



“The Swimming Pool” Newsletter

August 2024

Welcome to Newsletter #10

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1. President’s Report

Hi everyone and welcome to our end of winter newsletter. Hope you have all survived the cold snaps and perhaps done a few laps in an indoor pool.

Of course, our beloved outdoor Manuka Pool closed for the season on Sunday 24 Mar 2024 with a magnificent finishing event – the 24-hour fundraising event for Laps for Life.

Laps for Life wrap up

This year we had over 150 swimmers powering out laps every hour from 2pm on Saturday 23 Mar to 2pm on Sunday 24 Mar with over 11,000 laps in total. We also had 20 regular swimmers registered for laps throughout March with many raising hundreds of dollars individually for the Manuka Pool Lappers Team.

Thanks to Bryan Pasfield and his family of helpers who coordinated this event and managed to raise \$19,000. We also made it on to the WIN News on the Monday evening!



Above Left: Caroline Luke-Evered after 2nd swim in 24hr, on her birthday Sunday 24th March!



Above Right: During night swim



Above: Some of the Manuka Pool Lappers team photo with Bryan Pasfield after 24hr swim on 24 Mar 24

Photos by Rebecca Scouller

Saga of the Canberra Services Club request for DA variation on previous club site

Over the autumn and winter, FoMP and other community groups have been waiting for the outcome of our responses to the DA variation of the lease for a site adjacent to the pool by Canberra Services Club. The Club wrote to us and others about having one-on-one meetings to convince us of the merits of the deconcessionalisation. Not one group wished to do this but requested a public meeting instead, which has not been forthcoming. Given the upcoming election, we believe nothing much will happen now until next year.

Club Champion's Board

We have made progress with obtaining the 'lost' Champion's Board in that the Canberra Amateur Swimming Club has agreed to a permanent loan of the Board at Manuka Pool. We are now waiting for a formal loan agreement to be arranged, seeking heritage advice on how best to conserve the board and an affirmative from the ACT government to pay for the lockable box with glass and a plaque. These things seem to take a long time, but we are hoping to have the project completed by the beginning of the pool season in late October. Fingers crossed!

Heritage Walk and Talk

Our third annual walk and talk at Manuka Pool took place on Saturday 20 Apr 2024 during the ACT Heritage Festival.

David Hobbes, a retired Canberra heritage architect, once again regaled an eager group of 18 people with a detailed history of the architecture of the building and interesting stories of the beginnings of what was then 'The Swimming Pool'.

Some attendees provided their own memories of their childhood at the pool and were delighted to revisit the changerooms, the toddler pool and, for some, reminiscing about the old diving board!



Above: David Hobbes introducing the pool to a group of enthralled attendees

Photo by Rebecca Scouller



Above: Discussing how the Men's change rooms were larger than the that of the Ladies!

Photo by Rebecca Scouller

We believe this event is important to keep as a regular one in the Heritage Festival calendar as it increases awareness of the importance of the architectural and social heritage of Manuka Pool and visibility of FoMP with our main aim of protecting the pool and surrounds from developers.

One grateful attendee wrote to me later that day and said, *"That was a wonderfully informative and enjoyable tour today. Please relay this to your colleagues and thank you for your efforts to conserve the place so it can be enjoyed by us and those who come after us...."*

Thanks again to Bryan for opening the facility and having the pool look clean and magnificent and providing some post-talk nibbles.

Passing of David Denham

We were saddened by the passing of David Denham, an active member of the Inner South Canberra Community Council. His tireless campaigning for supporting issues in the Griffith and Narrabundah area was greatly appreciated by the wider Canberra community. His assistance to fight for Manuka Pool was invaluable when FoMP first formed, and then joined in with the other groups, to successfully change the government's mind on the Grocon bid to change the Manuka Pool precinct for the worse. FoMP committee sent a condolences card to the GNCA committee and expressed our deepest sympathies.



WITH DEEPEST SYMPATHY

We were very sad to hear of the passing of David Denham and offer our sincerest condolences to his family and your committee members.

Rebecca Scouller, immediate past president of FoMP, had prepared this speech to be read at David's funeral and we would like to present it here in this card.

*Best regards,
Friends of Manuka Pool committee*

A copy of the eulogy by Rebecca Scouller is available at the end of this newsletter.

Yours in swimming,
Caroline Luke-Evered
President, FoMP

2. Save the Date: FoMP AGM

It is that time of year again, the FoMP AGM. Our AGM will be held on Tuesday 10 September 2024 at East Hotel, Kingston at 1830 hrs.

We welcome all FoMP members to attend and meet up with like-minded people who have a passion for Manuka Pool and heritage in general. Members and those who may not yet have renewed their membership will soon be emailed the necessary documents for the AGM.

Please consider coming along to this as we do need to make a quorum for a successful AGM. **Plus, we have a special speaker TBA!**

FoMP AGM 2024

Date: Tuesday 10 September 2024

Time: 6:30pm for the AGM

Location: East Hotel, Griffith

3. Call for Committee members

FoMP is seeking new Committee members to be able to continue as an organisation. We are especially seeking members with website experience and/or event organisation to support social and community-based activities for our members.

The committee has a healthy bank account, and meetings are concentrated (no more than monthly) around the pool's open season.

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 celebrating our past, present and future.

4. Membership renewals

We thank those whose membership is up-to-date and encourage those with lapsed membership to renew. We always welcome new members.

Members can renew or join via the Friends of Manuka Pool website:

<https://friendsofmanukapool.org/>.

Or email friendsofmanukapool@gmail.com.

If you're unsure whether your membership is current, please send us an email!

Membership fees for 2024-25

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**

5. Pool opening!

Message from Bryan on the upcoming season:

*Pool re-opens on Saturday 26 October 2024!
We are looking forward to the 2024-25 season, with learn to swim programs, floating yoga, aquatic zumba, and a family fun day scheduled for January 2025.*

Laps for Life will be running again in March 2025, and we are looking to increase the number of registered swimmers for the Manuka Pool Lappers Team.

Other than that, preparations are underway for regular maintenance, cleaning and staff training. See you there!

*Bryan Pasfield
Manager Manuka Pool*

6. The Mystery of the Missing Lamp Post

After the heritage walk at Manuka Pool in April, eagle-eyed FoMP members identified that one of the heritage-listed lamppost shades had been replaced with a new LED one.



*Above: The lamp post with the out of place LED shade
Photo by Rebecca Scouller*

Why this happened remains yet another mystery and enigma of the operations of the ACT Government. Manuka Pool has a Conservation Management Plan that cites what can and cannot be done by anyone operating within the precinct, the ACT Property Group knows this, our amazing pool manager Bryan knows this, ACT Heritage knows this, but apparently Transport Canberra and City Services does not know this!

After FoMP contacted Minister Vassarotti and ACT Property Group, a similar but not identical heritage shade was found and installed. ACT Property Group continues to work with TCCS to try and locate the original shade. In the meantime, we understand the replacement shade will be painted Brunswick green to match the heritage colours of the site.

*Rebecca Scouller
Vice-President, FoMP*

7. Upgrades to roads around Telopea Park school

Many of us have experienced the chaos and near accidents round school drop-off and pick-up times at the crossing and intersections near Telopea Park School.

Several weeks ago, Rebecca Scouller wrote to the Minister for City Services, Tara Cheyne MLA, regarding the proposed upgrades to roads and traffic around Telopea Park and Kingston that had been mentioned in the Canberra Times. Rebecca received a reply on 20 Aug 24 with the main points being:

Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) will be installing three wombat pedestrian crossings (raised zebra crossings) on routes to Telopea Park School within coming months. These crossings will help to manage vehicle speed and give priority to active travel.

The crossings will be installed on Telopea Park and New South Wales Crescent at the intersection with Currie Crescent, and on New South Wales Crescent at its intersection with Telopea Park.

Full detailed plans are 7 pages long and are available on request from FoMP.

8. Meet the ACT Aquatic Alliance

FoMP is pleased to introduce members to fellow Canberra pool enthusiasts, the ACT Aquatic Alliance.

The ACT Aquatic Alliance is the peak aquatic sport advocacy body in the ACT:

- *Representing the members of the major aquatic Olympic sports (as defined by World Athletics) as well as Triathlon in the ACT;*

- *Providing advice to the ACT Government and other key stakeholders in relation to the aquatic sports industry;*
- *Engaging government and key stakeholders in relation to the upgrading or the establishment of key aquatic infrastructure; and*
- *Leveraging new and existing partnerships with key industry stakeholders to promote aquatic sports within the ACT and its surrounding regions.*

Get in contact via the website: [ACT Aquatic Alliance \(actaa.com.au\)](https://actaa.com.au)

9. Another pool in distress – Phillip

Earlier this year, a group led by Sarah Ransom contacted us to find out how FoMP managed to save Manuka Pool from the developers. Rebecca Scouller has been in regular contact with the group and suggested forming a Canberra pool alliance. Unfortunately, this did not get off the ground with other pool advocates, so the Phillip group are going it alone. However, we are still in contact, and this is Sarah's latest email to FoMP committee:

Save Phillip Pool started as a Facebook group early in 2024 as an effort of a group of local swimmers wanting to demonstrate that our local pool is loved and wanted.

Building on years of advocacy by the Woden Valley Community Council and others, the crunch point came when in late 2023, after years being closed, it was announced that Geocon had bought the lease to the pool.

While current lease conditions require a pool to be operated on the site, at some point shortly before the sale this requirement was changed from a 50m outdoor pool and ice rink to a 25m indoor pool due to "changing community preferences". We don't agree!

Phillip Pool has become run down, with no public sign, and is so surrounded by overgrown bushes that many Woden residents don't even know it's there. Despite this, it is clean and cool and absolutely the best spot Southside for 50m laps as the water glitters in the early morning sun.

With a little political will and imagination, and investment, Phillip Pool could be a real community drawcard once again. The omens are not good with the pool now owned by a developer, but this is not beyond the government's ability to solve. Hundreds of us are looking for that in the upcoming ACT election....

Sarah Ransom 8 Aug 24

10. Manuka Oval key dates

Plan your swims! It'll be busy around the major matches of the season.

Event	Date	Times
AFL: Giants v Hawthorn	Sunday 4th Aug 2024	Gates 11:40am; Match 1:10pm - 3:40pm approx.
AFLW: Giants v Bulldogs	Saturday 31 st Aug 2024	Gates 12:05pm; Match 1:05pm - 2:45pm approx.
AFLW: Giants v Suns	Sunday 15 th Sept 2024	Gates 4:05pm; Match 5:05pm – 6:05pm approx.
BBL: Thunder v Strikers	Tuesday 17 th Dec 2024	Gates TBC; Match 7:15pm - 10:25pm approx.
BBL: Stars v Thunder	Saturday 28 th Dec 2024	Gates TBC; Match 7:15pm - 10:25pm approx.
WINT T20I: Australia v England	Thursday 23 rd Jan 2025	Gates 6:00pm; Match 7:15pm – 10:00pm approx.

11. Condolences card eulogy

Sent to David Denham's son, Angus, and to GNCA committee.

David and many others, as part of the ISCCC and as individual groups, have worked on many significant issues over the years, including planning and legislative reform. However, I would say the biggest project we all worked on together was in 2016, saving the Manuka Oval Precinct from an unsolicited bid from Greater Western Sydney and Grocon.

The proposal included up to 1000 apartments around the oval, the loss of the heritage listed Manuka Arts Precinct, and 1500m² of the Manuka pool lawns and a land swap deal that would have most likely seen the closure of MOCCA childcare centre, a community childcare centre more than 40 years history, and the Telopea Park School tennis courts. There were also rumours of the loss of Montgomery Oval, and exclusive use of Manuka pool and Telopea Park for GWS training.

In opposition, several community groups formed a coalition to fight the proposal. The campaign against the bid took hundreds of hours of community members time, more than 300 people turned up to a community meeting and we collected around 500 signatures across a single weekend, opposing the development.

It took seven months of sustained campaigning, media, meetings, FOI requests and analysis before the Chief Minister went from being 'impressed' with the proposal – to rejecting it. It was also an election year which may or may not have worked in our favour.

It was the tireless efforts of people like David who helped convince Canberra that we were not a bunch of NIMBYs but, in fact, the proposal was a bad deal for Canberra, ratepayers, nearby public land and assets and for the oval itself.

With hundreds of pages of material to read and analyse, it was always great to know that David was there to assist with the analysis and synthesis of material so that we could present cohesive and compelling arguments to the media and the community. Without people like David, our local areas could potentially be very different to what we know and love today.

David's efforts supporting issues within Griffith and Narrabundah and the greater Canberra region to ensure Canberra is an equitable and sustainable place to live is recognised by the many who know what is involved in maintaining the rage. And while some may still call us NIMBYs and some may never realise the huge efforts of people like David, his legacy will remain for many decades to come.

Card on page 1 and above created by Caroline Luke-Evered using Canva