

# Fairy Bower Precinct

FEBRUARY 2017 NEWSLETTER

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## 8TH FEBRUARY >

**NEXT FAIRY BOWER COMMUNITY FORUM MEETING:**

Wednesday 8th February 2017, 7pm, St. Patricks College.



Despite the **Mona Vale Place plan featuring 6-storey buildings being deferred** by the Administrator, a good crowd of concerned Pittwater residents still attended the rally against the plans held at Mona Vale on the 27th November. Here a number of speakers made the point that Pittwater needed its independence back to protect the area from inappropriate high-rise development and intensification.

### Welcome to All Fairy Bower Residents

## NEWS

### What A Break !

Well I trust everyone had a good Christmas and holiday period. Such a break can be a time for more reflective thinking, when one is not occupied by our usual day to day pressures. So we now come back to start the new year with a new Premier, a pending by-election in the State seat of Manly and promises of a Poll on the creation of the Northern Beaches (NB) Council.

I received a tip off about a change of Premier, the poll on amalgamations, and going to the next council polls earlier than September 2017, from a fellow (non-Manly) Northern Beaches ex-Councillor after the 13th December NB Council meeting, which was held at Manly Council Chambers.

However as Councillors we receive lots of varied "information" and one becomes used to reviewing such

### The February Meeting will include:-

- ◆ Amalgamation Poll
- ◆ The Whistler Street triangle site
- ◆ Update on Precinct Projects
- ◆ Upper Bower Street Subdivision is back
- ◆ General Business

reports critically to identify any manipulative intent and vested interests at work (this is the root of our "post-truth era" problem).

So I must admit I discounted this report as simply an attempt to misinform wishful thinkers, to try to take the wind out of mounting de-amalgamation sentiment - particularly within the Pittwater community. However as two of the

three predictions have proved correct, it seems I have to be more careful about my own cynicism.

The amalgamation poll announcement could be seen as an attempt to prevent a repeat of the Orange by-election wipe-out, in the two looming Sydney by-elections - including Manly.

As many of you might have seen in the Manly Daily recently, I have been on the case for such a poll since the Delegates' "Public Hearings" that produced the pro-Northern Beaches Council report - without any proper test of public opinion. At the December Council meeting the Administrator Dick Persson formally declined my request. However circumstances have now changed, so it looks like our community will now get the Poll we need.

It might be instructive for residents to be aware that when Manly Council was incorporated in 1877, the test for amalgamation or division (de-amalgamation) under the Act was a 66% "yes" vote in each constituent Council area by the eligible electors. (Sorry but back then those eligible to



**Sculptor Helen Leete with clay originals for the 50 cm Oceanides limited edition fund-raising replicas. 10 of these will be available for "donations" to help meet the cost of recasting of the full size Sea Nymphs sculpture next to the Fairy Bower Pool. (Wendy McReady)**

vote were only property owning, renting or occupying males over the age of 21.)

Its also instructive that back then the Act specified the only way to make such a change was by a public vote. So it appears current Local Government Act, as amended, has become in some ways less democratic than an earlier Act from the Victorian-era.

So the next battle will be how and when the Northern Beaches Poll is to be conducted and what will be the outcomes criteria. One would hope that the Poll is conducted within a balanced "for" and "against" factual campaign (as per previous Manly Council changes) and not one based on emotive propaganda or one exploiting political party allegiance.

Thus we will have to be vigilant that the offer is not for a biased poll to be conducted well into the future (e.g. now September 17), which is just being proposed to temporarily neutralise this issue for the two by-elections over the next two months.

It would be a poor outcome if the pro-amalgamation lobby simply pushes for a simple majority vote in the current combined Northern Beaches Area. Many Manly and Pittwater residents would see this as unfair due to Warringah having a much bigger population that could simply outvote the rest of area (the ongoing key problem). Thus we should continue to push for a significant majority to be required to be obtained in each former LGA, with the poll to be conducted as soon as possible.

## Save Our Sea Nymphs - Oceanides

Next some good news on the proposed recreation of the marvellous iconic sculpture next to the Fairy Bower Pool. In December and over the break we formed the Save Our Sea Nymphs (SOSN) Committee and created the web site [saveourseanymphs.info](http://saveourseanymphs.info)

The members of this committee are Julie Bakalor, Sharon Curby, Sherree Hooper, Wendy McReady, Heather Potts, Janne Seletto, with Candy Bingham and myself. We also have the support of sculptor Helen Leete, and Clive Caulder from the Australian Bronze Foundry at North Head.

Generously Council has offered us dollar for dollar funding up to \$40,000. I must personally thank the Administrator, Dick Persson, for his support on this project.

***With this newsletter is a card from our SOSN Committee. It gives the web address and requests your consideration of a donation to our bronze replica cause - large or small.***

The link to make a donation on this web site works with credit/debit cards, and all donations so made are **tax deductible**. However if you wish to make a non-card or large donation and don't need it to be tax deductible please contact the committee via [info@saveourseanymphs.info](mailto:info@saveourseanymphs.info) and we can give you our bank account and/or postal details.

There also will be up to 10 miniatures of the sculpture produced by Helen and Clive for fund-raising. These will be 23cm high pair of figures on a bronze base, or 50cm high pair of figures. These will be available for a donation of \$4000 and \$6000 respectively. These will be able to be seen at our launch function currently scheduled to be on the 10th March. I would urge everyone to give what they can to help support this cause.

## The Whistler Street & Oval Car Parks

The good news is the Northern Beaches Council has negotiated a settlement with the Oval Car park contractor Abergeldie to exit the project on a "no fault" basis. I have previously noted the oval car park was simply the key to unlocking the financial prize of residential development on the Whistler Street triangle site.

The cost of the agreement seems to be their tendering expenses and initial post tender preliminary design works. At \$780,000 the cancellation of the deed has not come cheaply, but at least Manly Oval and Sydney Road are now safe from what many considered was inappropriate development.

The major issue of concern is the NB Council appears to be entertaining discussions with Built-Athas to have these proponents continue with a redevelopment of the Whistler Street triangle site, possibly to make cancellation of the whole project a zero sum game (no financial loss) for Council.

In the September FB Newsletter I documented that senior Manly Council staff were aware of (and passed on



significant information to Councillors about) what became the accepted tender, before the tender process had even commenced. There was also no independent valuation obtained by Council for the whole area proposed to be leased.

So there are significant concerns in the Manly community about the probity of the Triangle Lease tender process, including the Built-Athas bid. There is also the problem that their accepted tender proposal was over-height and over-floor space ratio. (I.e. it did not comply with the project brief). Any permit of such a major planning control breach would set a development precedent for other sites in the Manly CBD. So there is clearly a lot at stake and due to tender process issues, it appears a complete tender termination is the only ethical outcome.

It is noteworthy that all Manly Councillors were told during the infamous 12th April meeting that "conditional precedent risks would be addressed in the development deeds" and "there was no capital risk to the ratepayers".

Some residents may consider that Council amalgamation could be a good thing if it ended the controversial Manly Car Park redevelopments. However we must remain vigilant to ensure that amalgamation does not ultimately lead to a loss of existing height controls in the Manly CBD and see Manly becoming another high-rise Dee Why.

## Fairy Bower's Unfinished Promises

Our current Northern Beaches Council's parked and pending project tracking list includes:-

- the upper Bower Street "car park full" sign,
- the Fairy Bower Pool upgrade and
- rebuilding the Fairy Bower Pool Toilet Block.

We are attempting to obtain updated reports on the delivery of these works for the February Meeting.

## North Head Digesters - Update

Last year the Manly Environment Centre lead two odour forums at Manly Council Chambers to provide residents with information about Sydney Water North Head Water Treatment Plant. These also included representatives from Sydney Water being present. Various plant operational issues were outlined by expert speakers. One major technical conclusion outlined was the North Head plant had insufficient digester capacity, that required more capital investment to fix.

There is a steady increase in the volume of sewage being processed by the plant and major maintenance on any digester involves taking it off-line for 6-7 months. Sydney water, supported by the EPA, planned to invest capital on installing two extra digesters.

The trouble was IPART disputed the need to increase digester capacity to this extent, on the grounds of minimising the increase in water charges, and only

## 23rd Manly Ocean Care Day In Pictures



**Above:** Manly Environment Centre (MEC) Director **Judy Reizes** with staff members Robynne Millward and Jill Hartley, members of the Manly Environment Committee and a large number of volunteers, local schools and partner organizations made 4th December 2016 a very successful and memorable day for the community. **Below:** The MEC Lab containing creatures to touch and other interactive exhibits is always very popular with the public. Local primary school children's art decorates the walls.



**Above:** A well attended rally against shark netting of beaches in NSW was also held during Ocean Care Day.





**The Christmas Choral Concert returned to the Oval in 2016.** It was competently organised for residents who attended, but some of the higher level detail like custom large screen animations, and live streaming or video recording of the event, done in previous years, was omitted. Due to the event cost, maximising the audience is essential.

allowed funds for one. Due to our media campaign in the Manly Daily, Sydney Water undertook via our local member to provide an answer on whether they would increase digester capacity at North Head beyond IPART's recommendation, or find another way to increase the plant's digester efficiency. This was promised by the end of last year.

On the 18th October 2016 the NSW Water Minister Niall Blair announced 817 million had been allocated in 2016-7 for a Sydney Water Forward Program which included \$40 million for the Biosolids Amplification North Head Project, which includes **two** new digesters at North Head. While this appears to be another community victory we will continue to monitor Sydney Water's project implementation and report back to the precinct.

## Other Precinct Battles - Heaton Avenue

The Clontarf Precinct (one of the 5 still running) has lead a major community campaign to stop the RMS and Transport

for NSW (TfNSW) closing Heaton Avenue at Manly Road to create an indented B-Line bus stop.

Heaton Avenue intersects with Manly Road on the left going down to Spit Bridge just after the Ethel Street overbridge. So far the residents have won the battle to keep an exit from Heaton onto Manly Road open 24 hours, but are currently still battling to retain the ability to turn left off Manly Road into Heaton Avenue.

This campaign once again shows value of the Precincts as a means giving the community a louder voice to protect community amenity and influence political decision making.

***So want to meet new people and get involved in community matters? Come and join us 8th February 7:00pm at the ICMS (St Patricks College).***

Hugh Burns  
0435 407 257  
hughburns@y7mail.com

## Need Help?

Council Rangers: 9976 1633

Manly Police: 9976 8099

## Cabbage Tree Bay Issues

Fisheries: 8437 4903

'Eco Divers' Dave: 0421 334 529

24/7 Fishers Watch hotline: 1800 043 536

Water Police: 9320 7499

## Sydney Water Odour Complaints

<http://sniffandsubmit.com/>

Sydney Water Complaints: 132 090



Jake and his team are currently selling a number of "off market" properties on the Eastern Hill and the local Manly area. If you would like an appraisal on your property or would like more information on the off market opportunities please contact Jake and his team on the numbers listed below.

**Kate Blackett**  
M 0402 939 925

**Morgan Fahey**  
M 0408 666 110

**Jake Rowe**  
M 0414 612 546

**Nathan Tse**  
M 0411 386 455

**McGrath**