

## ***First day of Spring in Waterford***

***By***

***Adolph de Sousa***

***Part II***



***This Book is Dedicated to  
Phil Deschamp AAPS***



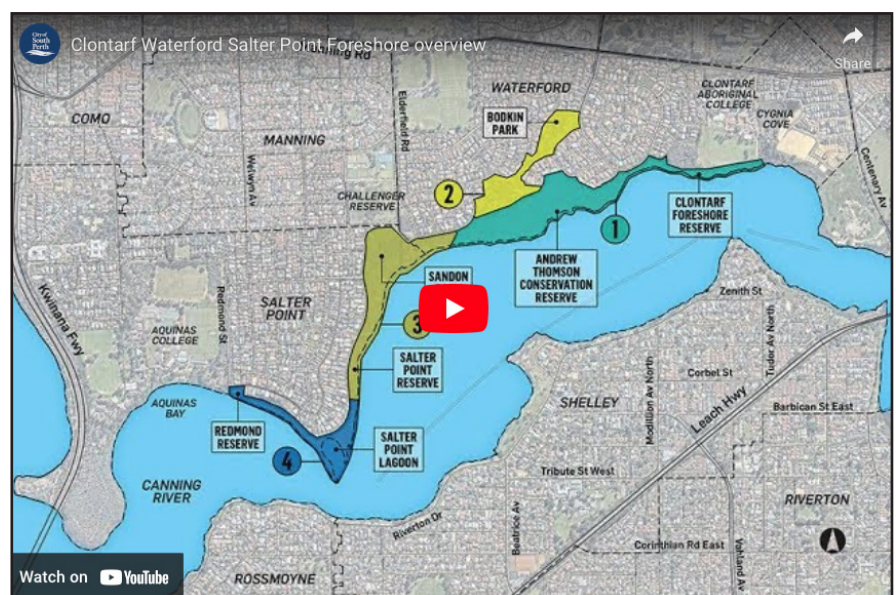
Ten years ago, I wrote a skit titled *First Day of Spring at Waterford*. It was written during Spring, and contained a series of thoughts which I recorded as I walked through my suburb early in the morning. The skit was intended for my friends who live in North America, UK and Europe, having migrated there from our hometowns in East Africa some fifty years ago. I tried to convince them why I am blessed with a beautiful suburb, with my neighbours, their pets as well as the wildlife fauna and endemic species in the reserves around me. The City of South Perth Librarian was impressed and agreed to place a copy of the skit in the local library under the local history section. For those who have not done so I would encourage you to click the link below:

<https://south-perth.libero.com.au/libero/docClientStream.cls?id=207542010bcd2ca255fe4bb9160158ae4e84b469b4c3d469b5e350ad4def13d5>

This Part II skit is written to record the changes that have occurred since I wrote the original version. It is intended for an Australian audience. I have dedicated it to my late friend and neighbour Phil Deschamp who edited my original skit and provided me with a wonderful selection of photographs of the birds and vegetation of the neighbourhood.

One thing has not changed since I wrote the original skit. My feelings that I am blessed to live in a wonderful suburb with a variety of people from different parts of the world and with very interesting and unique backgrounds. The issue for me has always been how can I document them. How can I write about interesting life experiences and keep a record of them for others to read and share. There simply is not enough time for me to do this in the short time the Lord has given us on this planet. But to be fair He /She has given me good health this last decade both in mind and body and is therefore saying to me *"Adolph get on with it. Write for posterity so that others can read your thoughts and work for the benefit humankind."* This record focuses more on the dogs in my suburb who are taken for a walk with their owners; the birds and native vegetation that have been rehabilitated.

The route I now walk has changed from the routine I did ten years ago. Now I have added *Salter Point* – a neighbouring suburb along the river as the Council footpaths have connected our two suburbs. Please refer to the route map in this skit. Basically, I walk from the area marked 1 to the north to Bodkin Park, then go South along the yellow section marked 2 and go East and South toward Section 3 of the map past Sandon Park and Salter Point Reserve and then return and walk East towards my home. When it is too sunny or hot, I tend to walk the old



route towards *Cygnia* where there are more shaded trees and skip Salter Point. There is a further change. Nowadays I wear ear pods and I am tuned to the local station and listen to the news and the trivia that Curtin radio DJ announces. Then with this *WhatsApp* App on my smart phone I call my good friends in Las Vegas and in Texas to chat about other life activities -politics, social events and compare our thoughts etc. All this means I have less time to reflect than I had ten years ago, and it confirms I too am changing my ways even though I walk the same distance. **Change is** inevitable. We have to accept it and as the old adage goes how we adapt to it is for us to determine. In short what I am saying is that this skit is the work of a number of years of reflection put together as if it were the reflection of one day's walk – which it is not. What is more the *Health App* monitors the pace that I walk, the average length of my steps etc and whether there are any changes as I grow older. I walk around eight thousand steps each morning. I am glad to say I still do that in a little over an hour and a half and there is no noticeable change in the length of steps I take. With all this technology on me these days I wonder whether I am simply health conscious or becoming a hypochondriac.

*"Come on Adolph, get to the point why all this preamble?"* I hear you saying. Yes, we do not have time these days to let our thoughts go free. We have been trained to focus on a subject and address it without all these frills. Is this really good for us? I have to ask an expert about this when I next meet one! Maybe I do not need an expert anymore. Artificial Intelligence (AI) on my phone gives me all the advice I need when I ask Siri the question.

As I step out of 52 Waterford Avenue, I look at the corner house, 1 Nenagh Place. There used to be the *Valentinos* – remember the Irish family with Italian names? They sold up -downsized you would ask? Apparently not. They intended living life to the fullest in their older age by moving to Cape Bouvard where they have the canals and a boat in their back yard. Why not? Australia has been good to them, and it makes me so happy to see them happy. Of course, I have lost touch with them as they are some 70kms away and I never had their telephone numbers. Their home at Nenagh Place is bought by a Pakistani family. *Nasim Muhammed* and *Ghazalla* are not ancestrally really from Pakistan – his parents were from Bihar in India. They had to flee India into Pakistan when the British decided to partition India that led to communal riots. His wife is a doctor who has a general practice, and they are both friendly and concerned neighbours. A quick visit to them for some medical advice will not go astray. It will at least keep your mind at ease if you have a medical episode. They have two children, a daughter and a son, both studying hard and preparing to serve this country as hard-working new Australians.

On one occasion Muhammed threw a party for their friends on some special occasion, and they parked their cars around the neighbouring areas. The beauty about their friends is that they dress up with their colourful and graceful traditional dress from the sub-continent. It really adds colour to this beautiful suburb.

Further on at 50 Waterford Avenue I have new neighbours since my last skit. The Indonesians



have been replaced by Chinese – from mainland China. *Sissi* does not speak English and whenever I ring the doorbell she comes out to the front with her young son. He is a smart kid – only been in the country for 8 years but speaks fluent English. They migrated on a business visa, but I suspect they migrated here for the same reason we all did. To work hard, be rewarded and give our children a good future. A good long-term future means we have to get on well with each other, because we come from such diverse countries and leave our newly adopted countries in a better condition than we found it. They manage a business selling dolls and craft – of course all imported from China!

At 48 Waterford Avenue is a new house. It used to be a vacant lot. It has taken nearly two years to build. That is a long time and is a reflection of the shortage of labour and skills as result of the Covid environment. It appears to me that a couple – must be in their forties with teenage children have moved in. I have not yet formally met them, but I understand that they represent the blended multicultural society we now live in.



I reflect on my walk and recall my other new neighbours at 58 Waterford

Avenue. They replaced the Caligaros who were there eight years ago. But that house was sold twice since Caligaros moved on – always at a premium I suspect. Anyway, *Denise Peggs* and *Steve Bizzaca*, the new owners, have decided to have a new lease to life. They brought

*Magnum* a puppy St Bernard dog who at six weeks weighed 20 kilos. He is cute in his own way and when full grown will weigh over 80 kilos. At one year old they struggle to keep him on the leash along the footpath.



As I walk on the footpath towards the northwest, I pass 31 Waterford Avenue. You remember in my last skit I said that this was a rented home where a new migrant, Mushidin Mohammed, from the subcontinent had moved in and had some strange habits? Well, Mushidin has moved to another suburb, and the house has been demolished – to make way for a new home. This sometimes

tends to be the trend in this suburb where older homes get rebuilt with newer ones if the economics of upgrading does make it worthwhile. You remember that was a funny story with racial connotations? Which reminds me of this new story I was recently told. Before I relate it let me explain.

You all know that Australia had a White Australia Policy till the late 1960s. Since then, we have embraced multiculturalism with zest, and we are a better society for it. It has been carefully introduced so as not to upset 'mainstream' Australians of the day, and now multiculturalism is 'mainstream' in our country. When discussing some core values, we Australians agreed that that "English" should form the bedrock of our society and we encourage migrants to learn and communicate in English as soon as possible so that they can fully engage in Australian society. Unlike the USA and possibly Canada or the UK our English language teachers do not emphasise uniformity of accent, just the same way as there is no uniform accent in the UK. But we are all proud of our origins. We may be South African Australians, Irish Australian, English Australians or indeed South Asian Australians each with a unique English accent from our country of origin. We are increasingly discerning in the variety of accents people speak in English - and this is part of our mosaic of a rich culture. So, here goes a story I heard when I went to the Indian Community Centre last week.

An Indian Australian man went to the Myers clothing store and asked the Australian Anglo-Indian sales lady *"Can you show me some Shaarts?"* She replied: *"Sir, are you a Bengali or Punjabi?"* The man *"How does that matter?"* She *"Sir, if you are Punjabi, I will show you Shirts; if you are Bengali, I will show you Shorts"*.

*This explains why the British shifted the capital from Calcutta to Delhi in colonial India. They simply got sick and tired of the Bengalis saying, "GOD SHAVE THE QUEEN"!*

I now pass the home of Charlie and Elvira, his wife.



His father, Joe Iannantuoni – now a widower- lives a couple of doors to him at 30 Waterford Avenue. His sister, Pina, lives across the road. Joe has an interesting background. He migrated from Italy in March 1952 at 22 years of age and arrived in Fremantle on the *SS Castle Bianco*. He migrated alone and came from *San Marco la Catola* which is located along the *Apennines* Mountain range of Italy. He would have been one of a number of Italian immigrants after

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1 The story is going around the web. The Australian bent is my own. Now let me say this to those who are trying always to cut me down. Australians are a bunch of people who love humour. And Australian South Asians have broad enough shoulders to make fun at themselves.



the Second World War. At that time, Australia had a population of a little over 7 million and we were so concerned about our small numbers that the authorities were saying “*populate or perish*” having just lost some 40,000 young men in the World War II. Although Australia had come out of the Great Depression and the economy started to boom, it was still a tough life especially for manual workers. However, their presence was required to open up the country where the infrastructure was still in its infancy. Upon his arrival he was taken to Belmont and following an interview he and another immigrant, Luigi - also from Italy, were transported to work in a farm in *Dalwallinu* , some 248 kilometres from Perth. They were there for 5 months during the seeding season and then both farm hands went to Northam where they were then sent to Albany. There Joe was asked to use a grader to construct roads which were being bituminised. Joe’s concern was to work hard and retain a job. The civil engineer was so impressed with Joe’s commitment and application to the task of road construction that he engaged him on a continuous basis. Whilst in Albany he got married by proxy to his childhood sweetheart from his village in Italy and she and two of his brothers migrated to Western Australia in 1954. Before they arrived, Joe had saved enough money to buy a home in Victoria Park. Charlie and his sister were born in Perth in 1956 and 57 respectfully. At this point Joe realised he needed to go back to the country to earn enough money to pay off the mortgage which he did in a short time. Joe then returned to Perth and worked for Sam Rifici, a popular hair stylist. In 1995, Joe built the current family home where I gathered my notes for his story.

At 93 Joe reflects on the success and struggles of his early life. The key to his success was to be flexible in his manual skills and undertake long hours of hard work. All this paid off by enabling him to give a better opportunity for his children. Today his son and daughter live close by to him. He represents a typical family whose children live within close proximity of their parents. This way they are a support to their parents during the ageing process. I know of at least two other families living within close proximity of their parents.

As I walk forward towards Bodkin Park I go left and pass the park with the pond which is a place where the teal ducks, shelducks and coots live and migratory birds such as pelicans, spoonbill and ibises keep coming for the fresh water in the living stream.

It is at this point that I must tell you about the ducks. During *Makuru* (June-July) I saw a neighbour, Bob, feeding the ducks. He shouldn’t be doing that because the ecosystem is in balance. Besides the Council has put plaques along the pond to say there





are a number of reasons people should not feed the ducks. Any way when I saw Bob, and I told him ***"You know you have been responsible for the population explosion of ducks in Waterford?"*** He said, ***"How come?"*** I told him this year I have seen more ducklings being born than I have ever seen in previous years.

Now during *Djilba* there was this Mama duck and Daddy duck with six little ducklings. Then next to them was a Mama duck and a baby duck - but no daddy duck. I also noticed that the other ducks were chasing this mother duck and her little one. I wondered why they were shoeing her off. I thought about this for a while, and I concluded it must be a case of infidelity!

Anyway, I carried on walking along the path and met three ladies who were also doing their usual morning walk. After my usual greetings, I explained to them what I saw and my theory that it was a case of infidelity. One lady said to me, ***"If the other ducks are harassing her, why doesn't she move further away from them and forage there away from the harassment?"*** I thought about it for a while, and I said to myself ***"this is a perfectly reasonable question for which I have not got a rational explanation"***. Besides I am not a duck psychologist. This must be a case worthy of referral to David Attenborough. Of course, I did not write to David as I know how busy he must be. Instead, I consulted a local expert and told him what my theory was. Well, he came back to me yesterday, and you know these experts - instead of giving you an answer they always ask you more questions! He said to me ***" Well Adolph, you have to do more observations. See who are chasing the mother ducks. Is it a case where the drakes are chasing her, and the gander is standing back and just looking on? There is only one way to be certain. One would have to do a DNA test"*** I must say I have not been so observant, and I am not going to the expense of having to do DNA testing. I thought about it for a while, and I concluded ***"This is a very thoughtful and considerate mother duck. She is trying to make sure she has made provisions for her little duckling in case something untoward should happen to her. That is why she is foraging next to the six other ducklings. She is hoping that her only precious duckling will become friendly with her six step siblings!"*** So satisfied with this explanation I had an answer for the lady who asked me the original question regarding why this mother duck was not foraging far away.

Now I have this friend in Canada. He too is writer of very imaginative stories. But he always has a fairy tale ending to them and I guess he has nobler feelings of humankind than I have. I sent him the above story and my theory about the situation and asked him whether he would like to offer some thoughts. He replied:

*Hello Adolph:*

*I read your story about the ducks a couple of times. I began to wonder where you wanted to go with this story. Since I do not know a whole lot about ducks and how they think, it would be mere speculation on my part to continue the story with anything factual.*

*However, if you wish to continue the story using one's God-given grace of imagination, I could make an honest attempt to continue the story.*

*Since Mother duck and her only baby were being constantly rejected by the ducks with large families, she pulled her little one aside and said to her, "You know my baby Jane, don't mind what those terrible ducks are doing to you. We will soon find other ducks who will be our friends." No sooner had mother duck said this, a drake with two little babies landed not far from them. The two babies swam as fast as they could to befriend the little duck whose eyes had teared up. "Why are you crying?" asked the ducks. "You see those ducks in the distance." "Yes" "Their parents will not allow their children to have anything to do with me." "We can be friends," came the immediate response.*

*They approached the little duck and spread their wings over her in friendship.*

*While this was happening, the drake approached the mother duck and greeted her.*

*"Why are you alone?" "It is a sad story. We were searching for food in a lake a few miles away from here, when suddenly we heard a deafening sound. Before we knew it, my lovely wife lay lifeless on the lake. We took off in a hurry since we knew that someone out there was out to get us too."*

*"I am sorry to hear your story. Please accept my condolences." "And why are you here alone, asked the drake. "Mine is a very similar story," said the mother duck.*

*"Perhaps you and I could stay together and raise our kids with love," said the drake.*

*"I think that would be a great idea and this seems to be a great lake to lay eggs and have a larger family if you so wanted."*

Is that not a good imaginative story? However. there is one **BIG** flaw. My North American friend has never been to Australia, and he doesn't know that we do not go around with guns and shooting ducks. In fact, our gun laws are so strict many of us have never handled a gun.

At this point I have to stress that I have absolute praise for the City of South Perth – my local government area. They are responsible for the maintenance of the parks, the dual pathways and for the rehabilitation of the vegetation and are protective of the wildlife and fauna. This is a turnaround in my attitude from the one I had ten years ago where you would have noted my cynicism. The mosquito problem – though not eliminated – is well under control. So much so that we had to disband the *Mosquito brigade* which we set up to make representations. Also, the micro bats with their cage homes are still there. Now the Council has regular walks of residents interested in this area to examine at close hand how effective these bats are at controlling the mozzies. Similarly, the Council has also started a program to spot and nurture the long-necked turtles breeding grounds and have advertised for volunteers who are interested in this creature.

Ten years ago, I reported that a pair of ospreys had made their nest by the Canning River. Well, a winter storm destroyed their habitat and they moved to the Telstra mobile tower which is located on the Curtin Campus. They were then evicted from their home by Telstra because they interfered



with the communications signal. The City decided then to build a artificial tower, ten metres tall with a huge perch and a nest so that these birds of prey could have a home. That was in March this year (2023) and by June I saw an osprey on the perch. I thought that during *Djilba* we would see young hatchlings. But no such luck. The osprey has not been seen since I last spotted him. My walking friends started wondering what had happened. Was all our good ratepayer's money gone to waste? Well, we had to consult an osprey psychologist. His conclusion is that the female osprey examined the nest that had been put up partly by the Council and partly by the male osprey and decided there was no way she was going to lay her eggs in that place. She then moved to another site – perhaps closer to the river and laid her eggs at some other spot. So the male, ever an obedient, decided to follow her to their breeding abode. However, in his report to the City Council, the psychologist said not all hope was lost. Next winter the osprey will come back do some renovations to the artificial nest, then get his beloved sheila and hopefully her approval. So, we walkers and joggers in Waterford are looking forward to the 2024 *Djilba* season. When I mentioned this the Mayor Greg Milner recently, he was not aware of the entire story. I guess the City administrators have decided not to place the report before their Council meetings!

Talking about Birds. Well, there are many migratory birds in our suburbs in addition to the ones who have made this suburb their home. My friend Mike Watson who also does the regular morning walk is not only knowledgeable about bird species but has a little camera to capture those fine photos many of which I have reproduced here for the record. Below is a collection of some twenty different bird species seen over the past two years. Did you know the latest census of birds has concluded there are 438 billion birds on this planet?<sup>2</sup>



*Brown Goshawk*



*Butcher Bird*



2 This figure was published on the International Birds Day and announced by the DJ of Curtin Radio on Friday 5 2024.





*Darter Comorant*



*Geater Egret*



*Namkeen Night Heron*



*Lorikeet*



*Magpie*



*Mistletoe*





*Pink & Grey Galah*



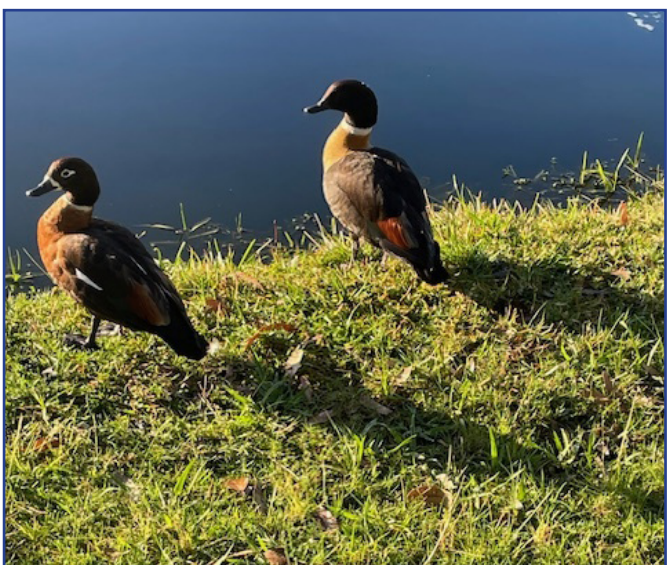
*Pelicans*



*Red Tail Black Cocatoo*



*Sacred Kingfisher*



*Shelducks*



*Spoonbill in Bodkin Park*





*Swamp Hen with Chic*



*White Faced Heron*



*White Cockatoos*



*Teal Duck Family*



*Wagtail*



*Family of four Tawny Frogmouths at Waterford Avenue*



This morning is a pretty cool one, so I walk past the Curtin boat house where the rowing club meets and move towards the new footpath towards Salter Point a little over ten metres away along the left, I notice a bunch of flowers placed on the side lawn. These flowers tend to be changed every other day. I wondered why these were placed there. I then met the lady who told me the story. She and her family do not wish to be identified for this skit and I have to respect her wishes. However, she explained to me that some 17 years ago her son was skating at some other suburb and did not wear a helmet. He had a fall and died tragically. As a devote mother she has grieved all those years and now regularly takes a contemplative walk along this footpath. She explained that one day when she was passing the spot, she heard the voice of her son. He said to her **"Mum, I died doing what I liked best. There is no need for you to grieve please get on with your life"**. I thought this type of spirituality was confined only in the belief systems of our indigenous people. But that is not the case these days. A number of Australians with a Christian background also have such beliefs.



I now walk towards the East and South along Sandon Park and Salter Point Reserve. This is an open area where dogs are allowed off their leashes and many of them come and greet me. It is the time of the day when many dog owners take their dogs for walks before going to work. That is a trigger for me to tell you about the dogs of the suburb. My suburb has a kaleidoscopic range of dogs. Big, small, friendly, overly friendly and some a bit aggressive. I have a collection of photos of some dogs in our suburb. I have already mentioned my neighbours at 58 Waterford Avenue who have this St Bernard, **Magnum**, who is now an

80-kilo dog. He would be the biggest. Steve Bizzacca says Magnum is the King of all dogs in the suburb, and who would dare disagree! Maree with **Pippa** is one of my smaller dogs. However, I have even seen smaller poodles – so small they are usually take for a 'walk' in a pram. Michelle and Shane walk regularly with **Scotty** their Border Collie. There are many varieties of Border Collies. They are an Australian sheep dog, but the white and black version is quite common







in our suburb. Then there is Mark and Kelly who walk **Veuve** their Labradoodle. Later on, on a different day I met Anthony holding a big round ball and his son Ethan holding **Lisa**, their little brown poodle. When Ethan looked at the photos, I had collected for this publication he pointed out to Kelly the owner of *Veuve* and said she was his teacher. I must mention Peter Macri



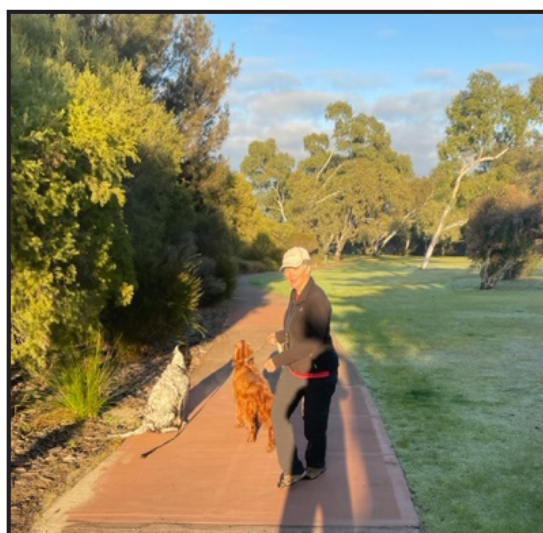
who walks his two English Steffis, **Atlas** and **Axel**, on a regular basis and they keep him fit as he has to have a ball or a stick and throw them away to give them an exercise. I had first introduced myself to him when a UK study was published to

say that many dog owners have the same disposition as their masters. Peter certainly fits that description. Then there is Lesley with **Sam** and **Rosie** the Irish and English Setters. She tells me that they get on well together! However,



I have established that the English Setter Rosie had an altercation with Axel the English Steffi! Randolph Baptista, a person from my part of the world, takes **George** a Golden Retriever on a regular stroll but George is not the only dog by that name in our

suburb. Talking about Golden Retrievers – they are placid friendly dogs and Leslie takes her dog **Whisky** regularly for a walk as well. There are pets galore in







the homes next to me between my home and where **Magnum** and his owners live at 58 Waterford Avenue. Mary Deschamp, the widow of Phil to whom this book is dedicated, now has a new Scottish companion called **Hamie** a little white West Highland Terrier. Hamie now finds himself wedged between a Swiss St Bernard and a feline Egyptian tabby, oddly named *Raven*, who sneaks over the fence and tries to enter through Hamie's swinging door, much to his consternation!

I love dogs and I used to have one who lived 17 years – a good age for mixed Kelpie and Doberman. But it was very painful parting with *Tojo*, and that's when I shied away from having a replacement. I will take a friendly dog from my family to look after if they go way on holidays – but I will not keep one permanently at this point. This is only a small record of dogs in the suburbs of Waterford and Salter Point – but it gives the reader a flavour of the range and importance of pet dogs in my suburb.



As I walk back to Waterford from Salter Point, I pass closer to the river in between a reserve park the Council has constructed. A live stream going to the river separates Salter Point from Waterford with a walk-over bridge and takes me back to the **Curtin Rowing Club boathouse**. One winter's morning as I was talking to my Las Vegas friend I showed her the sunrise through the video of my WhatsApp. She captured the photo and drew a painting of the morning sunrise which I am now pleased to share with you.



On the way back I catch up with Odwyn Jones walking brusquely with walking stick in hand. Odwyn has lived on Elderfield Road near the Boat Shed for over thirty years. I knew him when I worked at Curtin as he was employed by the



University to become the Principal of the School of Mines in Kalgoorlie. He served in that position for fifteen years with distinction - so much so that he was awarded the **AO** in the Australia Day Honours for his distinguished services to the mining industry and higher education. He hails from Wales and in his younger days he was a keen rugby player. He and his wife walked this route long before I did, and I used to meet them both regularly. Presently his wife is in a nursing home and Odwyn is now getting on in years. However, whenever we meet, we really have time to reminisce the good old days when we used to meet for business either in Kalgoorlie or at the Bentley Campus.



I now walk back through the rear dual footpath which comes close to my house. There at 12 Nenagh Place, I pause to pay my respects to Peter Fry who passed away in November 2023. Peter would have built his home at the end of this cul-de-sac when this stage of Waterford was opened to housing – over forty years ago. He was an active man, when the pressures of age made him seek alternative lifestyle and hobbies. He tried to interest me to join the Men's Shed shortly after my retirement without much success. But more importantly he kept a watch in the neighbourhood. Now that he has passed away and his spouse is in nursing home, I expect his family will decide to sell off the property.

In this edition I have not bothered with too many photos of the residences in our suburb as those are captured in Part 1 ten years ago.

There are few things I do want to record. I do not want readers to believe we live in an idyllic suburb. We do have our occasional careless residents or visitors through our park who throw away cans, plastic or glass bottles of drinks. The State Government has instituted a plan to reward those who collect these recyclables with ten cent per item. I have armed myself with a retrievable tool and with bag in hand I collect these cans, bottles and plastics



and give them to my granddaughter who deposits the bags at recycling centre. Over the past two years she has earned over \$200.00 for such items. Today I see less litter of this type than before the policy was instituted. Which is a good outcome.

In the warmer nights of summer, one finds certain youths – I assume youths – who wantonly slash the young trees the Council plants along the pathways. Here are photos of a couple of them. Such crimes should be stopped in their tracks, but we do not have night security personnel and they get away with it. Occasionally we get the guys going around with

spray cans and showing off their graffiti. I must say the Council is very quick in scrubbing off the graffiti and replanting the slashed trees.

I did sing my praises of the Council. Sometimes they can be frustrating. When Part 1 was written I had a photo of the tree we planted on the kerb along the footpath to commemorate the Bali Bombing in October 2002. My late friend Phil Deschamp made a solid metal plaque and had it placed at the foot of this gum tree. Every anniversary year someone from the suburb used to place a bunch of flowers as a remembrance of that tragic event in which some 112 Aussies lost their lives. Anyway, I noticed last year that someone had removed the plaque. So, I wrote to the Council on Friday 19 August 2022 the following:

**From:** Adolph de Sousa <[AdolphdeSousa@hotmail.com](mailto:AdolphdeSousa@hotmail.com)>

**Date:** Friday, 19 August 2022 at 10:18 pm

**To:** City of South Perth <[enquiries@southperth.wa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@southperth.wa.gov.au)>, Cr Blake D'Souza <[crdsouza@southperth.wa.gov.au](mailto:crdsouza@southperth.wa.gov.au)>

**Subject:** Replacement of Plaque - vandalised Opposite 54 Waterford Avenue

*"Dear Parks Section*

*20 years ago, the Residents around Waterford Avenue, sought permission of the Council and planted a tree provided by the Council in memory of the victims of the Bali bombing. A plaque was placed at the base which was concreted below the surface so that it would not be removed accidentally. The tree is located in Council property on the kerb adjacent to the Canning River close to the boardwalk and almost opposite 54 Waterford Avenue.*

*About a year ago I noticed that the plaque was missing. It may have been vandalised and it is no longer there. A photo of what it looked like is attached to this email.*

*Many thanks for your consideration. It would be a timely gesture on the part of the Council on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bali bombing on 12 October 2022."*



On 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022 I received a phone call from John Murray which I followed up with an email confirming my conversation. It read:

**From:** Adolph de Sousa <[adolphdesousa@hotmail.com](mailto:adolphdesousa@hotmail.com)>

**Date:** Friday, 2 September 2022 at 5:39 am

**To:** City of South Perth <[enquiries@southperth.wa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@southperth.wa.gov.au)>, Cr Blake D'Souza <[crdsouza@southperth.wa.gov.au](mailto:crdsouza@southperth.wa.gov.au)>, Cathy Ierace <[tierace@bigpond.net.au](mailto:tierace@bigpond.net.au)>

**Subject:** Re: Replacement of Plaque - vandalised Opposite 54 Waterford Avenue

*Dear John (Head Parks Section , CoSP)*

*Thank you for your phone call yesterday (1<sup>st</sup> September) after my follow up on the email (of 19 August).*

*I understood you to say that you looked up past records and had a record that your parks section had supplied a tree to commemorate the Bali Bombing in October 2002. But there was no record of having a plaque prepared. Your records are correct. The plaque was prepared and paid for by the late Dr Phil Deschamps who lived in 56 Waterford Avenue and placed with concrete footings in 2003. I understood*



you to say that you looked up Google records and it indicated that the signage was present in 2019 but that it was not there after 2020.

In our discussions you agreed that the Council would replace the signage and have a post made firm with a concrete footing so that it did not come off easily. The policy of the Council was to retain such posts for ten years and then see if anyone in the area was interested in it being retained. If no interest was shown the post would be removed and placed in the library/archival collections. You could not promise to have it done by 12 October 2022 – the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombing.

I said that was okay. However, when they were ready to reinstall the plaque to let me know in advance and I would get the community around Waterford Avenue together to a small reinstallation ceremony perhaps by a chaplain.

Regards

Adolph de Souza

We pay respects to the traditional custodians of the land, and to their cultures, as well as their elders both past and present.

The wheels of bureaucracy run very slowly indeed despite the stated statement for the City's automated response that It should take five working days to address the matter. On 24<sup>th</sup> November -yes, a whole two and a half months later - I received the reply below from Steve Atwell, City of South Perth

**From:** Steve Atwell <[stevea@southperth.wa.gov.au](mailto:stevea@southperth.wa.gov.au)>

**Date:** 24 November 2022 at 3:52:16 pm AWST

**To:** [adolphdesouza@hotmail.com](mailto:adolphdesouza@hotmail.com)

**Cc:** Cr Blake D'Souza <[crdsouza@southperth.wa.gov.au](mailto:crdsouza@southperth.wa.gov.au)>, Mike Bradford <[mike.bradford@southperth.wa.gov.au](mailto:mike.bradford@southperth.wa.gov.au)>, Anita Amprimo <[anita.amprimo@southperth.wa.gov.au](mailto:anita.amprimo@southperth.wa.gov.au)>, Councillor Request <[councillorrequest@southperth.wa.gov.au](mailto:councillorrequest@southperth.wa.gov.au)>, Denika Nash <[denikan@southperth.wa.gov.au](mailto:denikan@southperth.wa.gov.au)>

**Subject: D-22-52720 Enquiry Memorial Plaque Bali Tragedy**

Adolph de Souza  
52 Waterford Ave.  
Waterford.

Dear Mr de Souza,

Thank you for your further enquiry in relation to the possible replacement of the disappeared Bali tragedy memorial plaque which was once located below a verge tree opposite 54 Waterford Avenue.

I apologise for the lengthy period of correspondence which you have been party to in relation to this matter.

Mr Murray is presently on leave but I have looked into the issue personally.

Whilst I have been able to confirm that memorial plaque was located at the site during 2019 but no longer there in 2020, I have not been able to locate any documentation or correspondence within the City which clarifies the circumstance surrounding its installation.

Typically, the City's policy and management practice, which provides guidance on the placement of memorial or commemorative plaques or infrastructure, requires that all of the costs of provision are born by the proponent or applicant.

Similarly, if the plaque or the infrastructure is damaged or stolen, the City does not accept any liability for its replacement. Based on your stated recollection, of Mr Murray's previous advice, I must inform you that his advice was inaccurate.

*I can inform you, that the City has sought a quotation to determine the probable cost of manufacturing a similar plaque in bronze and has been advised that cost would be in the vicinity of \$500.00 - \$600.00. There would likely be additional costs associated with installation and securing of a new plaque.*

*In view of the above, I am unfortunately not in a position to commit the City's funds toward the replacement of what is effectively a private memorial, in a residential street, all be it for a very worthwhile purpose.*

*If you wished to pursue the establishment of a public memorial in honour of that tragic event, I suggest that you speak with your elected Council representative in that regard.*

*Kind Regards*

**Steve Atwell**

Manager Program Delivery  
Infrastructure Services

**P** 9474 0953 **M** 0435 222 534 **E** [stevea@southperth.wa.gov.au](mailto:stevea@southperth.wa.gov.au)  
Cnr Sandgate St & South Tce, South Perth WA 6151

All my correspondence has been copied to the Councillors in my Ward. Do you think any of them showed any interest in this correspondence? Steve Atwell says that it was "*effectively a private memorial, in a residential street, all be it for a very worthwhile purpose.*" There is no doubt next year one or more of the Councillors will knock at our doors seeking support for their re-election! I thought Council members were there to reflect the wishes of the ratepayers – particularly when there is a public good in such a memorial reminder – whether it was created as a private or public initiative. To me that part of the street is adjacent to a reserve and the Council should take responsibility for ensuring the security of property on it.

It is over a year since the last correspondence took place with the Officers of the Council and I have been remiss in not pursuing it further. But I have promised Phil Deschamps' widow that we would pursue the matter. May be if there is Part 3 to this story, we might have something pleasant to report. I do not know I will be around when that happens. At the way things happen, we might be in time to commemorate 25 years of the Bali Bombings through a Council restoration of the project. In 2023 we elected a new Councillor to our Ward. Let us see if he is more responsive to this appeal.

Adolph de Sousa  
25 December 2023



***Acknowledgements***

- Mike and Sue Watson for the photographs on birds.
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- The residents of Waterford and Salter Point who I chat during my walks, and in particular the dog owners.
- The Global Goan magazine, Melbourne, for layout and typesetting.



