

# Fairy Bower Precinct

OCTOBER 2017 NEWSLETTER

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11TH OCTOBER >

NEXT FAIRY BOWER COMMUNITY FORUM MEETING:

Wednesday 11th October 2017, 7pm, St. Patricks College.



**Sculptor Helen Leete stands between her freshly completed Sea Nymphs installation, with Clive Calder (foundry director) and her husband on the 15th September 2017.** The statues went in on the 6th, with the final detailing of the mounts carried out on the 15th. Following the intense media coverage, the public started photographing the statues as soon as they were re-erected.

## Welcome to All Fairy Bower Residents

## NEWS

### Oceanides Installation Completed

On Friday the 15th September the restoration of the Sea Nymphs project was officially finished, with the completion of the decorative concrete mounts below each leg. This final detailing was done by Helen Leete and Clive Caulder, and I also attended and gave some hands-on assistance.

Following the success of our fund-raising, we had privately wondered if our fabrication and re-installation of the sculpture would be completed before Council completed its projects in the vicinity i.e. the (previously budget funded) part replacement of the pool bottom and the reconstruction of the amenities building. In short our sculpture won.

As many would have seen, the coverage of the rescued great white shark included showing it being put in the *Fairy Bower Pool*. By complete coincidence the prominent picture

**The October Meeting will include:-**

- ◆ Update on the Beaches Tunnel link Project and what it will mean for the Manly Community
- ◆ What community projects should the Fairy Bower Precinct seek from Council?

of the shark in the *Sydney Morning Herald* taken on the 11th September showed the freshly reinstated Oceanides in the background, almost as though it had never been missing !!

In conclusion there is a photo of our *Save Our Sea Nymphs* committee on page two. I would personally like to thank everyone on the committee including my fellow ex-Manly Councillor Candy Bingham, all those who donated or bought the miniatures, as well as particularly Clive (foundry director) and Helen (sculptor) and the ex-Manly Council staff who got us Council's contribution through the Administrator's office, when Robbie Patterson of the *Manly Daily* called them for comment on the matter.

### Fairy Bower Pool

If *Oceanides* is a success, then the Fairy Bower Pool must remain a failure for both the Fairy Bower Community and particularly myself. But its not for want of trying, and as many of you will recall I had a Councillor motion passed by Manly Council to fund the replacement of the bottom, which advanced to the point that even tenders were called for these works, but the project was then cancelled.

However readers with long memories will recall the issue of replacing part of the pool bottom has been on Fairy Bower Precinct's agenda for many years now.

As part of my retirement from Council I have had to review



**The Save-Our-Sea Nymphs Committee triumphant after our fund-raising success!** - The team consisted of Wendy McCready, Sharon Curby, Heather Potts, myself, Candy Bingham, Helen Leete, Janne Seletto, Clive Calder, Julie Bakalor and Sherree Hooper. I would also add-in ex-Manly Council staff members Michael Hedger and Mick Darda.

and sort through nearly 9 years of my Council papers. During this review I reminded myself that in September 2008 when I was between being Precinct Chair and newly elected Councillor, I was writing stiff emails to Council staff on the lack of progress on our Precinct's Budget Bids - particularly the Bower Street and Bower-Reddall Footpaths and the Fairy Bower Pool bottom replacement.

My election to Council saw the magic wand waived by the General Manager (Henry Wong) on the footpaths, all of which were built just after I became a Councillor. However while the pool came up several times as a figure in draft Council budgets over the years, there was no real progress on the matter until the Council resolution.

However following the amalgamation the new Council has switched back to a strategy of patching the pool, which everyone (including Council's own maintenance staff) recognizes is only temporary and does not really fix the



**The reconstruction of the Fairy Bower Pool Amenities block continues.** Here progress up to 6th of October is shown. The basic building structure including the roof is now complete. The door and window installation has commenced, with ceramic tiling also about to start.

problem.

While I have received no official explanation, I suspect the pool budget has been re-allocated to the reconstruction of the Fairy Bower Amenities block - but without any community consultation. So here we are 9 years later, back to square one on the pool it seems.

### **North Head Utopia Moment**

There are press reports that the NSW Energy and Utilities Minister Don Harwin has announced two digesters will now be built at North Head (after only one was originally sanctioned by IPART, following their review of Sydney Water's forward capital works budget in 2016).

This followed a local campaign for more digesters lead by the *Manly Environment Centre*, with the Director Judy Reizes organising an *Odour Forum* at *Manly Council Chambers*, aided by some publicity on the issue I managed to obtain in the *Manly Daily* - both in 2016.

The trouble is those readers with good memories will recall our *FB News* February 2017 edition included the announcement first made on 18th October 2016 by the then NSW Water Minister Niall Blair that the 2016-7 Sydney Water Forward Program (budget) would include \$40 million for the Biosolids Amplification North Head Project, which included two new digesters at North Head!

So now there is a fresh re-announcement, and we find the two additional digesters project costs have apparently increased from \$40 to \$62 million, with construction now due to be completed in 2021 (yes 4 years away).

### **Council Elections Results**

As everyone will have seen, the end result of the Northern Beaches Council elections was Michael Regan's independents group with six councillors (one from every ward except Frenchs Forest supplying two), the Liberals with five councillors (one from every ward), independents Candy Bingham, Alex McTaggart, and Vince De Luca with one each and Greens Party's Natalie Warren with one.

Following the Council election, the factions on the new Council became clearly visible in the battle for the role of Mayor over next 12 months. Michael Regan was elected Mayor, with the votes from his team, combined with Candy Bingham and Green Natalie Warren. Alex McTaggart, Vince De Luca and the Liberals aligned as the opposition (at least on the role of Mayor).

Other than Candy Bingham, former Manly identities on the new Council include Liberal Councillors Pat Daley (Manly ward) (ex-Warringah Councillor who was a former Manly Councillor 2004-8) and Stuart Sprott (Frenchs Forest ward) (who was the previous lessee of the Little Manly Kiosk in the Council reserve).

The result in the Pittwater ward was both surprising and predictable. It was surprising that all the Councillors actually elected to the Pittwater ward were pro-amalgamation, maybe not obviously so from their election material, but certainly in their past Council voting (ex-Pittwater

Councillors Alex McTaggart and Kylie Ferguson) or in Michael Regan's greater-Warringah independents group (Ian White).

The Pittwater outcome was predictable as regards to well-known candidates getting more votes than an over-wide field of unknown candidates (26 over 8 groups!) - even if some of these were clearly anti-amalgamation. Other than too many candidates muddying the waters in the Pittwater ward, the result could also suggest a level of voter disengagement with election issues, with the public seeming to focus on recognisable candidates.

The same could be said for the Manly ward, with two of the three elected councillors having links to Warringah; Pat Daley (Liberal) being most recently an ex-Warringah Councillor and Sarah Grattan again being part of Michael Regan's independents group. Before the election Candy Bingham was also fairly pro-amalgamation as regards her publicly expressed views. So the good news is there should be no infighting among the elected Councillors about the amalgamation, but the question remains will the new Council be perceived as fairly serving the whole community?

A notable issue with this election compared to past Manly Council elections was the low visibility of campaigning (e.g. number of candidate posters out) and perhaps a lack of the usual campaign energy - which made this election more about known candidates.

The election of Candy Bingham and her alliance with Michael Regan's team should also ensure the Manly Community's interests are represented on the new Council via the dominant elected faction, at-least in the short-term. One question will be if others on Michael Regan's team or other allies will be rotated through the annual vote for the deputy Mayor role over the three year term of this Council?

Secondly, with any alliance there is the question of how far the relationship can be pushed on a critical public issue, where Council staff or other area Councillors hold opposing views. It is likely issues of over-development and possible Council asset sales will test Candy's and Michael's alliance.

Despite the struggle for the Mayor's position, Warringah Council under Michael Regan's Mayoralty has continued to be pro-high-rise development (look at Dee Why). As I have previously noted the perception of Manly Council not listening to its residents about unwanted development (the Oval car park) appeared to alienate it from its progressive residents, who appear to have rather assumed the new Council will now listen to them.

The Warringah culture of facilitating development was clearly visible under the Administrator with the Mona Vale Place Plan (parked after resident opposition) and Frenchs Forest Hospital Precinct Structure Plan (pushed through despite strong resident opposition), so the ideological differences between the Northern Beaches independents and the Liberal Councillors may not be as great as might initially be expected.

With this attitude evident I suspect the Manly community will



**A map showing the proposed indicative route of the Beaches Link Tunnel - a new Warringah Freeway scheme (red line).** Parks and reserves planned to be used as construction sites in the Manly area include the forested but residential-zoned area of the Manly Dam War Memorial Park (Warringah Council rezoning) adjacent the Wakehurst Parkway at Seaforth, and some of the Balgowlah Golf Club grounds. (Northbridge Progress Association Inc.)

need to remain vigilant to protect its amenity from any over-development pushed by the new Council. Such vigilance will also be needed to protect our Manly Council Chambers building, which is reported to be currently largely empty (of staff).

-> Read more about the voting results in each ward at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/elections/2017-nsw-local-government/northern-beaches/>

## The Middle Harbour Tunnel

This proposal was announced by the Premier Gladys Berejiklian on 16th March 2017 in the lead up to the Manly by-election. It is basically a modern resurrection of the 1950s Warringah Freeway plans that were intended to see Manly-Warringah and Sydney City linked by expressway and the Harbour Bridge.

By way of background, planning of the Warringah Freeway began in 1951 with the first stage of the road opening on 18 June 1968. Originally "Stage 2" was the Northbridge to Castlecrag, and Wakehurst Parkway link. This was planned for completion in 1974. The initial plans had the surface road and bridge route passing through Castlecrag, which was later modified to be via Castle Cove after opposition from Castlecrag Progress Association (residents).

In 1983, under the Wran Labor Government, there was a public Warringah Transport Corridor Inquiry conducted by Commissioner David Kirby, which found against the original project on traffic and environmental grounds. This resulted in the scheme being abandoned. In the same time-frame the Wran government was spending heavily on public transport in our region, as regards new Manly ferries and replacing the bus fleets.

However like the controversial WestConnex expressway, this major road project has now been re-announced as a tollway. Again this has been done without the usual public or parliamentary inquiry where the community can raise issues; and the cost/benefit analysis of the scheme can be fully scrutinized. It is now proposed to pass under Castlecrag.

I attended a public meeting at Balgowlah North Public School on the proposed middle harbour tunnel on 3rd August 2017, where a presentation was given by two local residents - Marco Corrent and Neil Christiansen. The two seemed to have access to a great deal of tunnel data that was otherwise not in the public domain. They worked with the local member James Griffin, James Hay the RMS project director, Steve Briant from RMS Communications, The Department of Planning (re the approval process), and various consultants involved in the project.

Their presentation was able to detail aspects of the present conceptual scheme, including current tunnel portal and ventilation stack (35m tall) locations, the broad civil engineering geometry of the tunnel and plans for construction. They outlined comparable road projects including construction sites, construction time-frames and gradients. They noted the present project design was likely to have a significant impact on the Balgowlah North community and sought to persuade the RMS to modify the design to reduce the community impact. However they did not seek to stop the project.

The key points were moving the Wakehurst Parkway portal north away from Balgowlah North residents and relocating the Burnt Bridge Creek deviation portal ventilation stack to the same ridge location as the Wakehurst Parkway portal ventilation stack (to prevent the exhaust plume being trapped in the valley).

Moving the Wakehurst Parkway portal north would also assist easing of the tunnel gradient which was currently too steep by RMS design standards. Additionally they wanted to stop possible clearing of the residential-zoned forested area in the Manly Dam War Memorial Park for a construction zone and prevent a feared post-construction use of this then cleared land for high-rise apartments.

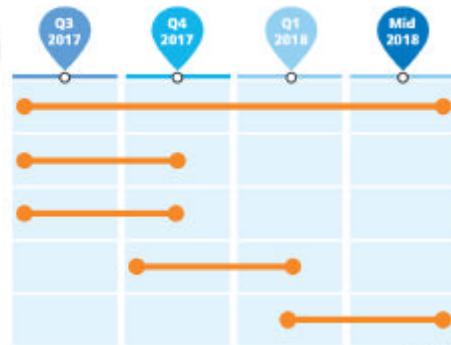
The difficulty of changing the RMS position and detailed design was noted, with most other comparable projects not having any track record of design modifications stemming from community consultation.

They focussed on a range of issues including environmental impacts of construction, disruption to traffic on the Wakehurst Parkway, the impact of the exhaust ventilation stacks, people being forced out of the suburb due to resumption, loss of rare bush land habitat and beauty spots,

### Project timeline

#### ACTIVITY

- Community engagement, Q3 2017
- Geotechnical and other site investigations including harbour marina ecology studies, Q4 2017
- Market interaction process - discussions with industry about design, construction and financing, Q1 2018
- RMS Government final assessment of design options and costs/risks following geotechnical investigations, community feedback and market engagement, Mid 2018
- Confirmation of project scope, final costs, including options for funding and private sector involvement, Mid 2018



**The indicative timeline for the Beaches Tunnel Link project.** Continuous public consultation is indicated, but there appeared to be no changes made to the expanded Rozelle-Beaches concept scheme after the on-line public input, in which many people raised concerns about matters like exhaust stacks and numerous submissions expressed a preference for building a railway instead. So one must question whether they are listening to the public (RMS)

and loss of value to properties in the suburb.

However their presentation did not examine alternatives to the project such as a railway on a similar route (as was proposed as far back as 1915). Nor did they assess the project viability in terms of reviewing any cost-benefit analysis.

Near the end of the meeting I asked the room what the residents wanted and the consensus from these present was they actually wanted the project stopped. The community links any new road or rail infrastructure to more people and more development, leading to loss of residential amenity and the beauty of where we live. There is similar public opposition at the Northbridge end, with North Sydney Council taking a leadership role.

More news on this next month.

**Come and join us 11th October 7:00pm at the ICMS (St Patricks College).**

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