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# Subiaco POST

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April 12, 2003

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Crossword.....  
Classifieds .....  
Surfing .....  
Fishing .....

## 18-year-old aims for Cambridge

By LINDA CALLAGHAN

**Teenager Samantha Pearce is pitching for the youth vote in the Cambridge election.**

And if the 18-year-old is elected she will be WA's youngest councillor.

Ms Pearce, of Boscombe Avenue, said she wanted to give young people a voice on the council.

She decided to run after the debate a couple of months ago over whether the council should support the night surfing competition run by City Beach Surf Riders.

Ms Pearce said: "The council makes decision on behalf of youth in the town and most decisions are right, but they need someone to occasionally say, 'you are way off the mark here'."

"I don't mean to be rude, but the average age of the council is quite old."

"I want to show that young people are here and we do care what goes on."

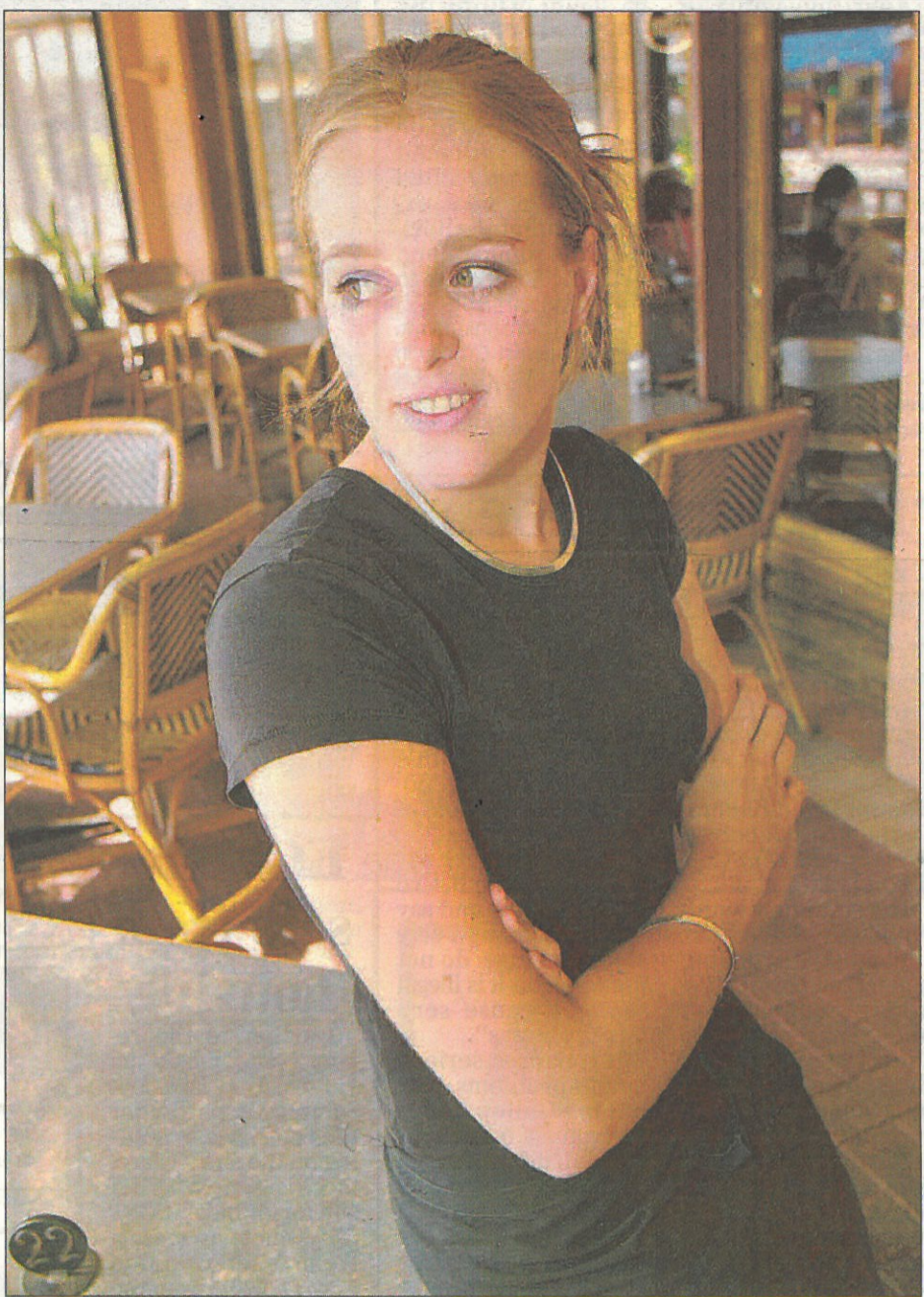
Ms Pearce was a student at Methodist Ladies' College until two years ago and is due to start a nursing degree at Curtin University in July.

"I know some people will say I am too young but I am very mature," she said.

"I may not be a ratepayer - yet - but my parents are."

Ms Pearce said while her main focus would be on youth and the town's leisure and sports facilities, she was prepared to tackle other issues, such as how the council should cater for the elderly or deal with its assets.

The youngest councillor on record is 19-year-old Richard Graham, elected Cockburn council in December, 2000.



Samantha Pearce may become WA's youngest councillor . . . meanwhile she's a waitress in Peppermint Grove, soon to start a nursing degree.

## 'Pub family didn't want big tavern

**The family planning to build Subiaco biggest tavern say they were forced designing it twice as big as they wanted.**

By PAIGE TAYLOR

City Beach man Steve Tombides, hopes to run the 560-person tavern with his mother-in-law, Sonje Gastevich.

He was giving evidence to this in the Liquor Licensing Court during an eight-day hearing to decide whether the tavern should be allowed.

Judge Rodney Greaves has reserved his decision.

Mr Tombides said he originally wanted to build a single-storey tavern that offered food and beer.

But, as a condition, the Subiaco Redevelopment Authority, the organisation that developed Subi Centro, insisted on a two-storey building with a bigger floor space.

Mr Tombides said he had not known about those conditions when he and others from his company, Resolve Nominees, had won the tender.

He had not wanted to build a two-storey tavern and asked his architect to investigate other ways to comply with the SRA's rules, including building a single-storey tavern with a big steeped roof.

But the architect, Mark Popplewell, said the logistics of that de-

sign were too hard.

Then Mrs Gastevich came up with the idea of using the site as a multi-function centre.

Lawyer Ashli Wilson, hired by Subi Centro residents who did not want the tavern, said to Mr Popplewell.

"What has occurred is that a preferred architect who is prepared to conduct the business of a tavern at this site who originally wanted to conduct a small-scale tavern business has been forced by minimum requirements to conduct a big-scale activity at the premises."

Mr Popplewell replied: "That would be correct in the instance, but then I saw the opportunity of creating the multi-function area."

Noise expert Nigel Gabriels said his relative tests showed noise from the tavern would exceed the limits set by the Environment Protection Authority.

"The most affected residents were in apartments just from the tavern," he said.

• Please turn to page 73

## Payout helps free Button from 40-year nightmare

By lunchtime on Wednesday, John Button finally realised he could re-start his life.

"You can't keep living in the past," said the 59-year-old who has been trapped by the nightmare of his past for 40 years.

The \$460,000 he had just been promised by the government was the key to unlock the shackles that have imprisoned his mind.

"I've realised it's the end of a chapter," he said.

He said the money was a recognition that the society that he had adopted as a 13-year-old British migrant was finally apologising for a



John Button now looks forward to life as a grandfather to Amy.

terrible wrong he suffered as a 19-year-old.

Mr Button now in-

tends to retire from his work as a bricklayer and spend time

trying to influence changes in the system that cornered him.

He said that until now he had been trapped economically by his inability to work, caused by the emotional torture of his false conviction.

"The first thing we can do is pay off the mortgage and fix up the kitchen so we can prepare some proper meals," he said.

Mr Button spent 5½ years in jail after being sentenced to 10 years

• Please turn to page 73

POST Editorial

### Wait for justice was far too long

Justice has taken too long to reach John Button.

The state government and Attorney-General Jim McGinty must get credit for giving Mr Button \$460,000 as an attempt to help him with the rest of his life after being the victim of a terrible mis-

carriage of justice.

It is extremely difficult to see how any sum can make up for what he has suffered and continues to suffer. But there is no other obvious practical way for the commu-

nity to say sorry for what was done to him.

Once the Appeal Court ruled last year that he had wrongly been convicted and sent to jail for killing his girlfriend 40 years ago, then the question

of society's trying to make amends came up.

The answer should have been swift, but it has taken months of waiting and that wait has been unnecessarily harsh.

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From page 11  
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Walker said she  
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McGinty had sug-  
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Ms Walker said  
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proposed that  
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summons should

have a barcode.

When the potential  
juror reported to the  
court, a number would  
be given then and only  
the summoning officer  
would know the iden-  
tity that matched it - in-  
stead of a large circle  
of police officers.

Ms Walker said the  
current royal commis-  
sion had raised wide  
alarm about some po-  
lice; that police and  
sheriffs had a higher  
duty and more was ex-  
pected of them.

She said that when a  
police officer knew the  
identification of jurors  
for a coming trial, for  
instance a murder,  
there could be enor-  
mous consequences.

"For example, if it  
was the Hancock trial  
or another serious trial,  
I do not see why the  
penalty should not be  
up to 20 years' impris-  
onment," she said.

"What if a juror were  
killed as a result of  
his identity being re-  
leased by a police of-  
ficer or an officer of the  
Sheriff's office?"

"On the other hand,  
it could be that some-  
one just takes a fancy  
to one of the jurors  
and releases his or her  
phone number or ad-  
dress.

"A lot could come  
of that, but it may not  
have a consequence  
as grave as death.

"It is generally the  
case in sentencing that  
such officers will re-  
ceive a higher penalty.

"I will persist with my  
amendment. In fact,  
the penalties should  
be a lot higher."

Mr McGinty, who had  
argued that a penalty  
of \$24,000 or two years'  
jail would be enough,  
said: "I have been beat-  
en into submission.

"I am prepared to  
vote for the amend-  
ment moved by the  
Member for Nedlands  
in order to happily re-  
solve this issue."

The usually fierce  
political opponents  
showed praise and  
gratitude on each other  
in Parliament.

Mr McGinty said he  
was grateful for such  
wide support and for Ms  
Walker's suggestions.

She said he had kind-  
ly showed her docu-  
ments and the num-  
bering system he had  
proposed was "excel-  
lent".

# Good waves mark start of bodyboarders' season

Cottesloe Body Board Club held its first contest for the season at Lancelin's Back Beach last Sunday.

## SURFING

with Cameron Bedford-Brown

new positions for the coming year," Goldie said.

The next CBBC competition is scheduled for May 18 at Cottesloe.

Results were:  
Open - 1 Michael Dobson, 2 Shem Mahoney, 3 Ben Mather, 4 Peter Quinn.

Women - 1 Katherine Charles, 2 Claire Dobson, 3 Lisa Goff, 4 Tegan Bransby, 5 Rio-Clark, 6 Pia Remund.

Junior - 1 Rupert Koning, 2 Tom Baxter, 3 Daniel de Giosa, 4 Daniel Freeman.

Cadet - 1 Glenn Rees, 2 Leigh Grgich, 3 Callum Wiltshire, equal 4 Jack Brown and Matthew Fergusson.

The swell continues its upward trend with more rideable surf in Cottesloe over the week-end.



Fresh from the national titles and open division winner of the first Cottesloe Body Board Club competition of the 2003 surf season, Michael Dobson is one of WA's best drop-knee riders. Here he swoops into the lurching lip of a Chicken Reef left at Rottneest in classic drop-knee style.

Saturday saw the biggest crowds since last year on the most popular Cottesloe reef

breaks. Isolated was the busiest, with up to 40 surfers in the water enjoying the morning glass.

Cove and Seconds were also crowded, with about 20 surfers on each break.

Seconds was thrown

ing up some lips to crack and some small tubes.

As we go to press, the first strong cold front is lining up off the coast and surfers may see some good surf this weekend, though it may be windy.



The Cottesloe Toy Library is having a cake stall to make money for more toys like these, being enjoyed by Cottesloe mother Melissa Harkins and children William and Charlotte. For more information, see story page 36.

## Subi row over solid wall bid

Iron gates and a solid wall aimed at cutting out traffic noise from a Barker Road, Subiaco, home have divided Subiaco council.

Councillor Rodney Wells said: "There is no issue of precedent here. This house looks out the front gate to Thomas Street.

"It is the only one in that situation."

But councillor Lorna White said: "We either have a policy on open front fences or we don't.

"People who move into the district must expect some traffic."

Subiaco council has a policy that front fences and walls have to be "see through" above 1.2m from natural ground level, with a maximum height of 1.8m.

Nearby properties have solid fences, but most have been in place for years.

A decision on the gates and wall was deferred.

## John Button gets payout at last

From page 1

for manslaughter for killing his girlfriend, Rosemary Anderson (17), by running her down with his car in Stubbs Terrace, Shenton Park, in February, 1963.

Mr Button's wrongful conviction brought him a lifetime of grief, recognised by Attorney-General Jim McGinty in awarding the record payout, almost three times that of the previous record in 1997.

"A horrible injustice has been done," Mr McGinty said.

"The toll on him continues to be huge, and it has affected all aspects of his life."

Many millions of dollars would be needed to fully compensate Mr Button.

Mr McGinty said state Cabinet's offer was not overly generous, but it would provide Mr Button with an income of \$35,000 for 23 years.

Mr Button said: "It's such a rare event they told me they don't have a procedure for making the payment; they don't know which account to use."

The payout has still to be approved by the Executive Council and the Governor.

The main evidence against him was a confession typed by police that Mr Button signed after hours in custody.

Mr Button said that while life in Fremantle prison was terrible, trying to make sense of his life after his release was worse.

He spiralled into depression and was admitted to hospital where he was referred to a government psychiatrist.

"He said the first step to my recovery was to accept my guilt," Mr Button said after his conviction was overturned.

"But I couldn't accept guilt for something I had not done. The psychiatrist didn't know what to do. After two weeks he never came back."

Mr Button tried to study for his builder's ticket, but his head was so full of grief and questions that he found he had lost the ability to study.

Even after serial killer Eric Edgar Cooke confessed to the crime in graphic detail, the ap-

peal courts in the 1960s refused to overturn the conviction.

Last February, the Court of Criminal Appeal finally exonerated Mr Button.

After a four-day hearing before three Supreme Court judges, the court accepted the evidence of US car crash expert Rusty Haight, arranged by the POST, that Mr Button's car had not hit a pedestrian.

Medical reports prepared for Mr Button's compensation claim show he is still suffering overwhelming emotional trauma as a result of his wrongful conviction.

Once he's quit work, Mr Button plans to go on a speaking tour to schools and communi-

ty groups.

"The school kids I've been talking to love it," he said.

"Because of what I have gone through they listen to me and hopefully I can help society work out a better way of doing things.

"They will all be voting age at the next election."

Mr Button said he was horrified by the evidence coming out at the Royal Commission into police, especially the admissions of the verballing of suspects by police to gain convictions.

"There is a need for the community to work out a better way of doing things," he said.

## Subiaco tavern

From page 1

errier, Murray ate, who works at investment company of Centro, said he led the tavern as ce to entertain ts.

criticised some of ico's most popu- rs and brasseries of the most wel- ng" and said: ainly the service ot very slack."

Bathgate named places where he eft without being d because he had up waiting.

## Nurses top up skills

Five ex-psychiatric nurses from Graylands Psychiatric Hospital have finished a refresher course and hope to return to work.

They make up a group of 10 nurses who have taken advantage of the state government's financial incentive to retrain and hopefully re-enter the workforce.

Graylands Hospital recently received a four-year accreditation from the Australian Council on Health Care Standards.

A spokesperson for the hospital said the accreditation was "quite a coup".