

Fairy Bower Precinct

OCTOBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

Email: chair@fairybowerprecinct.info

5TH OCTOBER >

NEXT FAIRY BOWER COMMUNITY FORUM MEETING:

Wednesday 5th October 2016, 7pm, St. Patricks College.



On Sunday last the **Manly Environment Centre** had its **25th Anniversary event**. We had 16 environmental groups with stands and displays near the Manly Council Chambers. Franka was representing the *Friends of Cabbage Tree Bay*.

Welcome to All Fairy Bower Residents

NEWS

Fairy Bower Pool

At the risk of you all thinking this is now the Fairy Bower Pool Newsletter, we provide the next update on this ongoing saga. Currently there is a \$300,000 amount in the 2016-7 Council budget for the pool floor works. There was a public consultation meeting on the 7th of September, which we reported that evening to our previous Precinct meeting.

The consensus of both the meetings was to only repair the deeper end by installing a reinforced concrete slab (with stainless reinforcing), if the shallow end can be resurfaced to last, and to begin the works as soon as possible, on the basis they would take 6 to 8 weeks to complete. A start date of the 10th October was nominated. Fixing the missing segments of the storm water pipe and providing advisory signage for residents was added by us during the meeting.

A well informed resident then accidentally arrived at the pool while Council staff were having an on-site meeting about it on Monday the 26th September. She apparently heard that the tenders were over budget and the works were possibly to be deferred with only patch repairs done.

The October Meeting will include:-

- ◆ More Sportsfields Verses Golf Courses - (Warringah & Balgowlah)
- ◆ A Pool Update
- ◆ More Local Committees for Manly?
- ◆ Spit Tramway Walk
- ◆ General Business

From discussions with staff today (Friday) there are now concerns about the time-frame to comfortably complete the works, given the approaching Christmas and summer holiday season. It also emerged the tenders called for the works may not align with the scope

of works agreed with the community.

It thus appears the staff are now seeking more time to properly investigate the pool structure and carry out the necessary works. Use of Council's own staff for some of the works was raised. To gain an extension of time from that previously agreed with the community, I have firstly requested a revised works time-frame be formally committed by Council, and secondly for an assessment as to whether Council's risk assessor considers the pool "as is" safe for public use.

The Council's Executive Manager, Urban Infrastructure, Mr Andrew Davies is going to see if he can attend our Precinct meeting on Wednesday night to discuss the issue with the community. We will keep you advised. I noted everyone was very keen to see these well overdue works completed as soon as possible.

Oceanides Sculpture Repair and Replacement

Sculptor Helen Leete attended our last precinct meeting and gave a very interesting talk and slide presentation about Oceanides, and her sculpture output over many years. We found there was a lot of her work privately held in the Fairy Bower area. We were also reminded where the previously



The Manly Environment Centre was originally founded in March 1991. It came from a resolution of the Manly Community Environment Committee. Its director, Judy Reizes, has been a key part of the centre since the beginning. The Environment Centre and the Committee have worked tirelessly to achieve environmental outcomes for the Manly Community. Our most recent actions were the Odour Forums with Sydney Water. Above is the Centre's display.

controversial Arched-back Bather sculpture ended up in Manly.

Helen outlined she was looking to crowd fund a facsimile replacement of the existing storm damaged work on the side of the Fairy Bower Pool. We are hoping members of the Precinct with an interest in this work will be able to assist by making pledges towards raising about \$45,000 (half the estimated cost) to replace the work, permanently in bronze.

To learn more about her work see <http://www.helenleete.com/>. We have started with a \$500 pledge - we ask all residents to consider making an offer towards the fund-raising target to restore this iconic work. Currently Helen is awaiting the return from overseas of a friend of hers who will assist her to set up a crowd funding site. More news next month.

Golf Club Into Sports Fields Controversy

The Administrator Dick Persson has been lobbied by sporting groups seeking more playing fields in the Warringah area of the Northern Beaches. The issue is obviously finding more land and the cost of purchasing it. The option of turning one or more of the area's golf courses into playing fields has been raised, in this era of zero sum (\$)

solutions. Warringah Golf Club is located near the Mall between Pittwater Road and Condamine Street. It's Council administered lease is due to expire soon and is thus seen as ripe for conversion.

The trouble is the Warringah Golf Club is not happy that it has been singled out in the Council report. They are unusual in being a public golf course and they claim to be popular and well patronised. The Council's sports field plan is going on public exhibition for comment. However the issue is not just related to the Warringah Club greens. The lease on Balgowlah Golf course is similarly due to expire, and similarly this Club is also reported to be being considered for conversion to playing fields.

Avoiding spending any capital on land acquisitions was certainly not a Manly Council policy. Manly Council tended to purchase land for community use and needs.

Examples would be the properties behind little Manly Beach being bought slowly over many years to complete the reserve shown in the 1948 *County of Cumberland Plan*. Although not a reserve, I was successful in getting Manly Council to buy the TAFE site at Seaforth to resolve proposed over-development issues. Manly Council has also had issues with State and Commonwealth agencies selling "surplus" property rather than transferring it to the local community.

So it is a matter for the community to consider, but I am



A popular interactive exhibitor was Taronga Zoo's Zoomobile. They had a range of small animals for the public to handle such as an echidna and lizard.

surprised with the “scale and capacity” arguments advanced for an amalgamated regional Council, the focus should not be on arguing about who gets what pieces of the current cake, but instead it should be on enlarging the cake to meet growing community needs, by (say) buying more undeveloped land in the remaining semi-rural areas of the Northern Beaches.

What does everybody think?

Manly Community Engagement Disappointment

The Manly community had more community involvement per 1000 residents than either Pittwater or particularly Warringah. In addition to 12 precincts for residents and local businesses, Manly Council had 24 committees and working groups. This covered about 18,000 households and 41,000 residents in the Manly municipality. All Council committees were shut down due to abolition of the Council on the 12th May 2016.

As examples some of these included the Art and Culture Committee, the Heritage Committee, Public Domains Committee, Manly Wharf Monitoring Working Party, the Community Environment Committee, Manly Lagoon Catchment Co-ordinating Committee (joint committee with Warringah), Manly Local Traffic Committee and more.

These committees provided a forum for interested and expert residents to guide Manly Council policy and monitor Council operations, to best meet community needs and expectations.

The committees were considered advisory to the elected Council but when the committee minutes were adopted (endorsed) by Council their “advice” became binding on Council and staff.

The committees are thus a way for Council and Councillors to involve the community in Council decision-making and also increase the effectiveness of Councillors by enabling them to be more knowledgeable across a range of specific areas.

Given the large number of residents involved with Manly Council, there was an expectation that this level of interest and expertise would be welcomed by the new Northern Beaches Council. Unfortunately residents who applied have seen the first demonstration as to the very limited roll and say the Manly Community will have in the new amalgamated Northern Beaches Council.

Putting it directly, most Manly residents who applied to be on the 11 Northern Beaches Community Reference Groups missed out. The reason is because with the exception of the



A view over the **Environment Centre 25th Anniversary event** from the the Council Chambers balcony. The smaller displays are behind the trees.

Community Safety Reference Group (with its major focus on CBD alcohol issues) which still has a heavy Manly representation, most of the reference groups have proportional representation based on the 5 new Northern Beaches Council Wards. This might result in only two people from the Manly local government area on each of the other 10 committees.

Hence there was widespread disappointment from the large number of people previously involved with Manly Council, who applied for the reference group positions, and were mostly informed that they were unsuccessful with their committee applications.

Amalgamation Acceptance Remains Mixed

I have previously outlined as a former Councillor I have a community issue polling system based on being stopped by Fairy Bower residents when I am out, to discuss their issues of interest. 4 months after the event, I have recently noticed an upsurge in questioning of the Council amalgamation and more comments on a loss of control by the local Manly community.

Some residents are openly against amalgamation, with one memorably saying “we don’t live in a totalitarian state”. The opinions come from a wide political spectrum from the environmental left, through to the pro-business and developmental right. Other residents sit on the fence undecided but still ask “how is the amalgamation going?”.

Precincts Remain Important

The Manly Precinct Community Forums are thus very important to maintain as they may well end up the only major channel of influence and communication left between the Manly community and the new regional Council covering 260,000 residents.

Maintaining the 12 precincts allows for a diversity of truly local community opinion to be expressed to the new Council,



New Spit Tramway walk project - hands-on volunteers sought

and prevents the message being filtered or controlled by sectional interest groups, or major political parties. Simply put, maintaining the existing Manly Precinct system is an anti-corruption, pro-democracy measure.

Council Communication Channels Reopened

As outlined, I have liaised with Council staff, particularly Beth Lawson, to develop a new communication channel between the existing Precincts and the new Council.

The new regional Council no longer offers the administrative assistance of having a dedicated "Precinct Co-ordinator." Residents will recall in the August newsletter I reported how staff of the new Council have expressed support for the continued operation of the Manly Community Precinct Forums (including Fairy Bower). In the last two weeks I met with the executive of the Clontarf Precinct (also still operating) and compared notes on their communications with Council.

This week I received a reply from Ms Lawson which provides us an interim arrangement. In summary this involved the Precincts themselves appropriately directing matters to either; Manly Council's - Customer Service Request (for

operational defects and safety matters), or one of 8 managers handling particular operational areas for more strategic issues (like the pool).

The other recommendation contained in her letter is that the Fairy Bower Precinct Community Forum registers with the Northern Beaches Council as a community organisation. The submission for this is thus currently being prepared and it is hoped to have this completed and lodged with Council by our October meeting.

More next month...

So want to meet new people and get involved in community matters? Come and join us 5th October 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