

Fairy Bower Precinct

SEPTEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

7TH SEPTEMBER >

NEXT FAIRY BOWER COMMUNITY FORUM MEETING:

Wednesday 7th September 2016, 7pm, St. Patricks College.



Oceanides at sunrise by Kevin Case. Our local icon turned into a powerful and extraordinary photograph. This shows the original sculpture before its recent damage. *Image supplied courtesy Oceanides sculptor Helen Leete.* **See Page 2**

Welcome to All Fairy Bower Residents

NEWS - First The Good Bits

Fairy Bower Walkway Re-Opens

As everyone would be aware Marine Parade was re-opened without fanfare on the evening of 19th August (which was within one day of the staff-projected date which we reported in our previous newsletter). Many residents noted (and senior Manly Council staff conceded) the restoration works took a longer than usual time.

This was reportedly due to complications from the Council amalgamation and Sydney Water having to do preliminary works on their sewer under the path. However the end result with reset stonework, paving repairs and new post and rail fencing is regarded as excellent work. A large number of residents have expressed to me their satisfaction with the works and the reopening. The project is a credit to Council's maintenance staff.

The Oval Car Park is Off

Next everyone would now be aware that the Administrator Dick Persson has decided to terminate the deeds of agreement to build the Oval car park (and to subsequently redevelop the entire Whistler Street triangle site).

The September Meeting will include:-

- ◆ **GUEST SPEAKER** talk from Oceanides Sculptor *Helen Leete*
- ◆ **Fundraising** for Bronze Oceanides
- ◆ **Future** of Whistler Street Carpark
- ◆ **Manly Council Staffing**
- ◆ **General Business**

This termination is also likely to come at some further financial cost to Council (and ratepayers) in terms of paying out any contractors and developers claims etc., which as yet are unquantified.

The actual reasons for the termination are currently not yet known, as the two expert investigative reports into the project, commissioned by the new Council administration, still have not yet been released (even to former Councillors).

Information about those selected to be interviewed by the two consultant firms, suggests the likely main issues of concern that lead to the cancellation action were the potential financial risk to Council (construction budget and the finished project covering its operating and interest costs) and the potential loss of patronage to Manly CBD shops from a more remote public car park.

*(If you want to read more reflections on this, see **Car park Epilogue** on Page 3)*

So then the inevitable question - **What next with Manly 2015 and car parking?**

Many of us are aware the existing Whistler Street car park is certainly not to everybody's satisfaction. The isles are wide, but the spots are fairly narrow - so they require care to park in, and make access to and from the car difficult. Candidly, the structure may well have to be replaced to meet community expectations.

Ctd. over



Manly Oval Park vistas to remain untouched. Manly Oval with Ivanhoe Park is unique, because no other similar oval in Sydney is set with its park above its oval on the side of a hill, forming such a beautiful natural amphitheatre. As can be seen works to improve the playing surface are currently being carried out.

The challenge will be to fix this car park without letting the genie of breaking the CBD planning controls out of the bottle. If the controls are broken, the Land and Environment Court will tend to uphold other developers wanting the same rule relaxations. This will flag a green light for high rise in the Manly CBD. In planning you always have to be mindful of setting precedents.

So what should we do about Whistler Street car park next?

Seed Funding To Remake Fairy Bower Oceanides “Sea Nymphs” Sculpture

Oceanides is the sculpture on the ocean-side of the Fairy Bower Pool. As residents will know, one of the two pieces was snapped in half by the recent storms. The piece has been recovered from the pool. However the sculptor, Helen Leete, is keen to remake a facsimile of the sculpture in bronze, to make this iconic artwork more durable and permanent.

The sculpture is installed in a visually prominent, but environmentally harsh and exposed location. The current sculpture is made of ceramic with steel frame. Residents will recall there were issues with the original finish of the work changing over time, and Council ended up painting it. The work was previously purchased from the sculptor and donated to Council, but it was not insured.

The preliminary fund-raising target for recasting it in bronze is around \$90,000. In the current climate this would be considered a very large sum for Council alone to provide for one public artwork. Grants are usually dollar for dollar.

So I would urge our local community to consider this proposal and if they support it to make pledges to see if we can attempt to raise at least half the sum required to return Oceanides to its full complete glory in bronze.

Meeting With Council Staff On Fairy Bower Pool

Residents can have the opportunity to meet with Council staff at the Fairy Bower Pool between 12:30 and 1:30 pm, on Wednesday the 7th September (the day of our meeting). At our August meeting precinct members present unanimously passed a resolution that the finished height of the resurfaced pool floor be

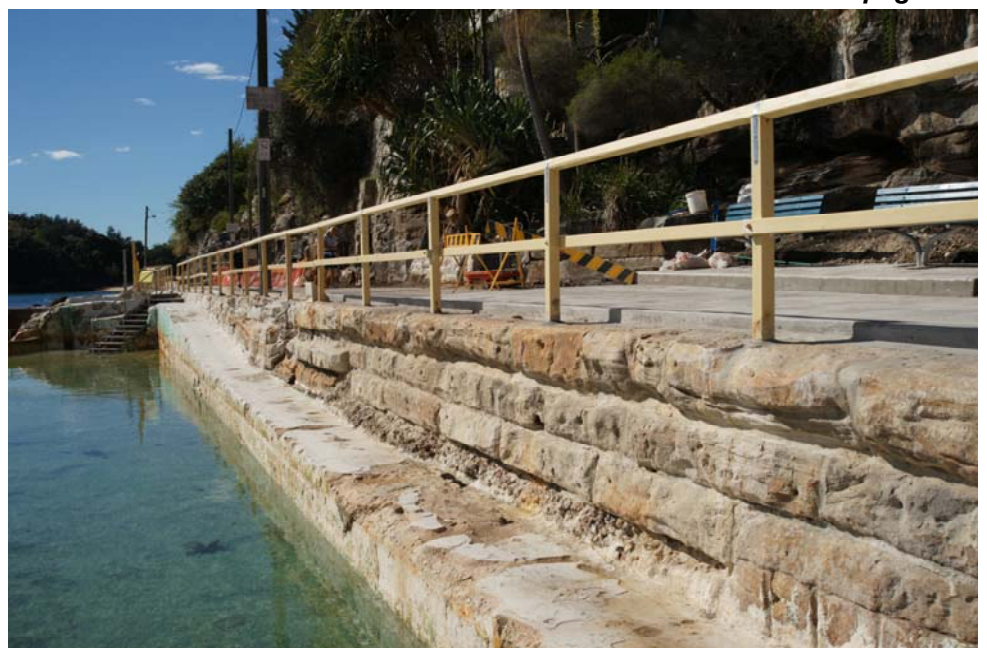
maintained to be the same as existing (so the pool doesn't get any shallower).

The Not So Good News

Reports of Former Manly Council Staff Being Pressured

Last Friday staff and former councillors of Manly Council attended a farewell function for former Deputy General Manager Stephen Clements held at the Ivanhoe Hotel. Henry Wong the former Manly General manager (who finished up the week before) also attended, so the event became a farewell for the two senior Manly staff.

Ctd on page 4 ...



Council's faithful restoration of Marine Parade. Newly reconstructed stone wall, new post and rail fencing and new concrete paving next to the Fairy Bower Pool.

Manly Oval Car Park - Epilogue

Opposition to, and belated support for, the 2015 car park relocation scheme certainly polarised the Manly community.

From many peoples' perspective the pedestrian only (car free) Manly CBD "vision" initially appeared to have merit, but the projects ran into complications that both senior Council staff and Councillors failed to resolve.

Some of us tried constructively to come up with something the whole community could support. At various times then Councillors Cathy Griffin, Steve Pickering and I tried to negotiate a more acceptable compromise, but unseen project proponents would simply not budge on deleting the Oval car park and confining all activity to the Whistler Street site.

Other major issues for the residents included the proposed entry and exit ramp arrangement for the under-Oval car park potentially causing traffic jams on Sydney Road and the access and ventilation stacks ruining the park entry and park vistas. At the Whistler Street triangle, the scale of over-development needed to make the projects cover all costs (including developer's profit) meant that *the proposed building height had to exceed Council's own planning control height limits* and would set a development precedent.

Some minor compromises were achieved, such as lowering the Oval car park, so it was not above ground level at the tennis courts, and adding 50 spaces for older or less mobile residents to still use to park at Whistler Street (near the Corso). The twin-theatre proposal was notable because then Cllrs Cathy Griffin and I were advised of this proposal from our separate "improve the community outcome" discussions with then general manager Henry Wong, *which were held before the tender process started*, and yet this proposal *was to be found in only one proposal from one bidder*. This was the preferred proposal chosen by Council.

The meeting of the 12th April 2016 was the worst Council meeting that I had to attend in nearly 8 years on Council. This was the infamous meeting where the public were controversially locked out. But the key issue was that the meeting requirements of the Local Government Act were not properly followed, to the point at the end of the night there was not even a valid motion that council had resolved to proceed with any tenders.

The problem was that Council met in "closed committee of the whole" and, as per the Act, could not resolve in this mode (i.e. make a formal decision). A second vote in "open" meeting session should have been taken, but due to certain



The community has to decide on development. Green gardens with Norfolk Island Pines and some beautiful period architecture make Manly a special place both for residents and visitors alike. The State government and developers will push for higher density and we will all have to decide if we want this.

key people being stressed, this was omitted. *So the published minutes of the meeting ended up not being a true record*, to cover-up this mistake.

The whole car park fiasco certainly ended up with the potential to damage the brand of Manly Council in some residents' eyes. But in truth it actually showed the strength of our Manly Community. This fight, like the previous fight to save the properties at Little Manly, was actually an indication that the Manly community is unique in having a strong sense of community ownership, with the residents being prepared to do whatever it takes to challenge and rectify civic decisions that significantly affect their amenity.

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

Continued from Page 2 - Amalgamation Staff Issues

So the farewell evening was a memorable occasion. The esteem and affection in which Mr Clements was held by his staff was clear for all to see. Mr Clements had worked at Manly Council for 9 years.

Most famously he battled with the State Government's Department of Planning on Council's new standardised LEP and DCP documents, winning special provisions for Manly with the support of Councillors and his planning staff.

It was therefore quite disturbing to hear from him personally that he had been asked to leave, about 9 months before he intended to retire. During the night there were staff reports that another Manly Council staff member was experiencing bullying by a new (non-Manly) manager and that another Manly staff member left in limbo due to the reorganization was also being pressured to leave.

Residents may remember that as part of the amalgamation the State Government promised Council staff that their employment was guaranteed for 3 years. As a former Councillor I can not accept these reports without seeking action to have them properly investigated, with any appropriate action taken.

What does everybody think? I will ask everyone to consider the matter and express their support that all Council staff be treated professionally and in accordance with the government's 3 year employment guarantee commitment.

More next month...

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

Hugh Burns
0435 407 257
hughburns@y7mail.com



At the last meeting it was reported the Bower/Reddall Street steps lighting had failed. We can now report the lights have been repaired and a new floodlight installed (shown at top). With two lights illuminating the steps there should be less risk of a complete failure. Each light pole also has an ID number on it if you need to report critical lamp failures. You can make the call (1800 044 808) or email details to us.



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