



## “The Swimming Pool” Newsletter

March 2024

### Welcome to Newsletter #9

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### 1. President’s Report

FoMP has been busy with a few matters so far this season.

The most exciting matter has been the launch of our website!

We welcomed many members to the official launch at the pool on 22 February. Minister Elizabeth Lee also attended and is a fan of ours. We are grateful to Chevelle Grey from Scorpio Strategic for creating the website. It is everything we hoped for, and I hope you agree! Feel free to let us know what you think and provide any suggestions. We are particularly interested in photos and stories that you feel free to share about the long history of the pool and what it means to live in Canberra with such a beautiful place to visit in summer.

A shout-out to East Hotel for providing refreshments and their long-term commitment to FoMP. Of course, thanks to Bryan Pasfield for allowing us to host the launch on the pool grounds.



*Left: L-R: FoMP Committee members with Minister Lee. John McGinness, Caroline Luke-Evered, Elizabeth Lee MLA, Yvette Wajon, Rosemary Hollow and Rebecca Scouller*  
*Right: L-R: Polly and Todd from East Hotel with Caroline Luke-Evered and Bryan Pasfield.*  
*Photos credit: David Evered*

### **Friends of Manuka Pool has a new website!**

The Committee was proud to launch a new website for the Friends of Manuka Pool earlier this year. Check it out at:  
<https://friendsofmanukapool.org/>

Be sure to key an eye out for upcoming events, publications, and updates from the Committee.

#### On a more serious note...

FoMP has been working on a letter to the Environment and Planning Directorate regarding the Canberra Services Club (CSC) resubmission of their wish to deconcessionalise the lease on their previous club site on the corner of Canberra Ave and Manuka Circle (known as DA201732582 Block 1 Section 15).

Some FoMP members have been involved in this process, being members of other local community groups. FoMP organised an urgent meeting with CSC and Purdon’s (who are managing their case) on 14 March 2024, and it was well-attended with many groups and concerned individuals asking pertinent

questions; unfortunately, not always fully answered. The FoMP submission letter was widely distributed and the final letter with supporting documentation was submitted on 21 March, 2024. We await the decision by the Directorate and Minister.

Our final paragraph for our letter was:

*In summary, FoMP welcomes the news that the Club wishes to return to their spiritual home and provide a Club to service veteran and emergency personnel. For 11 years now, the community has wanted something to be done on the site and certainly a club is a likely endeavour. Whilst there are limitations to the size of the new building and its purpose under the current concessional lease, it is prudent to await clarification of building plans and preliminary drawings prior to deconcessionalising.*

*We welcome careful consideration of the development proposal and call on the ACT Government to consider the importance of maintaining community land for future generations.*

### Club Champion's Board found

It has come to our attention that the 'missing' Club Champion's Board has been found and is currently displayed at the Gungahlin Aquatic Centre. There has been such an interest in this object that several of us have been out to see the Board and FoMP is currently in negotiations with the Canberra Amateur Swimming Club about having it on permanent loan to Manuka Pool – here's hoping!

Tim the Yowie Man has taken this one step further and sought out the lady who found the board, talked to relatives of the possible history of how it ended up in a disused shed and a great deal more.

Keep an eye out for his article in the Canberra Times on Saturday 23 March 2024!



Photo of the Club Champion's Board, courtesy of Karl Willett (President of CASC)

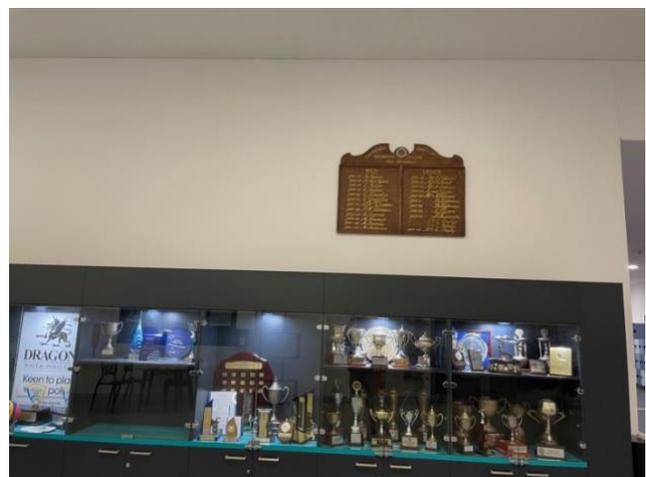


Photo of the Board in situ at Gungahlin Aquatic Centre. Courtesy of Caroline Luke-Evered.

### Women of Manuka Pool – we need you!

Finally, FoMP is interested in writing an article on Women and Manuka Pool with the help of Frances McGee (heritage whizz) who wrote the booklet 'Swimmers who gave their lives'. A few copies are still available.

Anyone who is also interested in this topic or has any photos to share, please contact us as we would love to hear from you.

### Until the next season...

All the best to everyone as autumn gently makes its way into our lives and look forward to next

pool season. In the meantime, take care and happy swimming wherever you go in winter!

FoMP will keep in contact either directly by email or via a newsletter on any updates to the above matters. Maybe even see you at the Heritage week event at the pool!

Caroline Luke-Evered

## 2. End of season update:

The current 2023/2024 season draws to a close on Sunday 24 March 2024. The pool is now in its ninety second year. Manager Bryan Pasfield said it has been a good season, with over 40,000 visitors to the pool.

There has been the usual mix of people attending for recreational swimming, lap swimming, learn to swim classes, children in the toddlers' pool, and people using the green space for picnics, parties, and sunbathing.

Whilst the pool is nearing the season's end, Bryan and his team are all looking forward to the Manuka Pool 24-hour swim as part of the Laps for Life campaign.

The 2024/2025 season is scheduled to start on Saturday 26 October 2024.

John McGinness (Treasurer)

## 3. Upcoming events

**Laps for Life:** Every March, the Laps for Life campaign is on to support young people experiencing a mental health problem.

### [Laps for Life](#)

The funds raised directly support ReachOut which is a free online mental health service in Australia to assist young people connect with mental health workers, peers, and online resources.

Everyone knows someone whose life has been affected by youth suicide so please support Manuka Pool Lappers raise funds. The team has been counting their laps and raising funds individually with the final fundraising being a swim-a-thon at the pool!

The 24-hour swim will be held on the last weekend of the season, **Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 March**. If you are wanting to participate, check with Bryan and his team to lock in a time slot. Or just support the team!

Last year we raised over \$15,000 and came second on the leader board!

### [Donate to Manuka Pool Lappers](#)

**ACT Heritage Festival:** Ever wondered why Manuka Pool isn't 50m long? Or if it is a unicorn or a seal in the toddler pool? Did you know that up to 500 people would watch swim club meets along with a live broadcast?

On **Saturday 20 April 2024**, from 10-11am, David Hobbes, a retired heritage architect will be leading a Heritage Walk and Talk at Manuka Pool.

This will be the third time David has given this talk and it just shows how popular this type of event is. There are already many people listed to attend so get in quick!

Bookings essential via [Eventbrite](#)

## 4. Season highlights

As with every season recently, the highlight of Manuka Pool, or simply the Pool, for my family is the sense of community. No matter what time of day or what day of the week, whenever we do decide to pop down to the pool for a quick cool off, we inevitably meet up with friends from school, university, work or more increasingly these days with other families from our kids' schools.

There is nothing better on a hot evening than bobbing mid pool shoulder deep in cool water catching up with past acquaintances, while your kids compete with others from the neighbourhood in doing the best bomb at the deep end.

Manuka Pool has become an extension of the backyard or local park for many families; it is our oasis hidden in the middle of the city.

In modern life where we are losing the opportunity to casually bump into familiar faces, Manuka Pool remains steadfast as the accidental meeting place for people from every part of our community. In my grandparent's generation it would have been likely that they knew everyone at The Pool.

I am happy that so many years later it's still a place where you always see a familiar face.

Patrick Pentony (Committee Member)