

1840 want pool to remain afloat

Monash Journal

A PETITION of 1840 signatures urging Monash Council to reconsider the closure of Oakleigh pool was tabled at a council meeting on Tuesday.

Adding voice to the petition were more than 100 protesters, some wearing blue ribbons and blue hats, in the public gallery.

In response to six formal questions from protesters, the councillors were resolute in defence of their decision.

Mayor Joy Banerji reiterated the council was seeking to provide a recreational asset – not based on a single water element – to replace the pool.

Cr Banerji said the council would try to create a “drawcard to the area”, using the parkland and links to bicycle and walking paths.

She said the community would be consulted on the council’s plans.

Former councillor Brian Little asked why the council was closing Oakleigh’s outdoor pool when the Monash Aquatic and Recreation Centre couldn’t cope with demand on hot days.

Cr Banerji said MARC’s indoor facilities were more popular than its outdoor pool on hot days, and believed the planned Clayton indoor pool would also be popular.

After the meeting, Community Life Action Group spokeswoman Julie Clearwater said she believed more community passion was building against Oakleigh pool’s closure.

“More people are upset about it, and more people are becoming involved in our campaign.

“[Councillors] are just pretending there’s not an issue.”

Buoyed by news Sunshine’s outdoor pool would be retained after protracted community protest, she said CLAG’s focus was on publicising a public meeting to be held on Thursday next week.

24 July 2006

We do care

Monash Journal
24 JULY 2006

Insanity Streak by Tony Lopes

DO Monash councillors really think that if they keep saying there is no community support for Oakleigh pool that we will give up our fight for it? ('Pool: it's 'no', *Journal*, July 17)

Councillors, you have neglected our pool.

You have neglected its filters and pipework.

You have neglected its grounds.

You have neglected its change rooms.

You have neglected its barbecue area.

You have neglected nearby Brickmakers Park.

Councillors, you are ignoring the people of Oakleigh, who are clearly asking you not to destroy a facility that has been part of Oakleigh for almost 50 years.

We care. Stop pretending that we don't.

Julie Clearwater,
Oakleigh

A numbers game

CR Denise McGill's comparison of 14,000 attendances at Oakleigh pool with 700,000 at Monash Aquatic and Recreation Centre is simply selecting facts to suit her argument ('Closure still puzzles public', *Journal*, July 10).

CR McGill fails to mention that 700,000 Monash Aquatic and Recreation Centre attendances includes people using its aquatic, gym and recreational facilities.

She conveniently ignores that Oakleigh has similar facilities.

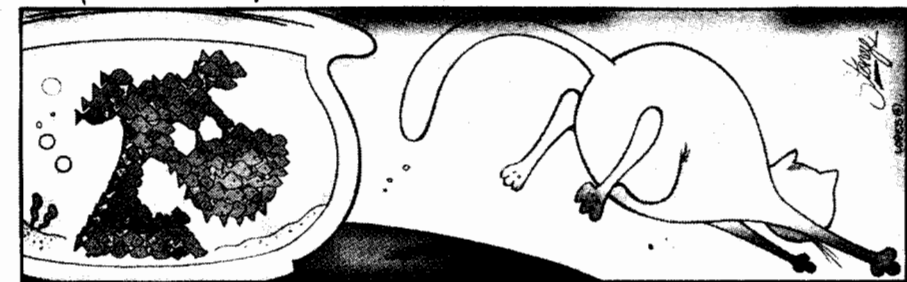
I am advised that the Oakleigh Recreation Centre and pool has conservatively 1000 gym attendances and 4000 visits per week.

The fact is at least 264,000 people attend the Oakleigh pool and recreation centre per year.

The council must take responsibility for dwindling pool attendances.

CR McGill also fails to mention that neither of the children's pools were open this summer (due to the council's neglect), so families with young children could not have been counted in her figures either.

CR McGill's selective use of the facts is an example of a



council attempting to justify a decision that has been on the agenda of the council administration since its first aborted attempt to close the pool.

Lesley Hodge
Oakleigh

Editor's note: Monash Mayor Joy Banerji told the *Journal* the ORC registers team numbers rather than individual attendances. "It is estimated that for the past financial year, the number of patrons would have been between 275,000 and 300,000," she said.

Contradicting Crs

I READ with amazement the comments made recently by Monash councillors in the *Journal* regarding the closure of Oakleigh pool.

How can two Oakleigh Ward councillors have differing views on what their constituents want?

CR Gerry Kottek was quoted as saying his constituents were understanding of the council's decision. CR Denise McGill said most of her constituents were in favour of saving the pool.

As well as contradicting each other, the cost of refurbishing the pool changes every time it's quoted.

For councillors in the Glen Waverley and Mt Waverley wards to say their constituents have no interest in keeping the Oakleigh pool open is not surprising.

With an abundance of council facilities for their families to enjoy, they have no need to venture into Oakleigh. Meanwhile, Oakleigh residents have virtually no facilities (especially for teenagers), and are expected to travel to Waverley.

I challenge all Monash councillors to come to the

public meeting on August 3 (6.30pm at the Mechanics Institute, Drummond Street, Oakleigh) to meet their constituents and see how many support the retention of the Oakleigh pool.

Greg Schultz
Oakleigh

Keep pool open

I AM appalled Monash Council has decided to close Oakleigh pool.

Almost every day in the media we are hearing about increased rates of childhood obesity, and parents are being urged to encourage their children to be active.

The Oakleigh pool is a place where families can get out, be active and have fun in the summer.

Not all families have the means to travel to flashier aquatic centres.

Monash councillors were elected by the people to represent the people. They have a duty to ensure the wellbeing of these people and that includes facilities such as Oakleigh pool.

Bernadette Pearson
Oakleigh

Time to re-elect

THE Monash Council is treating the communities of the Oakleigh and Monash with hubris and arrogance.

A recall election should be called or demanded on the basis that the majority of councillors appear to be controlled by influences beyond Monash's borders.

Candidates for such an election should be free of controlling egos and influences beyond the desire to better the whole of Monash.

Why hasn't money been applied for from the State Government for an upgrade?

Why wasn't there community consultation prior to the closure decision?

The whole community does not want a 'sprinkler pad' area, or another sauna built around a short-length pool.

The decision process that led to justifying the reduction of maintenance, so forcing the closure of pool areas and exposing the community to sub-standard pool water filtration, should be investigated and responsibility taken.

This is a valid request as a decision (enforced by the community) had been made to keep the pool open and maintained.

There was no mandate given for this lot to reverse the decision, as pool closure was not raised as an issue at the time of the election.

For the sake of the immediate and surrounding communities, leave the pool complex in its current configuration, and upgrade it as required to retain all the pools.

This will allow the community to decide whether they want to swim and spend recreation time in open fresh air, rather than being manipulated into travelling excessive distances and spending excessive money to swim at aquatic centres.

Ian Palmer, Hughesdale

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