



“The Swimming Pool” Newsletter

October 2023

Welcome to Newsletter #8

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1. President’s Report

Welcome to this Newsletter, our first for 2023!

My name is Caroline Luke-Evered, and I am the new President of Friends of Manuka Pool (FoMP) as at the Annual General Meeting on 12 September 2023.

I have previously been Secretary and Treasurer on the Committee and am now back on the team after a 2-year break.

I would like to welcome returning committee members, Rebecca Scouller, Rosemary Hollow and Robby McGarvey, who have been the mainstay of FoMP, in particular Rebecca who is an inaugural member and has been President for 4 years.

And a very warm welcome to our new members, Yvette Wajon (Secretary), John McGinness (Treasurer) and Patrick Pentony (Public Officer) who have taken on their roles with enthusiasm.

We have lots of interesting news so keep reading!



Images (clockwise from top left): A cloudy pool pre-season; construction works for new accessible ramp; positioning display of original 4ft tile; framed 4ft tile.
Image credit: Caroline Luke-Evered.

Australia’s best public pool

In 2022, Manuka Pool claimed the top spot on the Guardian’s list of [Australia’s best public pools](#).

The Guardian writes:

The heritage-listed facility still retains its period signage and deco architectural style. It was subject to a significant refresh in 2019, but the ACT government was careful to retain the original design, including specially imported tiles from the Czech Republic.

2. Meet the new Committee

FoMP welcomes new Committee members.

Rebecca Scouller, President of the Committee for the past 4 years has stepped into the Vice President role to support new President **Caroline Luke-Evered**.

Caroline is passionate about the pool and swims there almost every day during the season. She's the one with the large colourful bag of swimming aids, headphones, heads-up display goggles and bright Funkita swimming costumes!

Rebecca was one of the founding members of the Friends of Manuka Pool. Rebecca started swimming at the pool more than 15 years ago and can often be spotted wearing an old-school floral swimming cap. Rebecca only started swimming laps once she moved to Canberra, has accepted she'll always be a slow swimmer but has always loved being in the water. Manuka Pool is Rebecca's favourite place in Canberra.

New Treasurer **John McGinness** has been coming to Manuka Pool for 60 years. The beautiful blue pool in an art deco setting and surrounding trees are what keep him coming back.

New Secretary **Yvette Wajon** thinks Manuka Pool should be considered one of Canberra's cultural institutions – an iconic place with great heritage and design, that brings the community together, especially on a sunny afternoon.

For new Public Officer **Patrick Pentony**, his grandparents swam at The Swimming Pool 70 years ago, and he'd love to think that future generations of his family will be able to enjoy it as it is today.

Continuing members **Robby McGarvey** and **Rosemary Hollow** also have fond memories of the pool. For **Robby**, it reminds her of the beautiful blue baths, which she visited every

summer as a child in Rotorua New Zealand. Robby's daughters have happy teenage memories of the Manuka Pool, and now enjoy taking their own children, sharing enduring love for the pool by the whole family.

For **Rosemary**, she has fond memories of learning to swim there and attend carnivals as a teenager. After 30 years away from Canberra, she returned in 2002 and delights in her regular lap swimming at one of Canberra's greatest treasures. She says both she and the pool are again gracefully!

Thanks to our departing members **Sarah Todd**, **Robert Douglas**, and **Judith Robinson**, who have done a sterling job keeping the committee going and supporting FoMP's endeavours to keep the pool's heritage and memories alive.

3. Update on works

Members may have noticed the new fencing and planting around the pool's grounds, and the improved access pathway and ramp at the front entrance. Great care was taken during this latter construction to avoid affecting the tree roots from nearby trees.



*Completion of graded pathway into side entrance of pool
Image credit: Rebecca Scouller*

4. Upcoming events

Clear your schedule and dust off your goggles, the day we've been waiting for is almost here: Manuka Pool will open on **Saturday 28 October**.

Plans are underway to celebrate the unveiling of a plaque dedicated to late, local legend, Merv Knowles, and the display of the pool's original 4ft tile. The Committee will advise members of a date once plans are confirmed.

5. Membership drive

With the 2024 ACT Government election around the corner and a heavy push for radical urban infill, we believe there is still a strong role for FoMP in both protecting Canberra's favourite backyard and running activities to celebrate the pool's past, present, and future.

As recently as early October, the ACT Property Group put out a tender for a consultant to undertake a feasibility study and provide a comprehensive costing report for future use of territory owned pools.

We want FoMP to continue to thrive as a community organisation to ensure we can protect the pool now and for future generations.

FoMP invites existing members to renew their membership to FoMP and welcomes new members to join.

Please email friendsofmanukapool@gmail.com to renew or join.

If you are unsure whether your membership is up to date – please send us an email.

Membership fees for 2023-24

Annual single concession \$10 (Centrelink/student)

Annual single \$20

Three-year single \$50

Three-year household \$100 (two adults, any children under 15 years old)

Lifetime \$200