

# Fairy Bower Precinct

MARCH 2017 NEWSLETTER

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1ST MARCH >

NEXT FAIRY BOWER COMMUNITY FORUM MEETING:

Wednesday 1st March 2017, 7pm, St. Patricks College.



**Manly Council Chambers** was the centrepiece of civic activities. Here the building is the venue for the 25th Anniversary of the Manly Community Environment Committee held on Sunday 26th June 2016. Constructed in 1937, it is a mixture of a neo-classical exterior, with an art-deco interior. As the staff numbers in the building decline, what will be the future of one of the most elegant Town Halls in Sydney?

## Welcome to All Fairy Bower Residents

## NEWS

### All Change !

A famous British Prime-minister said “a week is a long time in politics”, so a month must represent an eternity!

As most residents will have seen, the State Government’s consideration of reviewing their Council amalgamations policy appears to have mostly evaporated. While the country councils were released, there were reports of lobbyists and pollsters working overtime to enable the State Government to continue the push to merge local Councils in Sydney.

Thus the potential offer of a poll to test the community’s views of amalgamation on the Northern Beaches has been withdrawn. As previously reported, there is an intense dislike of the amalgamation by residents of Pittwater. However despite the withdrawal there remain other options - including the community conducting its own poll.

**The March Meeting will include:-**

- ◆ What should happen to Manly Town Hall?
- ◆ Oceanides
- ◆ Fundraising Invites
- ◆ Post Office Park and Manly 2015
- ◆ Update on Precinct Projects

Of course the Government still has to get through two by-elections. Both cover amalgamated, or proposed to be amalgamated, Councils - so this policy may yet have to be reconsidered. However like the early days of the Manly car park fiasco, the decision has been made to tough it out and press ahead regardless. Whether this represents strong leadership, or a *Yes Minister* style “courageous policy” is a matter for readers to determine.

### Manly Staff Departures (to Strathfield)

We previously reported the former General Manager, Mr Henry Wong and one of the ex-Deputy General Managers, Mr Steve Clements, left Council under pressure, and ended up at Strathfield Council. Since then it is reported around another 10 ex-Manly senior and financial staff have left the amalgamated Council, to join Mr Wong’s team at Strathfield.

Some of the reported departed staff were well known to Manly Councillors including Jenny Nascimento (former CFO), Raymund Banister (HR), James Ng (Legal Counsel) and George Malesevic (Engineer). Kathryn Falye (prev Human Services and Facilities) previously left Manly Council and is reported currently there, and Mary Rawlings (Risk Manager) is about to go. The other ex-Deputy, Beth Lawson, is about to take long service leave and is another departing under pressure to unknown pastures.

For the record four senior Manly Staff were given high-level management roles in the new Council. These are Natasha



Happy Times. Then **Manly Deputy General Manager Beth Lawson**, **Pittwater General Manager Mark Ferguson**, and **Manly General Manager Henry Wong** at the 2014 Local Government Conference Dinner held with the conference at Coffs Harbour in October 2014.

Schultz, Helen Lever, Nathan Rogers (IT) and Mick Darda (Events).

So while many Council services appear to continue for Manly residents, remember the behind-the-scenes human cost of the amalgamation in terms of staff stress and uncertainty in having to change jobs, locations and in some cases effectively being sacked. Then think of all the local knowledge we have lost from the Council with these departures.

Its a well known issue that Councils under administration tend to see very high staff losses. No doubt some will coldly portray these losses as "savings", but that is a bit one dimensional. What about the impact on the public's service? What about the staff members as people?

## Maintenance of Manly Council Assets

The performance of the amalgamated Northern Beaches Council on capital works projects was a topic discussed during the February FB Precinct meeting. Many residents considered the new Council's performance on major works within the precinct was fair to poor.

For example the Marine Parade walk repairs were considered to be done to an excellent standard of finish, but took way too long to get underway. The deferral of the Fairy Bower Pool works and ten months to start reconstruction of the storm demolished FB pool toilet block and change room(s) was considered unsatisfactory. As one local resident colourfully put it at the meeting "how long does it take to build a brick s\*\*\*house?"

This then lead to discussion of the new Council's performance on other public works outside the FB Precinct. Firstly mentioned was the continued poor presentation of principal Manly Council buildings, such as the partially demolished pergola off the front entry to the Manly Art Gallery and the sad looking peeling paint on the exterior of the Manly Council Chambers - particularly windowsills and parapets. The Chambers are normally attended to promptly,

with major works carried out over the holiday season when everyone is on their break. (The Art Galley and Council Chambers need for works were reported some months ago using Council's Customer Service Request on-line reporting system.)

A great deal of energy is being put into new Council branding such as new NB Council logos on the glass entry doors on Manly Town Hall, but apparently not for basic building maintenance. It raises questions about management and funding priorities under the new Council.

Next was the state of the East Esplanade reserve. Once again this poured soil and grass into the harbour during a recent storm, due to lack of a small retaining wall on the harbour-side of the grass adjacent the path. (Also ignoring the overuse issue.) A motion to fix this was passed by Manly Council at the April 2016 Ordinary Meeting last year, and yet



**Above:** The rear of the Manly Council Chambers building on Belgrave Street, showing the new but still mostly unpainted awning, missing brickwork and very dirty parapet with peeling paint. All this side of the building also has peeling windowsills. (I had successfully lobbied the previous General Manager to get the awning replaced.)

**Below:** The main entry to the Manly Art Gallery and Museum showing the partially dismantled pergola. The front area shown is supposed to be covered in a fine latticed timber work (like that just visible over the side corridor). Reconstruction to the original 1982 design is well overdue - for both aesthetics, and to provide some shading to reduce the load on the building's air conditioning system.



there appears to have been no action taken on it.

Some residents have asked if these are just transient rearrangement of administration problems, or if there is just currently no one in Manly (senior executives nor Councillors) with a sense of civic pride and sufficient influence to ensure proper maintenance of Manly's Council assets.

One hopes this deferral of works activity is not due to artificial amalgamation savings being considered more important than maintenance expenditure. Many residents might well consider it more productive for Council to refocus on the basics of carpentry, concrete and painters, in place of the current preoccupation with logos, letterheads, and new signage.

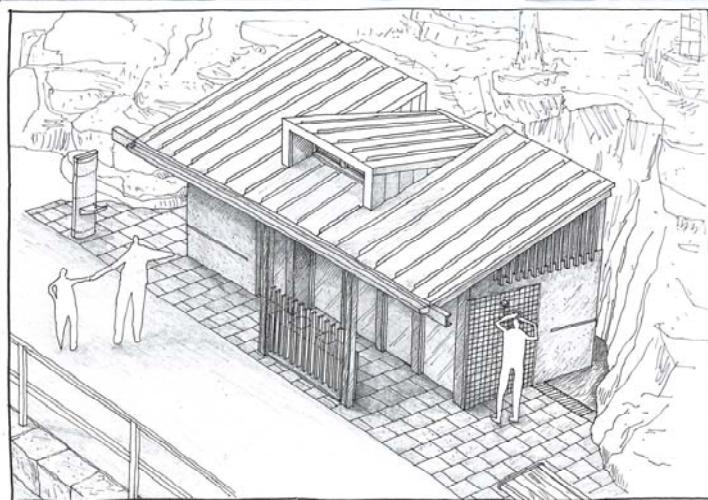
## Fairy Bower Pool Amenities Block

As previously mentioned, this was raised at the February FB Precinct meeting, with a number of residents well away from the location of the building receiving notifications for the proposed works. Even the notification sign was put up in the wrong place - near the fallen rock sculpture on the Marine Parade walkway!

Following the meeting we have reviewed the design by our talented ex-Manly in-house Council architect *Michael Biddolph*. Its going back in the same place. Interested residents will be able to see the documents and drawings from a link on the front page of the FB Precinct web site. However the DA consultation period has now closed.

In summary the design is a similar sized (slightly larger) building to the original, with two unisex and one disabled loos, and two separate change cubicles. My only professional concern is whether the block-work walls are going to be strong enough, and anchored down well enough, to prevent a repeat of the storm side-wave demolition that destroyed the previous building in June last year.

In fact the building really needs to be built of cast concrete like a WW2 bunker (bombproof equals waveproof). The same issue applies to the small unit paving proposed for



**Above:** Architects sketch - aerial view of new Fairy Bower Amenities Block (*Michael Biddolph* from Council web site).

the walkway in front of it - will this withstand the storm seas that reach this location, given the previous concrete paving slabs were just thrown about by the sea?

It might have been a one in 25 year storm, but we need to design for this to happen again, with the new building able to withstand the sea this time.

## Manly Environment Centre Eco Awards - A Community Success Story

A promotional graphic for the Manly Environment Centre Eco Awards. At the top, it says "MANLY ENVIRONMENT CENTRE PRESENTS" and "NOMINATE YOUR UNSUNG HERO". Below that, it says "Ordinary people doing extraordinary things". The main title "Annual Eco Award" is written in a large, stylized, green font. Below the title, it says "THE AWARD IS GIVEN IN RECOGNITION FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CONSERVATION OF MANLY'S ENVIRONMENT". At the bottom, it says "NOMINATIONS CLOSE MONDAY 20TH MARCH 2017". There is a QR code in the bottom right corner.

For more information contact the Manly Environment Centre [mec@manly.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mec@manly.nsw.gov.au) or 9976 2842 [www.mec.org.au](http://www.mec.org.au)

Yes its that time of year again, the Manly Environment Centre's **Eco Awards** are fast approaching.

If you wish to nominate someone for outstanding environmental work or achievement for our community, download a nomination form from the MEC web site ([www.mec.org.au](http://www.mec.org.au)) or the Fairy Bower Precinct web site.

Back in 2006, local community artist Marty Cullen came up with the concept of the Manly Environment Centre **Eco Awards** as a way to celebrate the **MEC birthday in March** each year.

The idea of the award was to recognise and celebrate the amazing work of volunteers in our community to preserve our environment.

Marty provided a wonderful artwork as the prize and the first winner was local Peter Garrett, who launched the MEC in 1991.



The Save Our Sea Nymphs introduction card.

Other Eco Award winners include:

Angelika Treichler, Keelah Lam, Dave Thomas, Brendan Donohoe, Sue Halmagyi, Silke Stuckenbrock and Sharnie Connell.

*So if you have someone in mind, don't forget to nominate them! The award ceremony is expected to be held near the end of March - see the MEC or Fairy Bower web-sites for the date and details, to be announced soon!*

## Oceanides - Fundraising Launch Event

The campaign to restore our iconic sculpture by the Fairy Bower Pool continues, and is soon to move up a gear!

All households in the FB Precinct have received one of the Oceanides information cards, so everyone can be aware of our quest. We encourage every household to consider contributing a donation towards the cause.

Remember, donations made through the [www.saveourseanymphs.info](http://www.saveourseanymphs.info) web site (using the Australian Cultural Fund) are also tax deductible. *The Northern Beaches Council will then match your donation dollar for dollar* (up to \$40,000)

Next the official fund-raising campaign launch event is due to be held on Friday the 31st March. The guest speaker for the launch function is expected to be Jenny Green - a highly renowned local sculptor.

At this launch will be shown the limited edition (<10) miniatures in bronze, either 23cm (mantelpiece/shelf size) and 50cm (table or outdoor setting). These will be available to order for "donations" of \$4000 or \$6000 respectively.

Tickets are limited. So if you wish to be on the invitation list please email us (see front page) or attend our next meeting. We will be able to take cash and card donations at the event.

**So want to meet new people and get involved in community matters? Come and join us 1st March 7:00pm at the ICMS (St Patricks College).**

Hugh Burns  
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### 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



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