-in-law. I said, "What are you doing here?" "Oh we were asked." Then this guy gets up, this governor, whatever they call him. He's talking about who this award is going to. He's going through all the things. I said to Bill next to me, "God, she sounds like me, doesn't she?" [Laughter]

HC When did it dawn on you, Anne?

BRINKWORTH: Well when he called my name. I was speechless. That was just out of the blue. Same as the Freeman of the Town, that was out of the blue.

HC Another one, the 2004 Local Government Meritorious Service Award 'for long and outstanding service to local government'. Then you received another award in March 2016, the Freeman of the Town of Bassendean. Tell me about receiving that one.³²

BRINKWORTH: Oh that was another mind-blowing one. I had finished council in October³³ and we'd had our goodbyes and everything because Jennie [Carter] was up for re-election. The councillors and staff had their big do and I had my goodbyes, my speech and everything. I thought that's it. The next thing I get a call from the secretary, she said, "Oh the Mayor has just asked if you would like to come to the Christmas do at the end of the year." I said, "Well I am not a councillor now." "Yes, but he specifically asked you – he's actually asked Jennie [Carter] as well." I said, "Oh okay, if Jennie's going." So I toddled down there, thought this is strange but that's nice, with both of us being there a long time. Jennie and Bevan were sitting on the table and the other Freeman of the Town John Paterson's³⁴ there and I'm thinking what's he doing here? Then when John [Gangell] came up to present... He came down, I couldn't get up on the stage. They'd done a presentation to Jennie and me, which we'd kind of had before, but that was their way of going over it. He said, "Now I present the Freeperson of the Year," or something. I'm looking at him because he'd mentioned my late husband and I'm thinking oh now that Alan's gone I am a free person. I'm saying to John Paterson, what's he talking about? He said, "You are a Freeman." I said, "What?" I just sat down. I couldn't say anything, I was just gobsmacked. Poor John felt bad too because he was trying to make a joke of it because he didn't want to say Freeman, but there was no such thing as Freewoman. I was delighted, but it took a long time to sink in.³⁵

HC Why, Anne?

³² See *Town of Bassendean Annual Report 2003-2004*, p 5 and also *Bassendean Briefings*, no 108, April/May 2016, p 2.

³³ www.communitynews.com.au/eastern-reporter/news/towns-long-serving-Councillor-farewelled/

³⁴ Dr John Paterson, an agricultural scientist, was President of the Bassendean Shire Council 1970-1975 and Mayor of the Bassendean Town Council 1975-1984. He was made a Freeman of the Town in September, 1984.

³⁵ See *Town of Bassendean Annual Report 2015-2016*, p 8 and also www.communitynews.com.au/eastern-reporter/news/annes-service-honoured/

BRINKWORTH: I have no idea.

HC Did you see it as a great honour, is that why you were....?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, yes. I always thought that Freeman of the Town is something special, which they are, but I didn't think I was that person.³⁶

HC So as a Freeperson of the Town, what do you get, what does it do for you?

BRINKWORTH: All it does you get a badge and you go to events that council themselves run, you are invited to those. I love that because like last week they had this volunteer week, so I was invited to that, as a special guest; the minister for the volunteers was there as well. It's nice because I am still in contact, I can find out what goes on.

HC They couldn't have given you anything better then?

BRINKWORTH: They couldn't have.

HC Thinking about the whole time you were on council, the work of the council and the whole set-up has changed vastly, what would you say are the major changes in the council and council work over the time you've been involved?

BRINKWORTH: Well each CEO brought a different perspective. I suppose the biggest one was Steven Goode, he brought a big change. It was an environment which still had a lot of rivalry then because the council had sacked Clarrie McCreed, so we were still getting over that. Then Steven got the job. He was a young brash man, came from Carnarvon and he had all these ideas he wanted to implement which I thought he was doing it too quickly and I told him so. He said, "Well that's the only way you can do it when you come in new," and I said I understood. He and I got on so well because we talked to each. He would explain his reasons and then I'd try and explain why I thought some things were going too fast. He brought a lot of difference – some people didn't like it, some staff didn't like it, but he certainly got council back on track and he took no nonsense. I can remember a councillor asking about meetings in the school holidays - there were two or three councillors actually who had children - he said, "We're not changing for you, when you went on council, you knew when the meetings were on." I thought well good on you, even though I felt sorry for her. That's the way it's all changed. When I got onto council I didn't have the responsibility of my children, they were at university, they weren't at primary school or high school. I waited. The mothers now want to do it while their children are still young, which I understand, but you can't change some things just for you.

HC Has the focus of the council as a whole changed, from when you started to now – are they still interested in the same sort of issues?

BRINKWORTH: No.

HC How has that changed?

³⁶ See Parliament of WA, Hansard, Council Wednesday 16 March 2016, pp 1164b-1165a, Hon Donna Faragher.

BRINKWORTH: Well at the moment it's more social definitely. They're focussing differently.

HC What are they focussing on now that they didn't focus on in the past?

BRINKWORTH: Well when they focus on something... At the moment it's the children's playground, a big deal, a million-dollar thing. Some of them are really dead set on it, that's on council and they can't see that they can't get it, even though the finances are not there. When they are asked they say, "Oh where there's a will, there's a way," that was exactly what one councillor said. I said, "Look it doesn't always work like that". A children's playground is just good for a children's playground, but what have we got for seniors. We really don't have anything, we don't even have a decent... We've got Hyde Retirement Village. But they don't look at it that way. Then the other thing - you know electric cars are coming - putting battery chargers through the streets. I am thinking why the hell do you want that? They're thinking more ahead I think than we were. We actually dealt with the present. I think they think forward, but that's because things are changing so quickly, so I understand that. That was one of the reasons I didn't want to go on council again, I thought this is just too far ahead for me.

HC So what you're saying is that the council today is trying to plan for the future, but the council when you started was planning for that present day.

BRINKWORTH: Present and maybe five years ahead, where now they're going to... even the government is, planning very far ahead.

HC What about the impact of social media and computers?

BRINKWORTH: I think that's a terrible thing. I know the last election a friend of mine went up for council and she was just gobsmacked what was going on, how they were attacking her and some of the others. Because I wasn't privy to it she would photocopy it for me. I thought this is bull dust. I think they've gone just too far. You see now politicians getting into trouble...

HC You mean it's become a personality rather than an issue...

BRINKWORTH: Yes, where I think before, if they were going to say that to the person they would think about it, where now just print it off and send it. I can remember the Mayor Tina Klein... actually she got into quite a controversy with somebody. She'd say to me this is what I've typed up. I'd say, "Okay, now go to sleep and tomorrow look at it and go delete!" Once she'd actually sent it and she said to me after, "You know, you gave me damn good advice and I should have listened to it." I said, "In the morning if you still feel the same then send it, but half the time you will delete it." That's one of the things I didn't want to go on, that maybe I would get like that and I wouldn't want to be like that.

HC So when you started was it more the issues that were the point of discussion and not the personalities, is that what you mean?

BRINKWORTH: Oh yes.

HC So it's become more personality focussed.

BRINKWORTH: I think so and I think that – I hate to say it – I think it’s because they’re wanting more females on councils and State Government. So you’re getting this focus of these young ones mainly getting on who want to go to the next step and use local government as a stepping stone. That’s why they’re bringing some issues to council that’s got nothing to do with council – your gay thing³⁷ that was just outrageous they way they had the gay flag up there. Now one of the councillors – and they followed suit – is they’ve taken the crest off our flag, which I just abhor and actually I wanted to make an issue of it at council, but because I was having heart problems my heart doctor said, “Don’t get yourself excited.” I thought well I’ve got to shut up and let someone else do it. What are the other issues? Yes, they’re bringing things that have got nothing to do with local government.

HC What is the rationale for taking the crest off the flag?

BRINKWORTH: They claim, I believe, that the person’s crest³⁸ that was on, that he was a murderer of the Aborigines. I still haven’t spoken to Jennie Carter to find out really if that was true or not.

HC But wasn’t he a landowner here also?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, the Broun family I think it was. So that’s what I’m trying to say. There’s areas that...

This recycling thing, I mean one of the councillors moved get rid of this at all these public events. I thought to myself but that’s going ahead anyhow, don’t put any more pressure on your... Because they’ve got to remember when they put these things up and it’s passed the staff have long reports to do. I remember once a councillor put in a report, it was so long - a notice of motion - and it was lost, didn’t even get a seconder. So I couldn’t help it, even though I liked him, I said to the staff, “How long did this take to do?” Five days! It was about twenty pages long, just to be rejected. That is just stupidity.

HC What about the Town of Bassendean since you moved here in 1961, how has Bassendean itself changed?

BRINKWORTH: Oh its gone ahead, well and truly, population-wise, business-wise – we’ve got better businesses. We’ve got a lovely industrial area. That’s when I came in and that was being talked about because it was on a field that’s supposed to have all this contaminated stuff and we fought to get that going and it’s a beautiful industrial area, really I am proud of it. It’s gone miles ahead, miles, but it had to.

HC What about the demographic, is it still the same? It had a reputation of being a working-class area, what is it like now?

BRINKWORTH: Oh it’s definitely changed. It’s taken a while. I only know that because politically I am involved a bit. When I am actually handing out leaflets you can see there’s more professional people. We’ve got judges, we’ve got lawyers, doctors. Yes definitely. Still

³⁷ Referring to the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey to gauge support for legalizing same-sex marriage held in November 2017, which generated lively debate. The result was an overwhelming vote for marriage equality and legislation legalizing same-sex marriage came into effect in December 2017.

³⁸ Referring to the replacement of historical Broun family crest. See *Eastern Reporter*, 5/4/2018 at: www.communitynews.com.au/eastern-reporter/news/bassendean-Councillors-flag-changes/

probably middle-class, more so – and that’s probably because of Ashfield and Eden Hill, but Bassendean that side, the river side, has definitely changed.

HC Who were you handing out leaflets for, Anne?

BRINKWORTH: It depends who I like.

HC Do you mean at State level or still at local government level?

BRINKWORTH: Both! Oh we don’t hand leaflets out because it’s all postal voting. No, I used to go out... I joined the Democrats thinking they would change the world. A friend of mine, Cedric Jacobs³⁹, have you heard of him, he’s an Aboriginal? Well he started something so my husband and I were his friends, so we decided to back him. Actually it was good because it was good giving out for a not Labor or Liberal. You can give it out and you get a different response completely and you learn about them.

HC Thinking about your years on council what would you say is your greatest personal achievement, while you were on council; what are you most proud of?

BRINKWORTH: Probably the Library and the War Memorial – have to be. Then the street lighting.

HC Looking back over those years how would you sum up your time on council?

BRINKWORTH: A real learning curve. An experience that I am so pleased that I had. There was a time when I wondered what the heck I was doing, but even my husband commented before he died, saying how it changed me completely and gave me a... But never changed me as far as I am still there for the battler, but I saw the other side of it too.

HC Did he mean that you changed so you saw both sides of issues?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, where before I would just see the poor side. There were other things I was a bit upset about, but I had no backing at all. I don’t know if you remember when they were doing... Peter Foss, the Minister for whatever he was then⁴⁰ wanted to put the women’s prison up there and I must have been the only one that wanted it. That was a bit of a thing with me, still now to this day. He actually took us into Bandyup, we had the privilege of going in here, meeting some of the prisoners. I was appalled. I came home crying – I get upset now even – to go into their wards and see how the females are treated and lived. I thought it was disgusting. He planned a place like Nyandi and I was all for that, but the community and the other councillors were so against it that I just didn’t have a voice, but I still regret that in a way.

HC Is that your biggest regret about not having achieved that?

BRINKWORTH: Yes, that would be my biggest regret that I didn’t have the knowledge, the power, how to help get something, to reason with people. In fact I think they would

³⁹ Rev Cedric Jacobs MBE, Noongar elder [1943-2018], stood as a One Nation candidate for the Legislative Council, in the WA State election of 1989.

⁴⁰ Peter Foss, Liberal, was a member of the WA Legislative Council representing East Metropolitan Region. He was Attorney General; Minister for Justice 1995- 2001. He retired in 2005.

have had less crime in that area. I lived near Riverbank in Caversham and I can remember everyone signing a petition there – I was only young – not to want Riverbank, all these horrible things going on. I remember a policeman saying to me, I was about fourteen, he said, “What are you scared of dear?” I said, “Well they’re going to come in my house.” He said, “No, if they run out of there, they’re going to swim over the Swan River and go to Midland. I said, “Of course they will, they’re not going to come to me are they?” I remember that explicitly. That worked out to be a fantastic place. In fact my husband had a lot to do with that because Peter Foss got him involved in there to train them. These were people who were not bad people but need a go before they get out into the community. To me there’s just nothing for them and for the females – oh! So that’s my biggest regret.

HC If you had to sum up what Bassendean has meant to you over the years, how would you sum it up – your feelings for the place?

BRINKWORTH: It’s my home, it’s my everything.

HC How do you see its future?

BRINKWORTH: I think we’ll get through. We’re lucky, we’re close enough to Perth but enough away. I remember some people coming here to live in Devon Road and they had an issue. I said, “Well why did you come here?” They said, “Because we can’t afford Subiaco!” [Laughs] I was thinking the other day after reading the paper about Subiaco. I thought they did the right thing! [Laughter]

HC Anne, thank you very much for a most interesting interview, it will be a valuable addition to your local history collection. Have you anything else you’d like to add?

BRINKWORTH: Thank you. I was really dreading it, I’ll be quite honest, but you’ve made it so easy.

HC You made it so easy – thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW

ATTACHMENT ONE - Awards – Anne Brinkworth

- **Late 1990s Lion's Club International Exemplary Award**
For 'a quarter of a century of a wide range of activities and organizations'. Presented at The Swan Districts Football Club.
- **Western Australian Local Government Association's Meritorious Service Award in 2004**
'For long and outstanding service to local government'. Presented by Clive Robartson, President, and Ricky Burgess, Chief Executive Officer, during Local Government Week, held once a year in August. At the same ceremony Councillor Bevan Carter, Town of Bassendean, was also presented with the Meritorious Service Award for his contribution to local government. [*Town of Bassendean Annual Report 2003-2004*, p 5]
- Distinguished Service Award in 2010 for services to local government.
- **2016 Freeman of the Town of Bassendean awarded 16 March 2016.**
'The Town bestowed the honour of Freeman of the Town on retired long serving Councillor, Anne Brinkworth. Anne was first elected councillor in 1988 and after 23 years in office, elected not to re-run at the expiry of her last term in 2015.' [*Town of Bassendean Annual Report 2015-2016*, p 41].
- **Red Cross Awards**
 - Australian Red Cross Distinguished Service Award
 - 50-year Laurel Wreath Medal
 - 2012 the Department for Communities awarded Anne a 50-year Volunteer Service Award for her services to the Australian Red Cross.



Red Cross Medals presented to Anne Brinkworth

ATTACHMENT TWO - ANNE BRINKWORTH – RECORD OF MEETING ATTENDANCE [Source: *Annual Reports, Town of Bassendean, 1998-2016*]

Annual Report	Council Meetings	Special Council Meetings	Standing Committees	Other Council Meetings
1998-1999	12	12	23	17
1999-2000	11	4	18	21
2000-2001	10	6	21	17
2001-2002	10	3	20	18
2002-2003	12	11	23	10
2003-2004	11	8	12	10
2004-2005	12	13	11	10
2005-2006	14	10	14	16
2006-2007	8	4	12	14
2007-2008	12	7	11	12
2008-2009	12	10	10	19
CHANGE IN RECORD KEEPING STATISTICS FROM 2009-2010, AS BELOW				
	Council meetings	Special Council Meetings and General Meetings of Electors	Statistic discontinued, possibly included in next column 'Other Council Meetings'	Other Council Committees (Possibly now includes Standing Committees)
2009-2010	22	6		12
2010-2011	21	3		20
2011-2012	13	3		19
2012-2013	11	3		24
2013-2014	11	8		15
2014-2015	11	6		12
2015-2016 (retired Oct 2015)	3	1		5

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