

# THE DEMISE OF A DOUBLE LIFE

Accused pederast Frank Arkell was always a Wollongong boy.

**KATE MCCLYMONT** reports on the life and times of the man who was brutally murdered on Saturday.

**T**HE matter is not going to go away," said Royal Commissioner James Wood tersely. The date was May 14, 1996, and the matter that was not going to go away was pedophile allegations against Frank Arkell.

At that stage Arkell, previously Wollongong's longest-serving mayor and a former State MP, was known in the Royal Commission only by the code-name W1. Several witnesses had given evidence about sexual encounters they had had with W1 while boys.

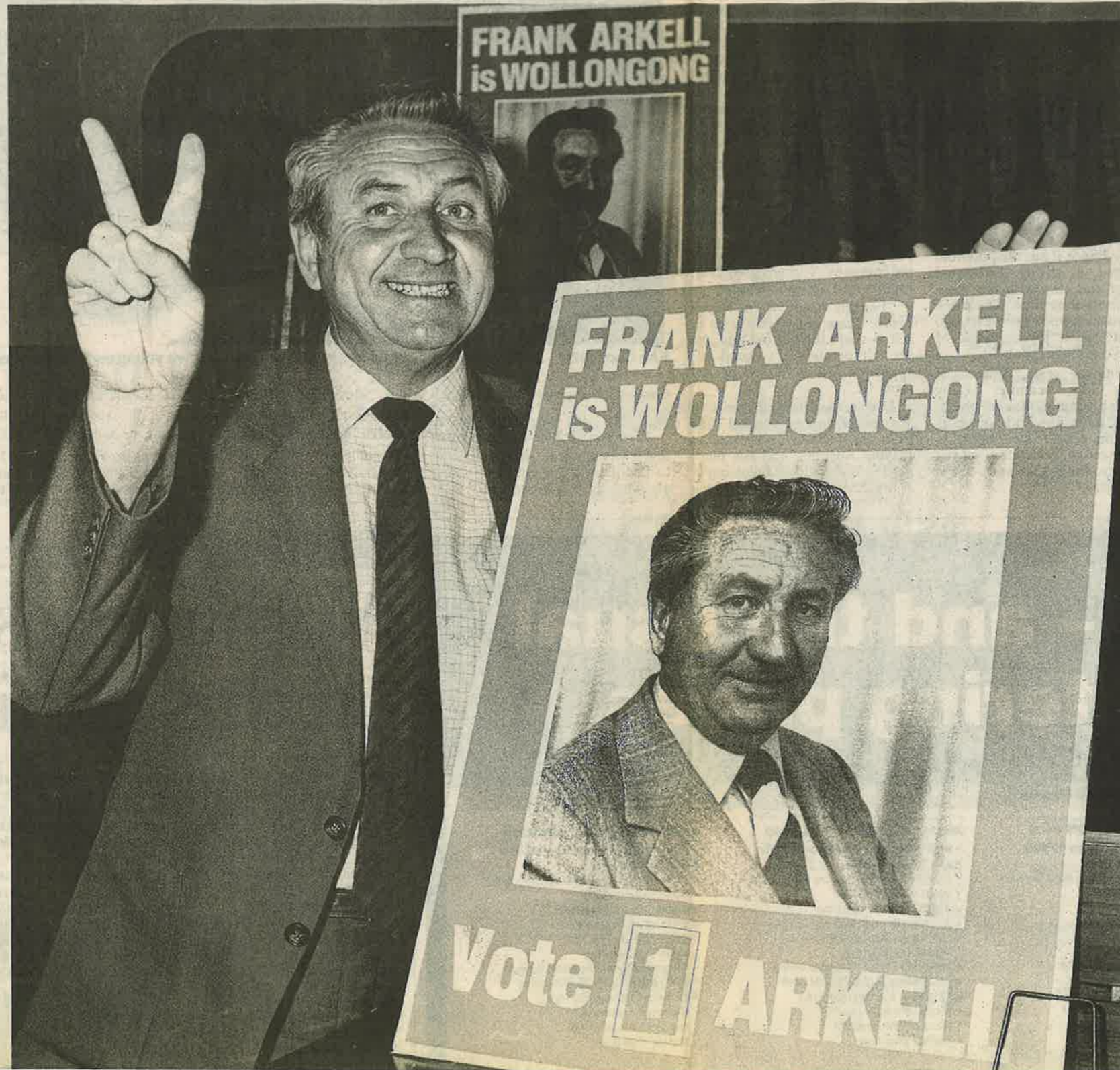
Arkell had been summonsed to give evidence to the commission that day, but his lawyer, Rob McIlwaine, had just handed up two medical reports, dated April 22 and May 9, which indicated Arkell was too mentally unwell to attend the Royal Commission. While the reports were confidential exhibits, it was understood the medical evidence suggested Arkell might attempt suicide if forced into the witness box.

Despite the commissioner's obvious displeasure at this turn of events, in some ways the matter did go away, at least for a while.

Some months later, in September, the ongoing problem of what to do about Arkell was raised again in the Royal Commission. The commission had direct evidence from two men that Arkell had had sex with them as teenagers, but Arkell was still claiming he was too mentally unwell to attend. On top of that, the commission could find no evidence of police corruption. Instead of being corrupt, it appeared it was more of a case of police incompetence.

At the time the pressure was on the commission to wind matters up. There were only four sitting weeks left. Perhaps with all these things in mind, the commission decided to excuse Arkell from his summons and pass all its holdings on him to the police.

The obsessive, workaholic Arkell lived and breathed Wollongong. Born Francis Neville Arkell in nearby Port



Frank Arkell on the campaign trail (left) and escorting Dame Joan Sutherland around his beloved Wollongong.

## The life and times of Mr Wollongong

- Born in 1929 in Port Kembla.
- Educated in the Catholic school system at Christian Brothers, Wollongong.
- Began a career in banking and worked for the Australian Stock Exchange, then moved into the family business and worked in real estate.
- In 1965 Arkell was elected to Wollongong City Council.
- In 1974 he became the Lord Mayor of Wollongong, a position he was to hold for 17 years, making him the longest-serving mayor in the State at that time. Arkell was known for his parochial love of the city. Asked why he had never married the bachelor would say "I'm married to Wollongong".
- By 1984 he had built such a profile in the city that when he stood as an independent in the State elections he won what had been considered a safe Labor seat. He held that position until 1991 and for many years was Wollongong's best known citizen, simply known as Mr Wollongong.

speaking to confessed pedophile Colin Fisk, or attending "K Roo", a boy brothel in the Sydney's CBD.

"I refer to the allegation of W26 that I had sexual contact with him in a public toilet at the IBM car park. I deny this allegation. I have never had sexual contact with a male under 18 and never in a public toilet," Arkell also said in his declaration.

The week after Mrs Arena named him in Parliament, the *Herald* visited Arkell at his Wollongong home. "Look, see," he said, raising his wrists, "no slash marks." Arkell explained that the reason he had not been able to give evidence back in May was that he had had the flu for six weeks. He added, "I dropped my bundle and I just did not have confidence in myself." Warming to his theme of retribution against pedophiles he said, "Anyone who interferes with a young person, girl or boy, should be locked up and the key should be thrown away."

His naming in Parliament by Mrs Arena in 1996 was not the first time Arkell's name had been raised. Two years earlier, in December 1994, Arkell was named by Mrs Arena's colleague, Deirdre Grusovin. Reading from a statutory declaration provided by Colin Fisk, Mrs Grusovin named Arkell and prominent solicitor John Marsden as pederasts. Several months later, Fisk withdrew his claims about Marsden, saying he'd been mentally unwell at the time he made the statutory declaration. About Arkell, he said nothing.

A year after the evidence was given



Frank Arkell with Barton Lynch and Tom Carroll

- In December 1994 the ALP's Deirdre Grusovin read a statutory declaration in Parliament which named Arkell and the Sydney solicitor and then member of the NSW Police Board, John Marsden, as being linked to pedophilia. Marsden was cleared by police and the allegation against him was later withdrawn.
- In May 1996 serious allegations were made in the



Kembla in September 1929, as a child Arkell moved to a comfortable weatherboard house in Reserve Street, Keiraville, a suburb about 10 minutes drive from the city centre.

He was educated at the Christian Brothers College in Wollongong and after finishing school began working with the ANZ bank. He eventually ended up in the real estate business before going into local politics.

Once described as the city's "ardent evangelist", Arkell was the independent Lord Mayor of Wollongong for 17 years until he was unseated by the present Lord Mayor, David Campbell, in September 1991. That was not a good year for Arkell. In May he also lost his State seat of Wollongong to the ALP, having held it as an Independent since 1984.

Arkell, who continued to live in the granny flat attached to his mother's house even after her death some years ago, appeared to have little other interests in life other than his work. His spare time appeared to be crammed with attending civic functions for his "wonderful, wonderful Wollongong."

But there was a darker side to wonderful, wonderful Wollongong and the activities of some of its civic leaders. An earlier Lord Mayor of Wollongong, Tony Bevan, died of cancer in 1991.

Inexplicably, he left behind a considerable collection of incriminating tape recordings and telexes he made of both his victims and his customers. These communications revealed that Bevan was the central figure in a large pedophile ring. After having sex with young boys himself, Bevan would pass them on to his friends, obtaining a fee for his service.

According to evidence at the royal commission, one person who availed himself of Bevan's services and was known to the pedophile ring as "Farkless Arkless," was Frank Arkell.

One witness, W13, was 15 when he was anally raped by Bevan. He latter became one of "the royal party" — Bevan's collection of young boys whom he brought to Sydney for his friends' use. The cheques for their services, always sent in advance to Bevan, was known as "the royal mail". Bookings for the boys were arranged by telex with codenames being used for both the adults and the boys. The latter were always referred to as females.

W13 described "the royal party"

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travelling to a motel in Elizabeth Bay where they were lined up and chosen by various men. It was, he said, like being a menu item in a restaurant.

Using the name "Hook", Bevan would telex friends outlining such details as age, attractiveness and anal penetration ratings for these young boys. One of these boys told the commission that he was 15 or 16 when Bevan arranged for him to have sex with a male friend of Bevan's in Bevan's apartment. The next night the boy was watching television when he saw the person he'd had sex with on the news bulletin. It was the then Lord Mayor, Frank Arkell.

Another witness, W2, was 16 or 17 when he met Arkell in Tony Bevan's office. Arkell subsequently offered him a job, but hinted that in return for getting the job he would have to have sex with him. W2 turned him down.

Then there was G17, who is now 33 years old. After meeting Arkell through Tony Bevan, G17 went for a drive with Arkell in his car. They drove to a local reserve where Arkell had both oral and anal sex with G17, who was 14 or 15 years old at the time. No money changed hands.

Finally, there was an incident in the early '70s with a 13-year-old boy whose commission codename is W26.

Now aged 39, W26 recalled meeting Arkell at the public toilet in the IBM car park in Wollongong. "I had an act of gross indecency performed upon me," he said. Arkell gave him \$20.

Months passed since that evidence was given to the royal commission. In October 1996, frustrated at what she believed was inactivity by the commission, Labor backbencher Mrs Franca Arena took matters into her own hands by asking in State Parliament whether Arkell was the alleged pedophile, codenamed W1, in evidence before the Wood Royal Commission. She also asked whether Justice David Yeldham had been protected by the commission. Several days later the judge killed himself. The day after he was named in Parliament, the order suppressing Arkell's identity before the commission was lifted and a brief statutory declaration, dated August 21, was released for publication.

Among other things, Arkell said: "I am not and have never been a pederast or pedophile." He also denied any knowledge of meeting or

against him at the Wood Royal Commission, Arkell was arrested by officers from the Child Protection Enforcement Agency and charged with 29 child sex offences against four victims. The offences, some of which dated back to 1973, included nine counts of sexual intercourse with a male without consent, indecent assault on a male, buggery, and using a stupefying drug to commit an indictable offence on male victims aged between 14 and 18.

After a five-day committal hearing in February, the charges Arkell was facing had been reduced. Arkell was to have faced Parramatta Court on September 14. He faced four charges relating to two victims. The charges involved administering a stupefying drug and buggery.

Yesterday, as Arkell's house was isolated from everyday life by the customary blue and white police tape indicating a crime scene, passers-by could still see the graffiti "W1 you're a wanker" on the fence.

Royal Commission about a former Wollongong Alderman known as W1, who allegedly had sex with minors. It was later revealed that W1 was Frank Arkell.

On May 1 last year police from the NSW Child Protection Enforcement Agency arrived at Arkell's house and charged him with 29 child sex offences, including nine counts of sexual intercourse with a male without consent, buggery, and using a stupefying drug to commit an indictable offence on male victims aged between 14 and 18. He was committed for trial on four of them.

Arkell was last seen alive at 2 pm last Friday. Neighbours found him murdered at 8am on Saturday. He was due to be tried in September.

# There's a whole lotta swappin' goin' on

IN ONE match a Moroccan rolled his shirt over his head before dashing off to display his underwear to a TV camera. In another, a Frenchman ran to the corner-flag and stood motionless while his team-mates created mayhem around him. And, in a third, the Paraguayan clawed at the netting like a caged man learning of his early release. Another fine mesh his team-mates had got him in.

Yes, despite attempts by soccer's ruling body to police goal celebrations (considered time-wasting) and prevent shirt-swapping (considered poor taste), players continue to find new ways of amusing, sometimes antagonising, World Cup audiences.

Old-timers will recall that once, when men were men and footballers were, well, also men, the scoring of a goal was greeted with an understated shake of the hand, an acknowledgement now reserved almost exclusively for consolation scorers.

Then, probably in the swinging '60s, came kissing, cuddling, occasionally even simulated love-making. A generation ago, it shocked; today, it is welcomed by psychologists and primatologists as evidence of macho-man's ability to show affection through touching, feeling and caressing.

And more. Through the '70s and '80s, the celebrations became more and more extravagant. Typically, goalscorers — whether they be playing for Brazil in a World Cup final or for Bonnyrigg under-eights in the local western suburbs comp — would become whirling dervishes, wheeling

away with arms windmilling before being submerged in a writhing, bacchanalian heap of bodies by their team-mates.

The first celebration injuries were sustained: an English player broke his collarbone in a collapsing human pyramid and could not play on. The first on-field orgasm seemed only a 35-metre banana shot away.

So to the '90s. Now, it's never mind the goal, get a look at that choreography. Players perform running backflips (pretty passé, now). They form chorus-lines to samba, lip-sync team songs, even rock imaginary babies (celebrating a goal by a team-mate who had also become a father).

They throw themselves across the turf like skydivers to form human stars. In formation, they flap like roosters, waddle like ducks, walk on all fours like dogs. Indeed, one dog-star, Nigeria's Finidi George, famously cocked his leg in front of a billion television viewers while "going walkies" after scoring a World Cup goal.

Inevitably, the time has come when even international body language is insufficient to express the unbearable ecstasy of seeing a piece of wind-filled plastic and pigskin hit the nylon mesh.

Hence the current use of "accessories". Some players, especially the Colombians, use the corner flag, bending the stick, wiggling sexily round it or even, in one famous case, uprooting it and throwing it like a javelin.

But the most popular celebration seems to involve the shirt. There are



Live and sweaty . . . World Cup soccer players enjoy a therapeutic post-score group hug.

several options here. Some make do with kissing the badge it bears. Others roll it up over their heads and run around like decapitated chickens. Still others remove it altogether: indeed, England player Paul Ince prefers to run on to the pitch bare-chested.

Some do so to expose solid pecs and six-pack stomachs; others have a message to impart, and not just the name of the maker.

Last week, one Paraguayan seemed to be wearing a T-shirt bearing pictures of his mum and dad (then

again it could have been a beer advertisement).

The Mexicans actually have their goals and their undergarments sponsored by a charity. "For a street kid," reads the slogan when their shirts are lifted.

In a recent English club final at Wembley, a Birmingham player removed his shirt to reveal a vest bearing the words "S--- on the Villa", the name of their bitter local rivals.

Which brings us, at the end of the game, to the vexed issue of shirt swapping. Of course, it is a hallowed

tradition, not confined to soccer, though usually restricted to men.

Nevertheless, football's ruling body, FIFA, doesn't like sweaty, semi-naked men running around in front of millions of fans, some of them easily offended women in Arab countries. It insists shirt exchanges are not allowed even by consenting adults until players are back in the privacy of their changing rooms.

So far, most players have simply ignored the ruling: just watch Brazil's opponents almost fighting to be the one to swap with the world's greatest player, Ronaldo.

At the current rate of exchange, one Ronaldo No. 9 shirt is worth a laundry bin load of South Korean shirts.

Of course, sometimes it doesn't happen. Back in 1966, when England won the World Cup (hooray), the coach Alf Ramsey intervened to stop his players swapping shirts after one match against Argentina, whom he claimed had behaved like animals.

And the German Olaf Thorn may have wondered why he had agreed to swap shirts with Holland's Ronald Koeman after a 1990 World Cup match.

The Dutchman, who still regarded the Germans as a wartime enemy, subsequently revealed he had used it as toilet paper.

Still the world should be grateful that it's their shirts that players twist, twirl and swop.

It could be worse. It could be their shorts.

JOHN HUXLEY

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