

Minister snubs protesters and snips the tape

By SARAH MARTIN

AFTER 26 years of controversy, debate and indecision, the first stage of the Albany Waterfront has been opened.

Scissors in hand, Planning and Infrastructure Minister Alannah MacTiernan dismissed a handful of protesters and opened the pedestrian bridge and the landscaped piazza.

"We have been talking about plans for many years," Minister MacTiernan said.

"There have been plans, new plans, revised plans, different plans and better plans, but today we've actually got something better than a plan, we've got stage one completed," she said.

Ms MacTiernan acknowledged the presence of protesters, but said she would not allow a "tyranny of the minority" to hinder the development.

"I say to these people who see this as a bad change for Albany: go back 100 years, have a look at



QE2 passengers Janet Meyer and Eric Fletcher from New York were the first Albany visitors to cross the bridge.

what the waterfront was like. It was bustling and there was an enormous amount of building and port activity," she said.

"We like to say we are restoring that sense of activity that always used to be on our waterfront."

Addressing the crowd in a Churchillian manner, City of Albany Mayor Milton Evans "spoke from the heart".

"For over a quarter of a century the community has lurched from one crisis to another," Mr Evans said.

"We've had council decisions. We've had rescinded decisions.

We've had all kinds of controversy and debate about what happens on this windswept piece of land on the waterfront," he said.

"History is wonderful, but to dwell in the past simply paralyzes the present and ... more than that, it bankrupts the future," he said.

Stage two of the civil works will now start east of the jetty, and tenders for construction of the hotel are expected to be sought in May.

Ms MacTiernan also said the groundwork for the "Albany Opera House" was under way.



Open for business: Albany MLA Peter Watson and Albany Mayor Milton Evans flank Infrastructure and Planning Minister Alannah MacTiernan as she cuts the ribbon to open the pedestrian footbridge to the Waterfront.

Albany Bicycle Treasure Hunt

- Where:** Middleton Beach
- When:** Sunday 9th March, 2008
- What:** Register a team of four
- Why:** Have fun & win some cool prizes

For more info contact Tracy, the Event Coordinator on 9844 8384 or 0428875503