

BEATTY PARK



CELEBRATING THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS
1962 - 2012



CITY OF VINCENT





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Written and compiled by
Maxine Laurie and Julie Davidson
City of Vincent Local History Centre



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Back Cover photos: *City of Perth Aquatic Centre, 1963* donated by Christina Arnasiewicz
Beatty Park Leisure Centre redevelopment, 2012 architect's impression by Peter Hunt Architect

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FOREWORD

FROM

HIS EXCELLENCY MALCOLM McCUSKER, AC CVO QC
GOVERNOR OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

It is a pleasure to write the Foreword to this delightful book, chronicling 50 years of Beatty Park, in words and pictures, with evocative personal anecdotes, reminding us of its significance as a sporting and recreational hub for the people of Perth.

In my early childhood, I lived in Chelmsford Road, North Perth. My father was born in the same street, where his mother and father (my grandparents) lived, only half a block away. Farther down this street lived my mother's parents, two sisters, and two cousins. And, just a few streets away, my widowed aunt and two of her children lived (her third child flew with Bomber Command during the war, and never returned).

Dad's father had worked underground, as a Kalgoorlie miner, before he settled in North Perth. He and my grandmother ran a very small grocery shop in Bulwer Street, just off the corner of Fitzgerald Street. Dad went to Highgate Primary before going to Perth Modern School, and used to deliver groceries, after school, in a handcart. I was a student at North Perth Primary, where three of my cousins also went, so I will always have a very close connection with the North Perth area.

By 1962, however, when Beatty Park Aquatic Centre was opened, I was no longer living there; but I frequently went swimming at Beatty Park. With its "state of the art" modern facilities, it was a far cry from Crawley Baths, where I and my fellow primary students had gone for swimming classes, by tram to Perth, then another tram to the Baths, a wooden structure jutting out from Mounts Bay Road into the Swan, where bumping into jellyfish – "Portuguese Men of War" – while swimming laps was unavoidable (the trick was to avoid getting one in your eyes or mouth).

When Beatty Park opened, I would go there, sometimes after work, sometimes in my lunch hour. At those times, when there were no school swimming classes, it was uncrowded.



The Centre was opened, of course, for the Empire Games. I went with friends to many of the events. It was an exciting time in Perth – there was a “buzz” in the air, and we felt a sense of pride that we had such a facility. And the Australian swimmers – the greats like Dawn Fraser and the late Murray Rose – broke records, thrilling the crowd and swelling our pride even more.

It comes as something of a shock to realise that 50 years have passed since it opened, and what we regarded as the “Taj Mahal” of swimming pools is now being redeveloped. So a new era begins for Beatty Park. It is just over 50 years since I was admitted to practise law, so you might say my professional career ran a course parallel with Beatty Park. (Some might unkindly say it is high time I was “redeveloped” too.)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Governor Andrew Forrest', written in a cursive style.

GOVERNOR

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR - 50 YEARS OF BEATTY PARK

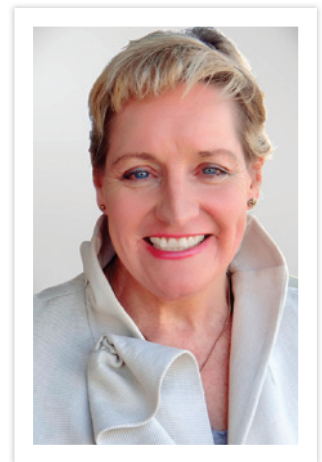
The construction of Beatty Park 50 years ago was one of a suite of projects that marked Perth throwing off its mantle as a big country town and starting to emerge as a true capital. It was a startling contemporary building in its day and helped make the 1962 Empire Games a success.

As a member of Perth City Council, I took some pride in steering through the first refurbishment of the building in the early nineties.

Since 1994, this fabulous regional facility has been under the stewardship of the City of Vincent. I congratulate former Mayor Nick Catania, CEO John Giorgi, and all the Councillors and officers who had the foresight to make this significant investment in the remodelling of the centre currently underway.

This excellent book records the story of this great facility and of its significant contribution to the health and happiness of our community. Congratulations to Maxine Laurie and Julie Davidson in Local History for preparing this record.

Enjoy the pool: enjoy the book!



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alannah MacTiernan".

Alannah MacTiernan

When Perth accepted the challenge of staging the VIIIth British Empire and Commonwealth Games, about the only assets on which it could base its plan of attack were an excellent climate, a beautiful setting, a love of all kinds of sport and a fierce determination that these would be Games to remember.

The city had almost no sports facilities of international standard and had never staged a major international sporting event on this scale.

It was a tremendous challenge for a community of less than 500,000 people in the most isolated major city of the world (1,380 miles to Adelaide, 1,834 miles to Darwin, 2,430 miles to Singapore, 6,390 miles to Johannesburg).

It was a challenge which could only be met boldly. Perth responded by building the best facilities yet provided for the Games, mounting the biggest publicity campaign in Games history, attracting one of the largest audiences ever to witness the Games, beating the previous ticket sales record by £96,870 and making the welcome to the visitors of all nations probably the friendliest yet.¹

Metric conversion table

1 foot = 0.3048 metres

1 yard = 0.9144 metres

1 mile = 1.6094 kilometres

¹ Official Programme Seventh British Empire and Commonwealth Games Perth 1962

LOCATION

Beatty Park – Reserve 884

In 1890 Reserve 884 was declared a sanitary site and was used by the City of Perth as a repository for night soil. This was delivered by the “dunny man” with his horse and cart and deposited in freshly dug trenches, which were subsequently covered over. Much of the City’s rubbish was also deposited there and burnt above ground.

The sanitary trenches were replaced by a pumping station in 1898. The night soil was then dumped from the carts into a hopper and pumped to a new site two miles away (Reserve 943). However, there were problems occasionally with blockages and breakages in the pipe. There were also stables for the sanitary horses on the site and several outhouses.

In 1905 the reserve came under the jurisdiction of the Municipality of North Perth and the following year (1906) it was classified as a recreational reserve. It was possibly at this time that the first tree plantings occurred.

In 1920 the reserve was named Beatty Park after Vice Admiral Sir David Beatty (later Earl Beatty), a British naval commander and World War I hero. Change rooms and toilets were erected near the northern boundary and it was possibly then that a kiosk was erected there. This kiosk had started life in the centre of Cremorne Gardens at the rear of the Cremorne Hotel in Murray Street before being gifted to the City of Perth and moved to the Esplanade. As time went on it was felt that it was in the way on the Esplanade, where it had also become a convenient dossing place for homeless men. The solution was to move it to Beatty Park.

Playing fields were established there with facilities for football and cricket from the early 1920s. A concrete cricket pitch was laid in 1923 with reticulation also being installed at the same time. Baseball was also played there from the early 1930s.

In 1962 an aquatic centre was erected at the western end for the VIIth British Empire and Commonwealth Games. It was opened to the public following the closure of the Games.

Lord Mayor Sir Harry Howard KBE JP is attributed with coming up with the idea of staging the 1962 Games in Perth. He then discussed the idea with the Town Clerk, William A McInnes Green and between them they provided the driving force for Perth's successful application for the Games. The two men managed to gain the support of local businessmen, representatives of sporting bodies, the State Government and the Opposition, and Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies. Afterwards Lord Mayor Howard became Chairman of the Organising Council and McI Green was responsible for the design of the facilities at Beatty Park.

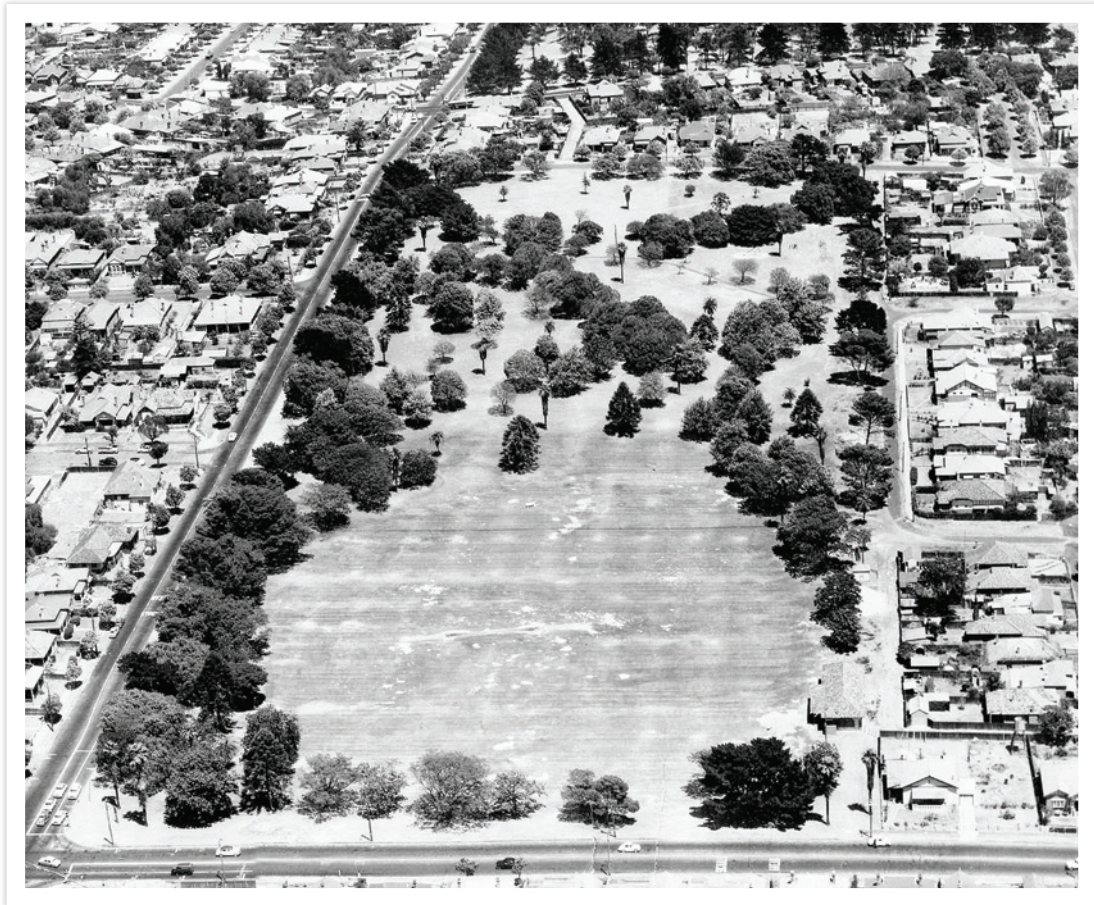
Initially there was controversy surrounding the choice of the aquatic venue. The Lord Mayor suggested King's Park which was supported by the Town Clerk, who drew up the plans. However, many members of the public were against development taking place in the park. This led to an amendment being successfully introduced to the Parks and Reserves Act which meant permission for such changes had to be obtained from State Parliament. Amidst continuing public outcry both for and against, the King's Park Aquatic

Centre Bill was introduced in 1957. This was eventually defeated 25 votes to 18 but the debate continued privately, and in 1959 supporters of the King's Park site had another go. This time the result was 27 to 18 against, which meant an alternative really did have to be found. Sites considered were Delhi Square (Harold Boas Gardens), Bold Park, Reabold Hill and in the Vincent area vacant land near Leederville Oval (where the City of Vincent Administration building now stands) and Beatty Park. A group from Victoria Park-Carlisle (convenor Perth City Councillor Harry Hawthorn) wanted it in their area.

Meanwhile the Leederville Chamber of Commerce began to push for the Beatty Park site. The Leederville lobby was backed by businessman John Venables, Secretary of the local Chamber of Commerce and also a member of the Empire Games Committee. The Leederville Chamber of Commerce held a public meeting in the late '50s in the Leederville Town Hall, where the Lord Mayor, Councillors and State Government representatives were invited.

We wanted the swimming pool to be in Leederville and it was put into Beatty Park after much interviewing with the Council and the people of Western Australia. The Council particularly wanted it in King's Park but the people got their own way.

John Venables²



Aerial view of the Beatty Park site looking west, 13 November 1959
(COV PH01481)

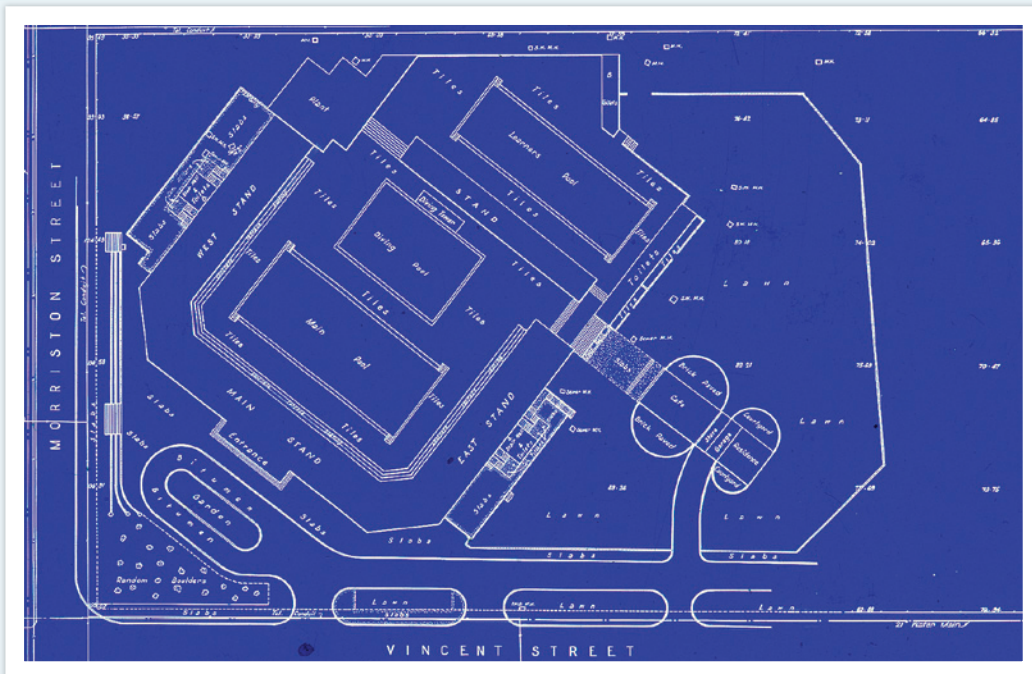
After considerable research, Mcl Green agreed that of the alternative sites available Beatty Park was the most suitable, as it was large enough to accommodate the pools required (4.5 acres of the park at the western end), it was a convenient

location and the local transport was satisfactory. A petition signed by 150 local residents who objected to Beatty Park being used for this purpose and the loss of the football oval was not enough to make him change his mind.

² Interview conducted by unknown student at Aranmore College 17.6.1989



Beatty Park Leisure Centre – 220 Vincent Street, North Perth



Public Works Department sewerage plan showing the footprint of Beatty Park in 1962

CONSTRUCTION

Beatty Park Leisure Centre was constructed in 1962 as the major aquatic venue for the VIIth British Empire and Commonwealth Games. It was originally known as the City of Perth Aquatic Centre or more colloquially as Beatty Park Pool, even though there were in fact three pools.

The pools were constructed in an area at the western end of Beatty Park Reserve (a portion of Reserve 884, Swan Location 1618), which was situated between Morrision Street, Swimming Lane, and Vincent and Charles streets, North Perth.

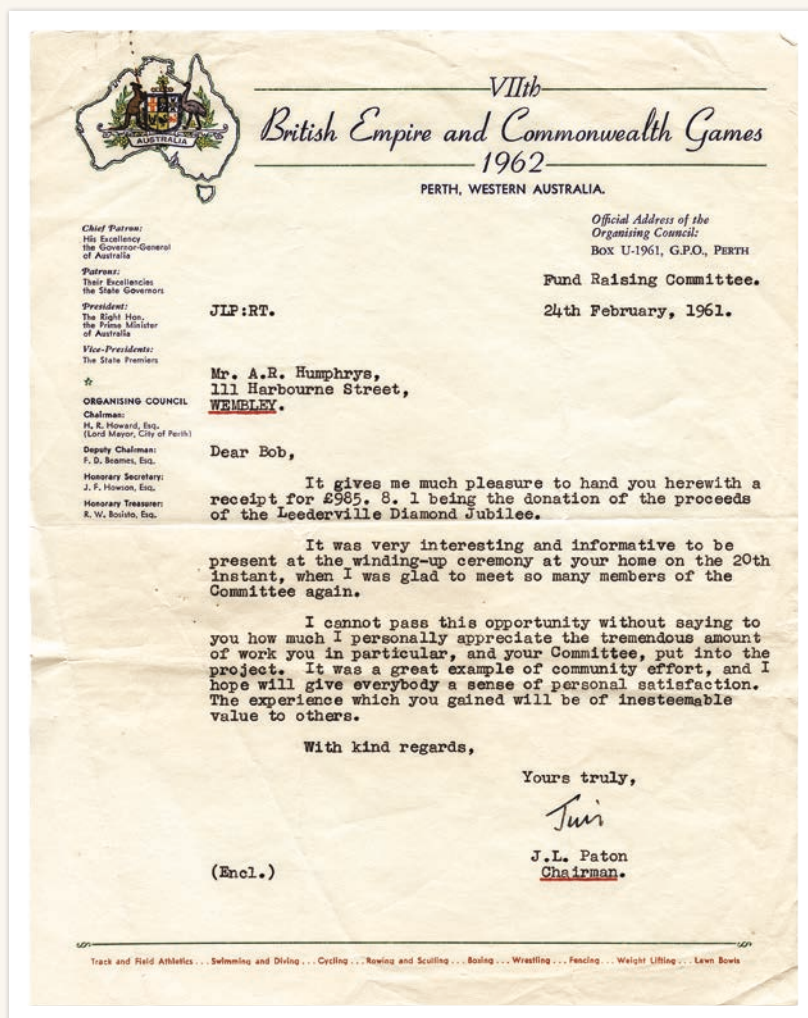


View of the City of Perth Aquatic Centre from Vincent Street, 1963
(COV PH02152 donated by Christina Arnasiewicz)

The Federal and State governments contributed funds for the Games: £160,000 from Federal and £200,000 from State Government towards the sporting venues. The City of Perth provided £1,000,000 for the aquatic centre, velodrome and athletics stadium. Funds were also raised privately to help Western Australia's Games effort by groups such as the Leederville Diamond Jubilee. A dinner was held in February 1961 which raised £985.8.1d.

In a letter to A R Humphrys who represented the Leederville group, the Chairman of the Games Fund Raising Committee, Jim Paton, said:

I cannot pass this opportunity without saying to you how much I personally appreciate the tremendous amount of work you, in particular, and your Committee, put into the project. It was a great example of community effort...



Letter from JL Paton (Chairman VIIIth British Empire and Commonwealth Games Fund Raising Committee) to A R Humphrys, 24 February 1961



Helen, Roslyn and Vivienne Stoneham at Betty Park prior to the construction of the aquatic centre, July 1957
(COV PH03508 donated by Helen Cozens)

We'd play games like Hide and Seek amongst the wide, large trunks (I think they were oak trees), with their thick overhanging branches which kept even the strongest sunlight out – giving a dark shadowy effect and making an ideal setting for being able to hide. As we grew older, aged around 14/15, on Saturday afternoons we would sit at the edge of the oval and watch the baseball. We would yell our heads off, cheering the team we wanted to win.

Marie Slyth



Site clearance began in 1961
(COV PH01958 donated by Trevor Grant)

Our home in Emmerson Street backed onto Beatty Park where we played cricket and football. Once development commenced, lines were marked and survey pegs appeared – an intrusion on ‘our’ territory! Whilst we could not do much about the trees we sure pulled out the pegs. Ultimately beaten, we became swimmers!

Ray Cribb



Aquatic centre looking north-east from spectator stands, showing main pool (foreground), diving and water polo pool excavations (centre) and learner's pool (rear), 1962

(COV PH03592 donated by Frank McGrath)

The building contractors for the Beatty Park project were a West Australian building firm, HA Doust Pty Ltd, who were successful with their tender of £564,300. The Project Manager was New Zealander Leonard Spence, who moved to Perth in

November 1961. According to Len's wife Joyce, he worked 23 hours a day on the project. The family was living in South Perth at that time and they regularly brought his meals over to him.



Main pool (55 x 24 yards) and spectator stands under construction, 1962
(COV PH03448 courtesy WASA (Western Australian Swimming Association))

I remember there was a rope hanging from the top of the grandstand down to the ground. At the time we just took turns swinging on this rope.

Jim Downey

At times up to 150 men worked on the construction of the centre. The diving pool, which was 15 feet (4.5 m) deep, was designed to meet

international standards for water polo as well as diving. It had observation windows set in the wall to enable underwater photographs to be taken of the divers. Advice regarding the boards required for the Games came from diving coaches Bruce Prance, John Charles and Tom Clarke - all members of the WA Diving Association's Committee.

The first Manager was Ray Martin with Rod Hounslow as Assistant Manager. The two men were appointed in early 1962 while the complex was under construction.

Rod Hounslow recalled:

We were interviewed by the General Purposes Committee of the Perth City Council. Some of those old famous names of Perth City Councillors who have now passed on were Alf Curlewis and Len Fletcher, the local members for Leederville and North Perth, Keith Frame, Joan Watters

and the Mayor of Victoria Park, Mick Lee. The General Purposes at the Perth City Council was the management committee for all the venues.

Ray and I were on the job for all of the winter months of 1962. My association was from June 1962 when I was on the site every day until we opened on 22 November for that first Commonwealth Games competition. It meant that you knew just about where every pipe and nook and cranny in the place was, without calling on the engineering department.



Stages in construction of the stands, 1962
(COV PH03528 and COV PH03531 donated by Geoff Venables)



British Empire and Commonwealth Games Federation Secretary, K S (Sandy) Duncan (right) is pictured inspecting the aquatic centre. With him is Games Director of Organisation, Jack Howson
(COV PH03452 courtesy WASA)

Mr Duncan flew from London to Perth to inspect progress with the preparation for the Games... He was enthusiastic about progress, and said Perth's venues were better set out and closer together than in any previous Commonwealth Games.

Mr Duncan said the naming was most appropriate as Lord Beatty's son would be commandant of the British team for the Games.³

³ Western Australian Swimming Association archives

There were large numbers of visitors to the building site, including Perth City Councillors, schools and even the King and Queen of Thailand. As time went on their numbers became a problem; there were so many that they eventually had to be banned.



Len Spence with Tania Verstak (Miss Australia) at the pool, 1962
(COV PH01199 donated by Joyce Spence)

Len Spence's wife Joyce believed that Miss Australia's visit

... was promotional, because she was in the business of raising money for the Spastics Association. I think that a lot of prominent people or people concerned with that were taken down to see the pool because everyone was very proud of it. I didn't have the pleasure of meeting her but I know she was there quite a bit.

As it got closer to completion he had to maintain there were to be no visitors. Especially when the tiling went down, because it was not to be walked on until it had completely set and dried out.

Joyce Spence

Nearly 12,000 square yards of tiles were used for the floor and walls of the three pools.



Tiling nearing completion, 30 September 1962
(COV PH0010)

Another problem was a plumbers' strike. This was a result of problems with the plumbing and until it could be decided whose fault they were (as it was costing more to put it right), the plumbers were not going to be paid.

That was a very worrying time because we had got to the stage where we were racing the clock. I don't really know the ins and outs of it but it did get sorted out, and the plumbing went in as expected.

Joyce Spence

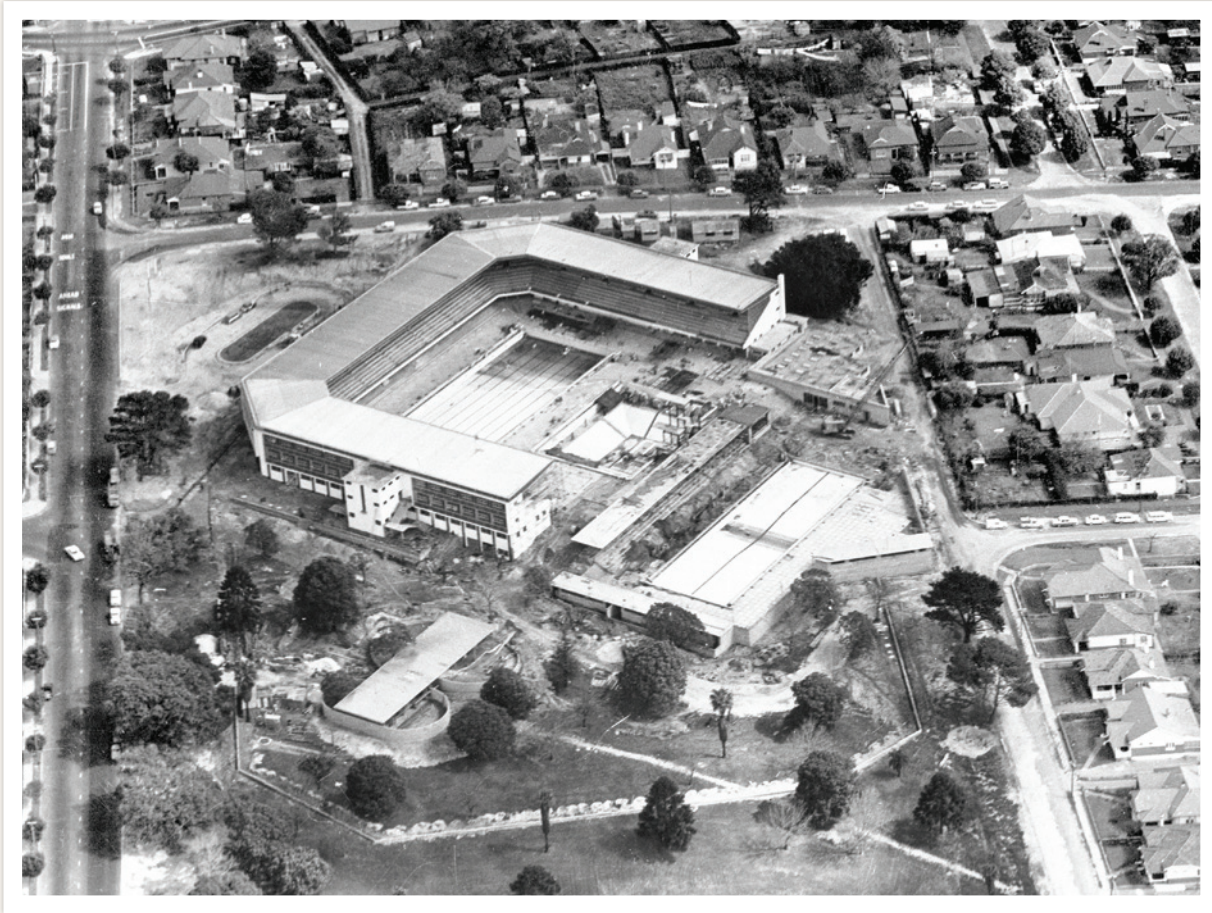
In 1962 Howlett and Bailey Architects won the design competition for a new administration building for Perth City Council, the landmark Council House. In the same year they also designed the Beatty Park kiosk and manager's house. The firm became known as a pioneer of Western Australian Modernist architecture and went on to design the Perth Concert Hall in 1973.



Kiosk located in front of the entrance to the swimming pools, 1963
(Courtesy State Library of Western Australia, Battye Library 340576PD)

The new aquatic complex took almost 12 months to construct, with final completion being less than 48 hours before the Games were due to start. The total cost of construction was £614,000, which included the pools, spectator areas and equipment. (The construction of the kiosk and residence were let under a separate contract to Tioa & Power Pty Ltd at £18,563.) State and Federal grants and other fund raising, plus the saving by planning

the venue inhouse (a saving of around £35,000), meant that the final cost to ratepayers was around £380,000. The landscaping was also done inhouse, the outside areas being designed by the City's Director of Parks and Gardens, Lionel Steenbohm and carried out by Council workers. A plaque was later placed on a rock near the original entrance commemorating Steenbohm's work at Beatty Park and the other Games venues.



Aerial view showing the main pool (top pool) with the tiered seating on three sides for up to 5,550 spectators, the diving pool (centre pool) and a shallow pool for juniors (55 x 18 yards), which had a deeper area in the centre section (bottom left)

(COV PH003451 courtesy WASA)

Who was first in the pool?

There remains some controversy regarding the first swimmer in the pool. The actual honour may have gone to a frog called "Ferdie", who was found swimming in three inches of water at one end of the main pool. Angelo Vitali, one of the workers, went in to get him out.

In 1962 I was 14 years old eagerly awaiting the games. I remembered the West Newspaper pictured a workman standing in the pool after some rains. A frog was swimming in the shallow rainwater in the main pool. The newspaper caption said the first swimmer in the Beatty Park pool (a frog).

Daryl Anderson

Mrs Spence believed her husband was the first.

He was very thrilled with his pool, he was a swimmer and I think he just wanted to be the first one to swim in it. He got a wonderful "hoy" from all the men who were working there.

The couple's daughters also went in for a dip.

They fooled around. I don't know whether they actually swam but he was happy to have them

there for the sediment. The sediment, which had accumulated on the floor of the pool, had to be stirred up so that the water would go through the filters. It was one means of testing the filters and making sure that everything was okay.

Joyce Spence

Another early swimmer was Assistant Manager Rod Hounslow's daughter, Gemma, and an article with her photograph subsequently appeared in the *Daily News*.

There was a little five year old girl by the name of Gemma Hounslow who popped in while the pool was filling. She was photographed by a "Daily News" photographer who was hanging about the pool. It wasn't a publicity stunt - it wasn't planned. That photograph went around the Commonwealth Games countries. I've got a copy of it out of the "Melbourne Herald" and it was certainly in the "West Australian" and/or "Daily News". She was the first one to illegally open the pool one day after school. It had been used by a lot of people, particularly the building trades people who had popped in, cooling off after work.

Rod Hounslow

A group of local boys claim they were the first persons to do so, having sneaked in one night before the opening.

We decided we'd be the first ones to have a swim in this pool. So it was the night before that we climbed the fence. There was Nick Catania, myself and John Borkowski (dec'd), Denis Hawtin, Frank Zuppar, David Schrandt (dec'd) and Dave Perrie – seven of us. We climbed the fence and then we just slid into the water. We thought, this is wonderful – we are the first ones in the Empire Games pool.

Anyhow one of the guys decided to dive off the diving board. So he dived and made a big splash and, of course, the guard spotted this. We scurried along, got out of the place, running down Vincent Street with this gentleman trying to chase us.

It was pitch black – there were a few spotlights on but it was very, very dark. This one gentleman – in the old days, you can imagine in the '60s, one guard. He was just sitting there not expecting any trouble at all and there wasn't. It was just a quick dip and we decided to go. So we christened the pool – it was the highlight of my life.

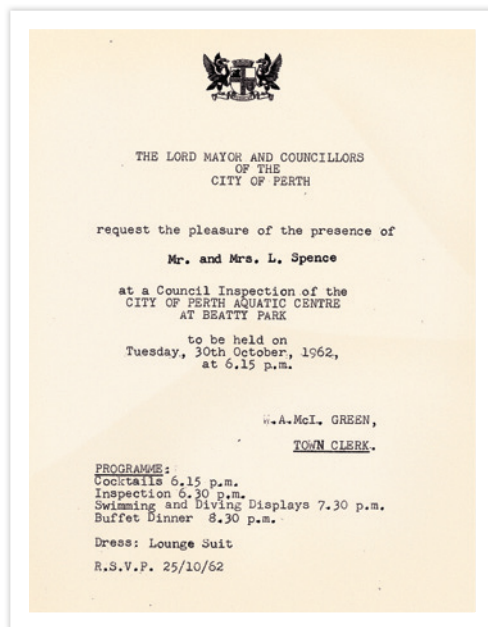
Peter Kora

The caretaker came out and chased us. We were lucky to get over the fence, which at the time had barbed wire. Anyway, most of us made it over the fence but one got caught. We were outside serenading this poor old kid and saying, 'oh leave him alone'. Eventually he did let him go and threatened that he would call the police the next time.

Nick Catania

The first official swim was by Herb Taylor, who was a member of the 1923 West Australian team at the National Championships in Brisbane. He was helped out of the water after his 55 yard swim by Dawn Fraser, then World Champion. This took place on the night of the official Council Inspection of the complex which was 30 October 1962. The assembled dignitaries were treated to cocktails, an inspection of the complex and swimming and diving displays followed by a buffet dinner.

Joyce Spence recalled: *'It was a very lovely affair and there were a lot of people there'*.



Plaque commemorating the opening, recording the names of the Lord Mayor, Councillors, Town Clerk, Architect and Builder

Inaugural Swim Meet

I remember there was a trial run for Beatty Park to make sure the timing worked. I can remember – and I would have only been about 13 at the time – lining up in a lane alongside Belinda Foley, Dawn Fraser, Judy Oxe and Pam Montgomery. To compete alongside her (Dawn Fraser) and it was just fantastic. I was so much in awe that I just remember the occasion but not enough details about it. It was something special.

Elsma Merillo

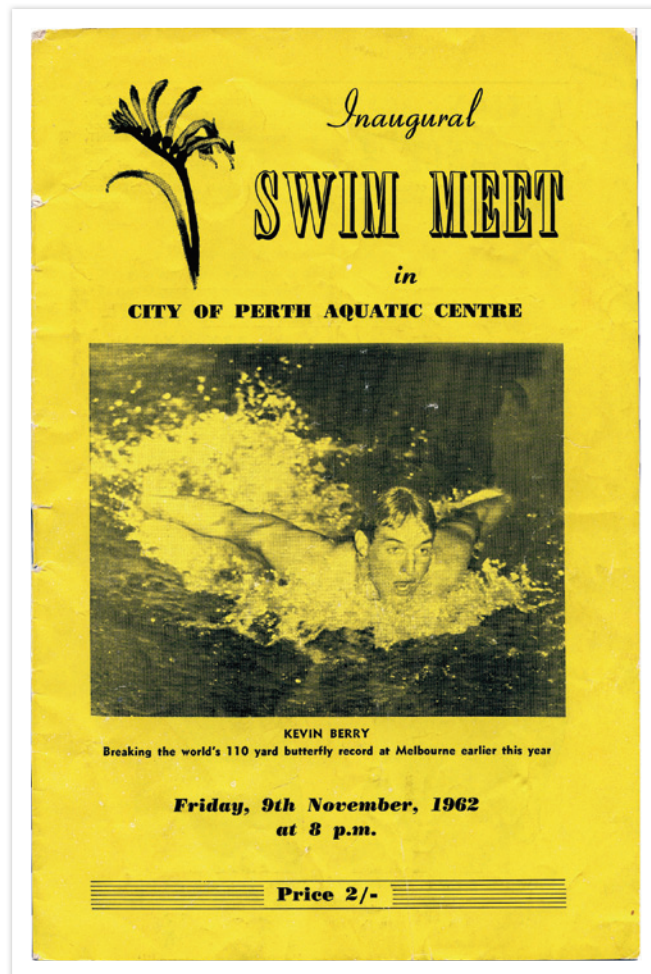
The timing mentioned above was an automatic device, which was installed by the Swiss firm Omega. It was developed 18 months previously and the Perth Games was the first time it was used in international competition. It was “unofficial”, the official times being those recorded by the time-keepers in each lane and the three overall judges, using hand-held stop watches. The judges compared the times and they had the final say in the placings.

A power breakdown in the middle of the feature event provided the only hitch to the first meet.

That was the whole of North Perth though. It wasn't just Beatty Park. That was unbelievable. It was the Australian Championships and I was swimming in the senior 200 metres, not the juniors, which was my age group.

Satako Tanaka, the Japanese lass, had come down on invitation because at that stage she was the current world record holder. The race started. We took off, finished the first hundred - that was fine. We were going up and about half-way up the third lap the lights just went out. All I remember is holding my head up. I didn't put my feet on the ground because I was terrified if I put my feet on the ground I would be disqualified. I could hear people yelling out, 'Lindy run, walk, just get going – keep going'. Tanaka was approaching the third lap end and cracked her head – she swam into the turn. She didn't see the end. So they re-ran the race about an hour later and unfortunately, she was unable to – well fortunately for me – she was not able to go in the re-race. I won that. I think it was an Australian record as well.

Belinda Foley



Program for the first meet on 9 November 1962

Following the Inaugural Swim Meet, the Commonwealth Paraplegic Games took place from 10 to 17 November 1962. This was prior to the able-bodied games which were held between 22 November and 1 December that year.

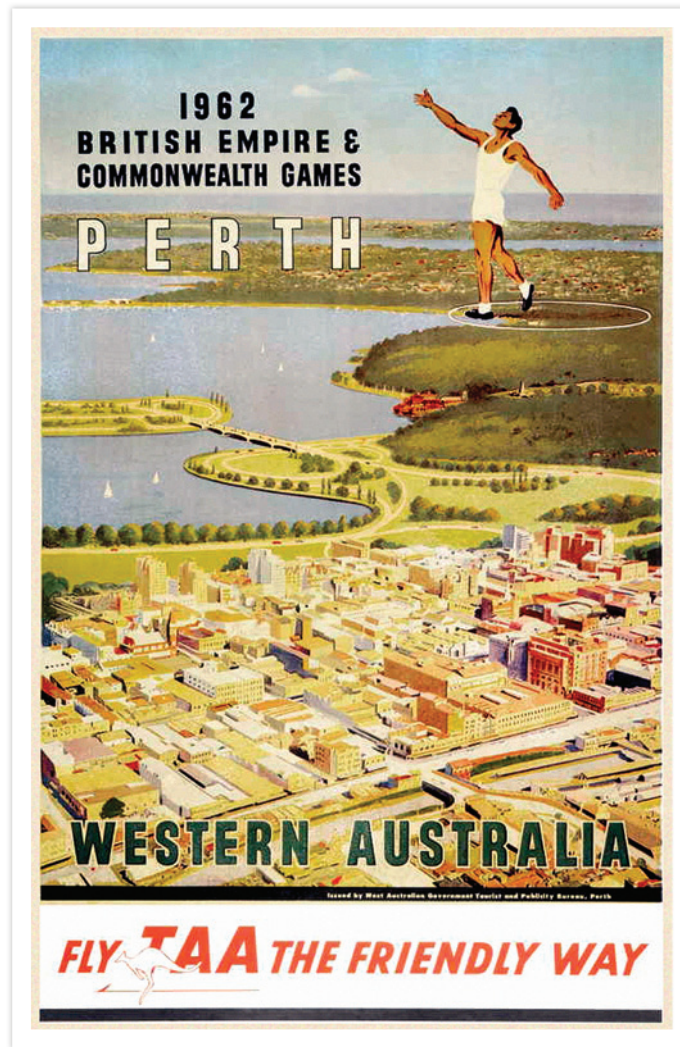
Perth at the present time is in a great flurry of activity getting ready for the Empire Games to be held here in late November this year. I am sure it is going to be a great thing for the City as well as the whole State from all the publicity that will surely come from a successful carrying out of the enterprise and although the authorities will just as surely be left with an enormous debt I still think it will be of wonderful benefit to the Country. Perth during this year 1962 has received a great amount of valuable publicity over it – principally in the USA. It all started shortly before Col. John Glenn made the second orbit flight for America in February... I went into the beautiful Beatty Park swimming pool during one of the training sessions before the Games started.

Extract from diary of Francis Raymond Wray



VW Beetle which was driven across the Nullabor to promote the Games
(COV PH0952)

VIIITH BRITISH EMPIRE AND COMMONWEALTH GAMES



Trans Australia Airlines advertisement



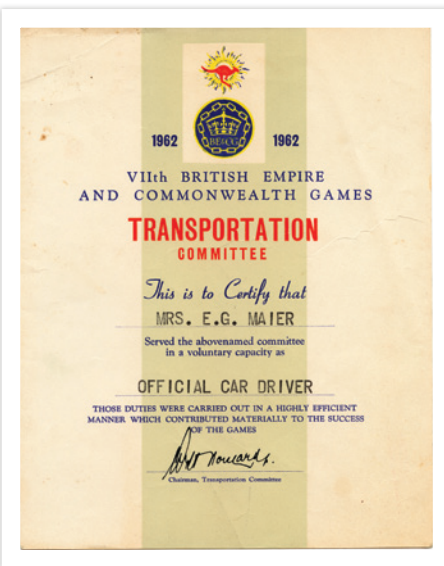
Sports Organising Committee for the British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Perth, 1962. Members included:
 F Treacy, R Bathurst, R Brown, K Carrick, Dr A Davis, S Foster, J Howson, J Sayers, N Burton and D Clegg
 (COV PH03453 courtesy WASA)

The VIIIth British Empire and Commonwealth Games were held in Perth from 22 November to 1 December 1962. It was an enormous undertaking and to counter any difficulties that might arise with regard to services required, the needs of the competitors, officials and spectators and the quantities required, an Organizing Council was set up and numerous committees formed. The committees are listed below in alphabetical order:

ACCOMMODATION, CARAVAN AND CAMPING,
 CEREMONIAL, COMMUNICATIONS,
 ENTERTAINMENT, FINANCE, FUND RAISING,
 HOSPITALITY, LEGAL, MAIN STADIUM, MEDICAL,
 PRESS – PUBLICITY - PUBLIC RELATIONS,
 SPORTS, TICKETS, TRANSPORTATION, VILLAGE –
 CATERING, WELCOME.



Vounteer driver Grace Maier
(COV PH01633 donated by Grace Maier)



The Transportation Committee was formed for the organization of traffic and public transport plus the transportation of all the official guests, Games officials and visiting athletes. Cars (new ones) were borrowed from motor vehicle firms, Government departments, etc. and 169 volunteer women drivers were recruited to drive them. The women were issued with a uniform, which included a hat in the Games' colours and a metal badge bearing their name. Pennants were attached to the cars to identify them.



Volunteer driver Alma Obretenoff
of Leederville
(COV PH01641 donated by Alma Obretenoff)



Volunteer driver Jeanette Gaebler with one of the official cars outside Beatty Park
(COV PH03641 donated by Jeanette Gaebler)

We had a week of preparation. We had a driving test and we got the uniform. They donated the uniform but we had to buy our shoes, which were a very expensive brand (Bedgood).

We had shifts – eight hour shifts starting at eight in the morning and you had to work right through until four in the afternoon. Then on the night shift you started about four in the afternoon. It was run by the Red Cross and when you were on duty you had to be there.

I always had Mr Spiro, the Mayor of Salisbury in South Africa. They allocated you a person and you had to be there for him whenever he wanted you to drive him anywhere. It was just for them to get from where they lived in the Village at City Beach. I did go to Beatty Park. I took some swimmers there. It was beautiful. It was all blue and enamel, all these tiles and everything. They really had put a lot of time and money into it and it was well designed. I thought it was very impressive.

Jeanette Gaebler

The official opening of the Games was held at Perry Lakes Stadium in front of a crowd of around 50,000 people on 22 November 1962. His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh officiated in his roles as Her Majesty the Queen's representative and President of the Federation of the British Empire and Commonwealth Games.



English team marching at the Opening Ceremony at Perry Lakes Stadium

(COV PH03600 donated by Frank McGrath)



HRH the Duke of Edinburgh waving to the crowd during the Opening Ceremony

(COV PH03605 donated by Frank McGrath)

Frank McGrath, a former building surveyor with the City of Perth, volunteered to help operate the new electronic scoreboard at Perry Lakes Stadium.

I had a gold armband which entitled me to go anywhere on the ground, including the Members' Bar. One day I walked in to find HRH the Duke of Edinburgh having a quiet drink. He invited me to join him for a while.

Frank McGrath

I know that as my wife and I sat in the lounge watching the Opening Ceremony on television we had such a feeling of pride in our city at the way the Ceremony was conducted that neither of us could

Speak to the other for a time until the lump in our throats had subsided. I found afterwards that we were by no means the only ones affected by the emotion of the event. He would be a very hardened person who was not affected by the scene of thousands of members of youth organizations all in costume marching onto the arena at the wonderful Perry Lakes Stadium followed by the athletes of the 35 competing nations, and then the Opening Address by the Duke of Edinburgh who made himself very popular by insisting on staying for the whole period of the Games and visiting every sport that was in session.

Extract from diary of Francis Raymond Wray

More than 850 competitors representing 35 countries in the British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations took part. During their stay they were accommodated either in a purpose-built village in City Beach, which was comprised of 150 contemporary houses, or in private homes.

Residents of Perth were asked to host or provide accommodation to visitors. Perth lacked hotels in those days. My family hosted visitors from New Zealand; we had two friendly men aged 25. Their friends stayed with our neighbours. They thought it was a real hoot when they trapped their mate in the old turnstile gates and made him jump like a circus monkey before releasing the turnstile.

Junell Jones

Nearly 100 diving and swimming officials had been put through their paces in preparation for the Games. These included stewards, referees, judges, starters, recorders and time-keepers. Amongst the latter group was time-keeper Alan R Skuthorp. His son Garnett recalled that he was

allocated a specific lane for each race which he was responsible for. (There were eight lanes, eight time-keepers and three judges for first, second and third, also with stop watches.) As recompense for his father's work prior to and during the Games, Garnett was able to have free entry to some of the Games' events and he was asked to carry the flag of one of the competing nations at the Opening Ceremony held at Perry Lakes Stadium. So at the age of 16 he led the Ghana contingent out into the stadium and around the track for the Grand Parade, an experience which he described as "overwhelming".

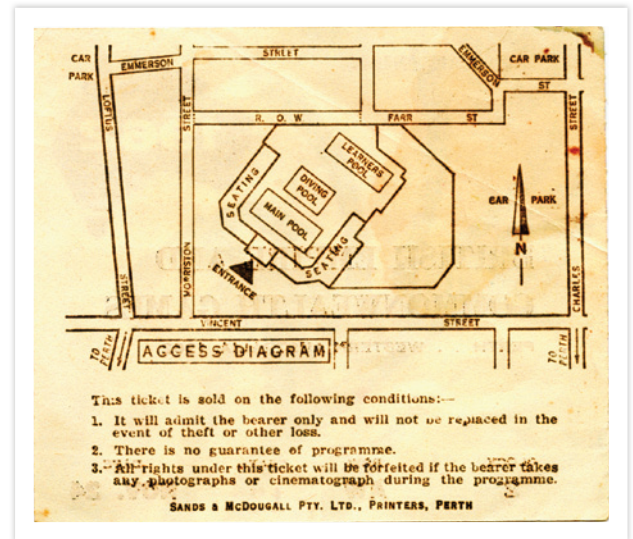
I was only 15 when the Games were on. I do know that that year I attended Perth Technical College in James Street to do my Junior Certificate and we had to sit all our exams in October because the kids had to be finished with all the exams before they started to get ready for the Empire Games. This was a big thing in Perth's history.

Lynette Chester

Jack Howson, the Commonwealth Games Secretary, organized the competitive events at Beatty Park with the help of officials from the Australian Swimming Union. The first one held was a men's 110 yards freestyle heat which began at 2.30 pm on Friday 23 November. The last event was 110 yards men's backstroke final in the evening of Friday 30 November.

I remember it vividly because it came in at an old fashioned 100 degrees. It was stinking hot and we had the first day of the Games on with full houses with everything fully booked. We had 6,000 spectators all day during the first day of the swimming competition.

Rod Hounslow



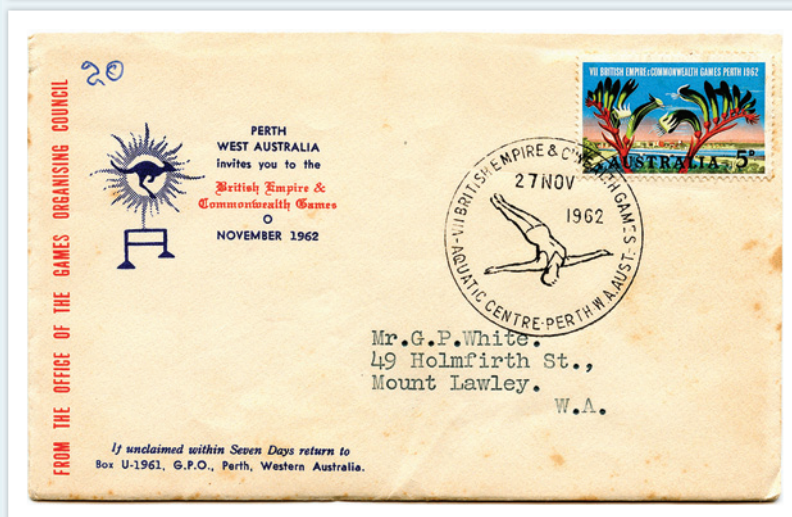
Front and back of a ticket for the swimming at Beatty Park on 24 November 1962

(Donated by Ray Stevenson)

We learnt that the litter 6,000 people leave behind had to be disposed of very quickly. This meant that we had a very big casual staff. They came from the surf life saving movement because they were young people that were qualified with surf life saving bronze medallions. They were employed casually and eventually that same workforce became our swimming pool attendants. They

became known as 'white knights' because we made them wear white shorts and shirts, white sandshoes and white socks. We were very aware in those days that the concourse, which was fully tiled, might be slippery. If you were down on the swimming pool concourse you had to be in a white sandshoe or a white soled shoe.

Rod Hounslow



First Day Covers commemorating the events at Beatty Park, postmarked 27 November 1962
(Donated by Geoff White)

My father was a policeman; he ended up as a Detective Sergeant. Well with him having a sporting background being a State Rugby League player and my mother was also a State hockey player, he was seconded about three months before the Commonwealth Games in 1962 as security officer. That was his job to get security ready and then about two weeks before the Games and while the Games were on, he lived in the Commonwealth Village with the athletes, because he was required obviously to be on-site.

Geoff White



Australian Swimming Team taken at Beatty Park, November 1962
(COV PH03940)

Men

Alex Alexander, Kevin Berry, William Burton, James Campbell, Julian Carroll, Gordon Creed, Graham Deuble, David Dickson (WA), Peter Doak, William Ebsary, John Everding, Anthony Fingleton, Neville Hayes, Brett Hill, Ian O'Brien, John Oravainen, John Pakarinen, Russell Phegan, Peter Phelps, Murray Rose, Tony Strahan, Wayne Vincent, Robert Windle, Allan Wood

Women

Lynette Bell, Jill Bolton, Claire Cooke, Jennifer Corish, Jane Cortis, Suzan Costin, Ruth Everuss, Marion Foye, Dawn Fraser, Janet Hogan, Cheryl Kensett, Susan Knight, Ilsa Konrads, Lorraine McArthur, Linda McGill, Barbara Nicol, Lynette Oatley, Patsy Plowman, Dianna Robinson, Marguerite Ruygrok, Pamela Sargeant, Robin Thorn
Mrs Dorothy Nordahl (Manageress) on left

We made very close friends of some of the athletes. We took them home and my mother cooked for us. We lived in Fitzgerald Street in North Perth and it was very close. So we made great friends. It was a real buzzing time; it was a time when Perth was on the international scene and we as youngsters - 16 and 17 year olds – were excited. Three weeks of our holidays were taken up by the Games.

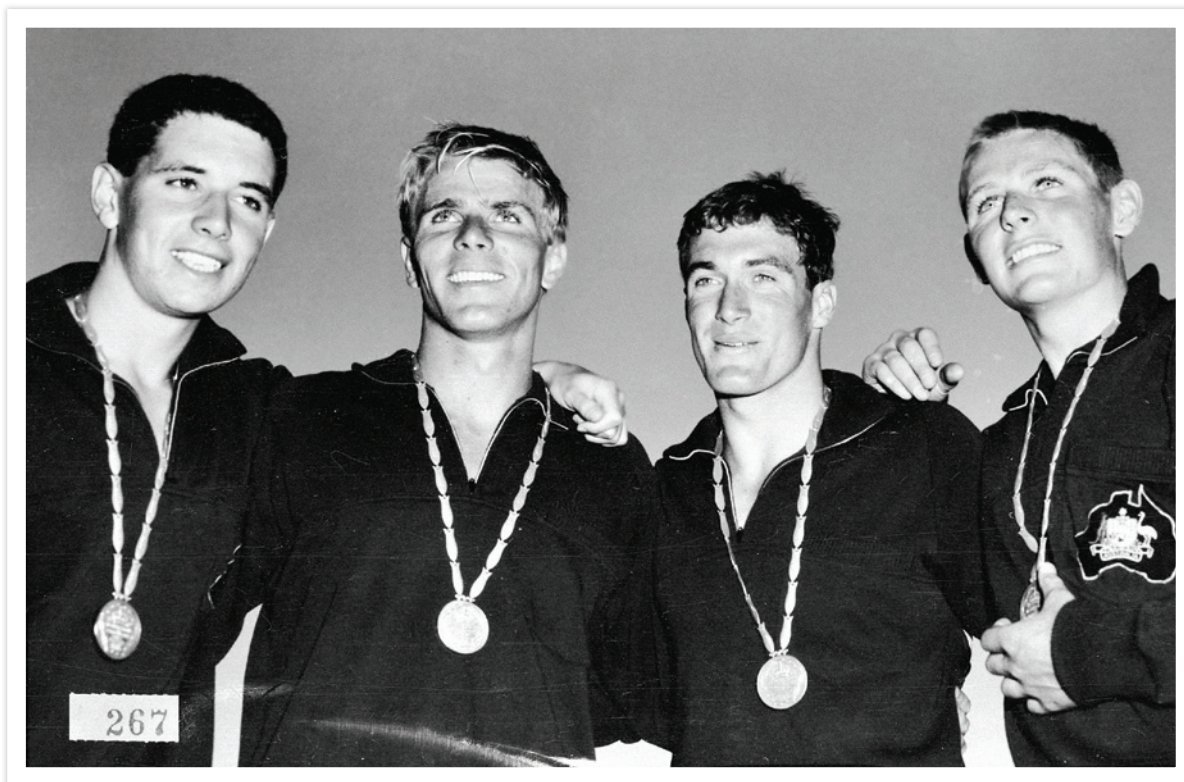
At Beatty Park we would carry the bag of one of the swimmers. They would go in and then come out and we'd get their bag and get their identity - it wasn't a photo identity in those days, thank God - and we would walk in. I remember distinctly the Sustagen. Every time the athletes went into Beatty Park (they must have been one of the sponsors), they'd get this Sustagen milk. So we used to walk in and get it as well. We were just rapt in being able to be so close to the action.

Nick Catania

Their new friendships led to free entry into the competitors' area to watch the events:



First swimming race of the Games:
Men's 110 yards freestyle heat won by Peter Doak of Australia in 56.3 seconds – a Games record
(Courtesy State Library of Western Australia, Battye Library 257162PD)



Australian team which broke the world record for the 4 x 220 yards men's freestyle relay
L-R: Bob Windle, Murray Rose, Alan Wood, Tony Strahan
(Courtesy State Library of Western Australia, Batty Library 257147PD)

Peter Kora recalled swimmer Murray Rose also helped the same group of boys to get into the Games.

He said, 'I'll meet you there tomorrow' and we said, 'what time?' He said, 'nine o'clock'. He just came with his little bag and his swimming togs. He met us at the gate, the turnstile, and told the gentleman, 'these boys are okay to come through with me' and away we went.

We were up in the grandstand there watching it all happen. It was as full as it can be; it was just a huge attraction. We saw the diving, all the swimming – all the sprinting. Murray Rose in his 800 yards swim, the whole lot – we went every day. We didn't miss a session. Murray Rose broke many records as did Dawn Fraser. She was coming on the scene and a lot of records were broken.

Peter Kora



Western Australia's David Dickson (Swimming Captain) is holed from the pool after swimming the final leg of the men's 440 yards freestyle relay in 55.5 seconds. The team broke Australia's own world record

(Courtesy State Library of Western Australia, Battye Library 257349PD)

Geoff White was watching a backstroke race for the first time.

They started in the water facing backwards and about five yards after the start there were two people holding a rope across. As soon as the swimmers went past, they tied it up on sticks. I was sitting in the stands with a friend, and we couldn't work out what it was for.

The lady in front of us could hear us talking and she turned around and explained that it was in case of a false start. If there was a false start, then they would let the rope drop down onto the water, to tell the swimmers to stop and start again. The lady who was so kindly explaining all this was Dawn Fraser. She was sitting in the stands watching the races with everyone else. Of course, she was that famous we recognised her from photos instantly and we had a lovely conversation with her.

Geoff White



L-R: Pam Sargeant, Dawn Fraser, Linda McGill and Marguerite Ruygrok celebrating after their team set a new Games and World Record in the women's 440 yards medley relay
(COV PH00889)

It was a fantastic pool and great to swim in – well before its time.

Dawn Fraser

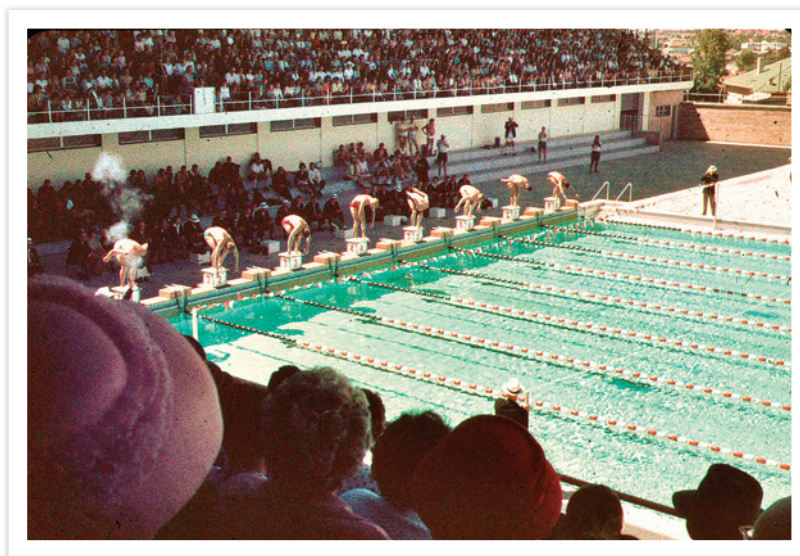
I was very fortunate to meet a fair number of the athletes and had the absolute pleasure of meeting the great Dawn Fraser. She was, without doubt, the greatest swimmer I think Australia has ever produced. She was just something else; she had the most beautiful style I think I have ever witnessed and she just did it so easy.

Terry Stokesbury

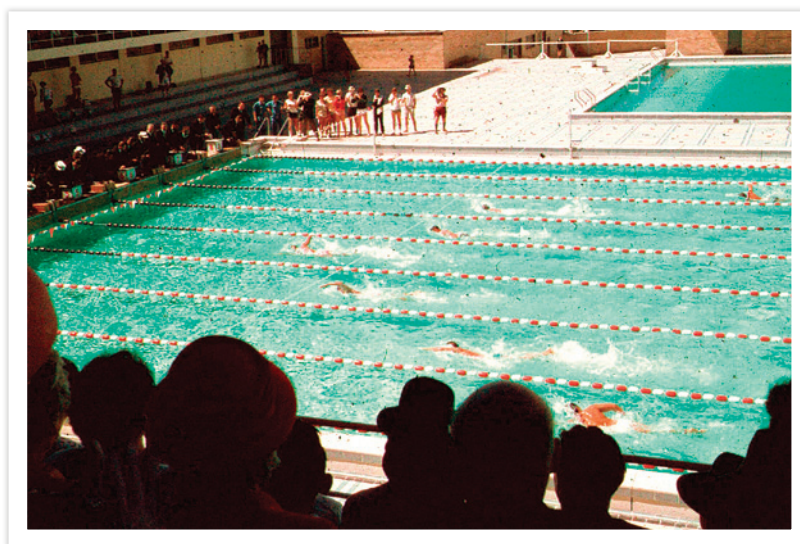
ECHOES OF 1962

A hushed stillness hovers
contestants on their blocks
anxiety bates all
a loud crack of the starter's pistol
arms flailing legs kicking
water thrashing
crowd roaring
cheering, urging their heroes on
another gulp of air
shoulders straining
bodies pumping
fingers at full stretch
to touch that wall first
to cement their name
in the history of Beatty Park.

by Michael Tittensor

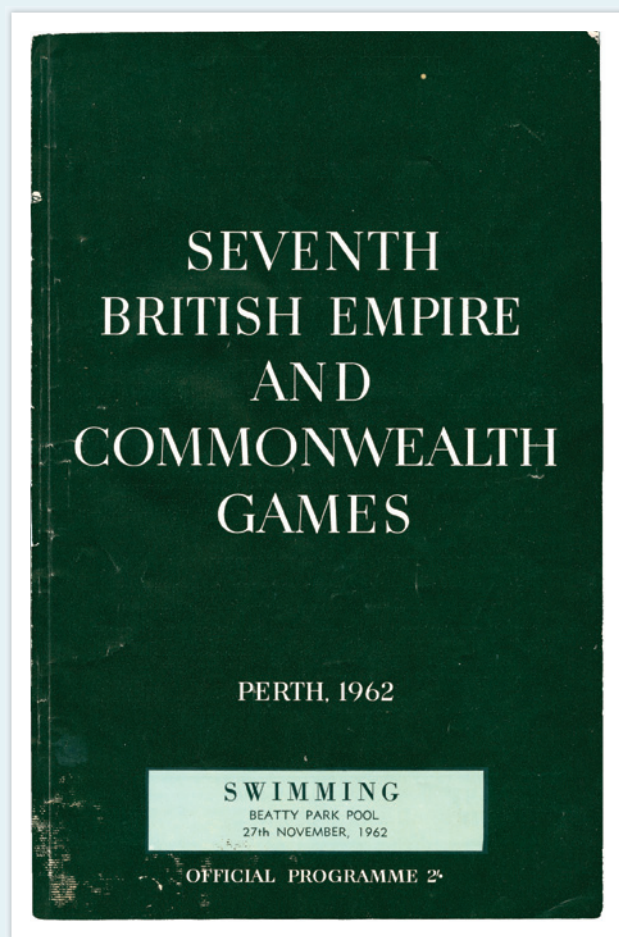


Swimmers ready to move off the starting blocks;
smoke from the starter's pistol can be seen behind the swimmer on left



Competitors near the finish in the same event
(COV PH03549 (top) and COV PH03550 donated by Steve and Suzanne Worner)

Refreshments were available for the spectators – almost a necessity in the consistently high temperatures. Perth was experiencing the hottest temperatures in November for 49 years.



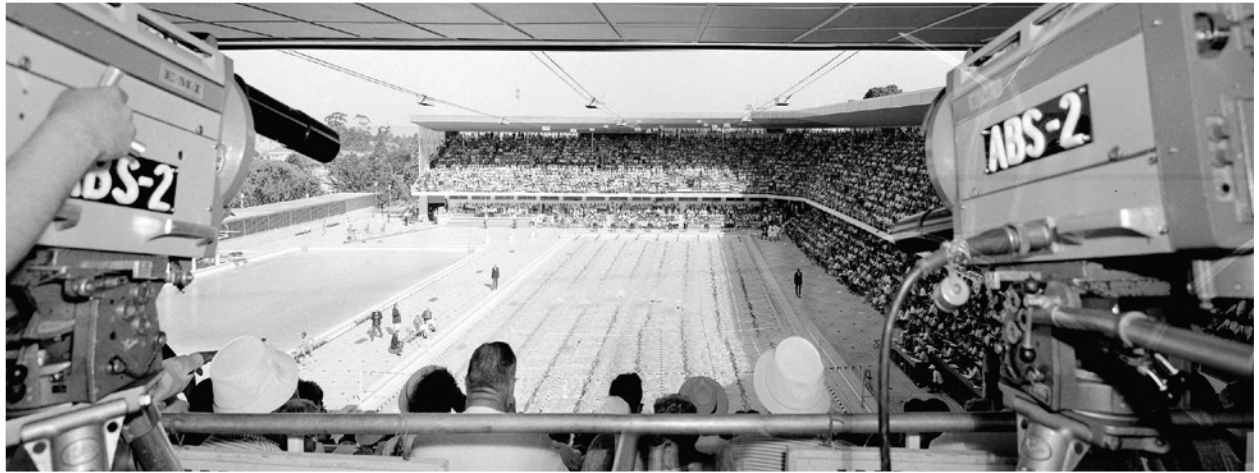
Swimming program
(COV PH03589 donated by Suzanne Worner)

I sold crates of cool drinks, Cottees, for one shilling a bottle. To help keep them cold we put large fist-sized blocks of ice on the top of them, your shorts and sand-shoes would remain drenched all day. I sold heaps and made a fortune in tips. For every case of empties we returned they would pay an extra two shillings. Being money-hungry at the time I was always the first there in the morning and the last to leave in the afternoon by running around collecting all the empty bottles. At the end of the day I would catch the train back home covered in the dried sticky dregs left in the empties because once the wooden tray was full, you could stack more in by turning the rest upside-down.

Harley Scott

I had just finished my fifth year at high school (1962) and we put down to work for Coca Cola during the Games. Our job was to supply the young kids with Coke to sell at the Velodrome for the cycling, Perry Lakes for the athletics, and Beatty Park for swimming. Well I was lucky. I went every night to the Velodrome for the cycling, I was there every day for the athletics and every day for the swimming. I did my job but I was totally absorbed in the competition, I just loved it. It was fantastic watching Dawn Fraser and Murray Rose for Australia at the swimming and Brian Phelps, he was an English diver. I had never seen high diving before.

Peter Panegyres (West Perth footballer)



View from the press desk with television cameras recording the events in the pool
(COV PH01491)

The very top deck of Beatty Park was known as the 'press deck'. They had the whole top deck and all their international telephone lines and faxes, as they were in those days, brought in. All that work had been done in the building and they were very well provided for.

Rod Hounslow

There was also an underwater room where press photographers could go to take pictures of the people diving in the main pool.

At the time of the Commonwealth Games the Canadian diving team was the first to arrive at Beatty Park pool. These press photographers – stills and TV men – were all down there in this room with their cameras shooting, and I was in the pool with an underwater camera. I'd get photos of them taking photos with their above-water cameras of the divers coming down off the high dive.

Jack Sue

Our Games Medals

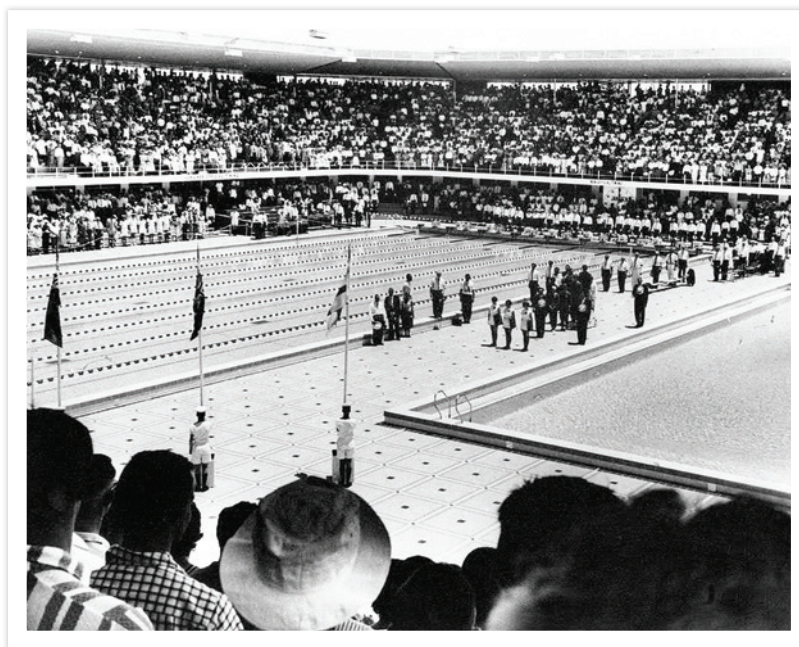
Overall Australia won 14 gold medals in the swimming and two in the diving. Commonwealth Games records were set by Australia in the following events:

Individuals:		
Women's 110 yards freestyle	Dawn Fraser	0:59.5
Women's 220 yards backstroke	Susan Costin Heat 1, later broken by England	2:38.8
Men's 110 yards freestyle	Peter Doak Heat 1, later broken by Scotland	0:56.3
Men's 440 yards freestyle	Murray Rose	4:20.0
Men's 1,650 yards freestyle	Murray Rose	17:18.1
Men's 110 yards breaststroke	Ian O'Brien	1:11.3
Men's 220 yards breaststroke	Ian O'Brien	2:38.0
Men's 220 yards backstroke	Julian Carroll	2:20.9
Men's 110 yards butterfly	Kevin Berry	0:59.5
Men's 220 yards butterfly	Kevin Berry	2:10.8
Men's 440 yards indiv. medley	Alex Alexander	5:15.3
Relays:		
Women's 440 yards medley	D Fraser, P Sargeant, L McGill, M Ruygrok	
Women's 440 yards freestyle	L Bell, R Everuss, R Thorn, D Fraser	
Men's 440 yards medley	J Carroll, I O'Brien, K Berry, D Dickson	
Men's 220 yards freestyle	R Windle, M Rose, A Wood, T Strahan	
Men's 440 yards freestyle	P Phelps, M Rose, P Doak, D Dickson	
Men's 880 yards freestyle	M Rose, A Wood, A Strahan, R Windle	

World Records were also broken by Australia in the men's 440 yards freestyle relay, men's 880 yards freestyle relay, women's 110 yards freestyle, women's 440 yards freestyle relay and women's 440 yards medley relay.

(British Commonwealth and Empire Games at Beatty Park, November 1962)

A total of eight new world records were established and three others were equalled.



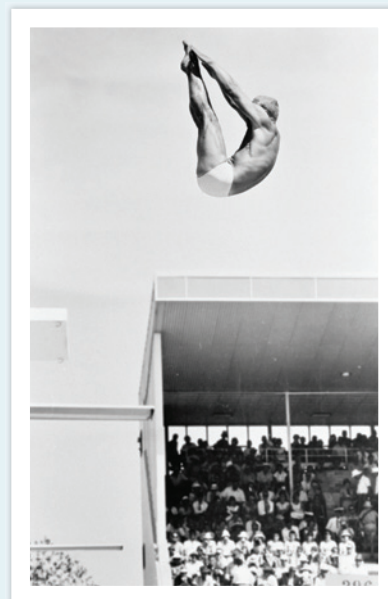
Medal ceremony at the Games, November 1962
(COV PH0949)

It was very, very exciting and very, very busy – full on – and everything was very new to everybody. You had spectators in the grandstand and down on the swimming pool concourse. There had been extra seating brought in and just making sure that the events went along unimpeded by the spectators was probably the biggest part of the thing – but the discipline of the West Australians and the visiting spectators was really very good.

Rod Hounslow

An innovation for divers is the on-the-spot competitors' room at the three metre board level. This will be exclusively for divers during their event and will, by a neat system of steps, eliminate much of the long climb to the high tower and walks to and from the dressing rooms. A glass wall will enable resting divers to see rivals in action.¹

Each country's divers were able to have daily training sessions at the Beatty Park pool and night sessions with full lighting so they could experience competition conditions. The swimmers had two daily sessions of two hours each in the main pool and the learners' pool and also at the Hale School swimming pool in Wembley Downs.



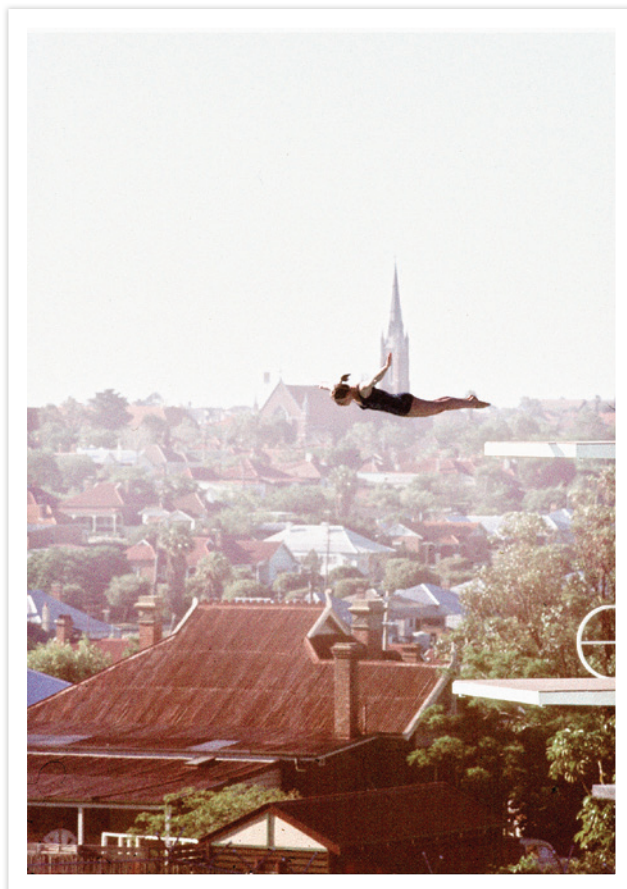
Diving competitors in action at the Games

(Courtesy State Library of Western Australia, Battye Library 257177PD and 257176PD)

I met the fellows that were in the diving team from Scotland. Bobbie McGregor was one and one of my girlfriends was keen on him. So we went down there with all these guys. That was very exciting but they were really sophisticated in comparison to me.

Judith Ehling

¹ *Official Guide to the VIIIth British Empire and Commonwealth Games*, p. 36



Diver in flight, with view across the roof tops of North Perth and Leederville to St Mary's Catholic Church in Franklin Street, Leederville
(COV PH02235 donated by Lyn Hawkins)

Susan Knight won both the springboard and tower titles, making her the first Australian woman diver to win dual gold at a single Commonwealth Games; a feat not equalled for another 40 years.

I went to the night of the finals of the diving and after the diving finished, which was absolutely amazing to us because we had never seen any people dive off 10-metre boards before, the divers put on a bit of a show. They dressed up in funny clothes, men in women's clothing, and they rode bikes off the high board and just frolicked around. It was just about the highlight of the Games for me.

Geoff White



The final message on the electronic scoreboard at Perry Lakes, 1 December, 1962
(COV PH03617 donated by Frank McGrath)

The year 1962 will no doubt be talked of for a long time. The year that Perth reached its peak for publicity, the year that Perth became known as the City of Light and the year that Perth had the honour of being host city for the Empire and Commonwealth Games... Since the Games Perth has had nothing but praise and commendation for the way everything was carried out...

No expense has been spared to make sure the Games were carried out in a fitting manner and although I have no doubt that we "the ratepayers" will have to pay for the honour, I still think it is the finest advertisement Western Australia could possibly have had and it has proved that our State is capable of carrying through a big project in a manner at least equal to any other country. Our State we are proud of you.

Extract from diary of Francis Raymond Wray

1960s

The Games finished on 1 December 1962 and the Beatty Park Aquatic Centre opened for public use three days later on 4 December.

Charges for admission:

1st September to 1st May inclusive –

Children under 14 years of age	1.0d.
School children in classes with teacher in attendance.....	6d.
All persons over the age of 14 years.....	2.0d.

1st May to 1st September inclusive –

Children under 14 years of age	1.0d.
All persons over the age of 14 years.....	2.0d.
Use of towel.....	1.0d.
Use of costume.....	1.0d.
Hire of locker.....	1.0d.
Charge for custody of lost property	1.0d.

Extract from the *City of Perth Municipal Year Book 1962-63* p.67

The report in the *City of Perth Municipal Year Book 1962-63* also stated that *“The revenue received for the period 4th December, 1962 to the 30th June, 1963 was £39,673. Attendances at the Centre since its opening indicate that it is filling a much needed want.”*

In the '60s, Mum came to fetch me and got stuck in the metal turnstile entrance. Being claustrophobic, everyone worked to free her. Even the television station came! All was forgiven when they reported her as being about 40 when she was nearly 50! Consequently the turnstile was altered.

Carol Resnick



Entry turnstiles and foyer, 1963
(COV PH000018)

The change rooms were the entire length of the grandstand. After being served at the front desk the ladies would go off one way to the change rooms and the men the other. The separate change rooms had showers and toilets, which could accommodate 1,500 people at a time. A chlorinated foot-bath (20 x 8 feet and 1 foot deep) was then the swimmer's only passageway to the pools.



Bathers at Beatty Park, 1963
(COV PH02153 donated by Christina Arnasiewicz)

I remember when I went for my first swim there a week or two after the Games, you more or less couldn't get into the pool – there were that many people there. There was standing room only; there was no way you could swim. It was just, 'I have been to Beatty Park and had a swim' – along with thousands and thousands.

Geoff White

My best memory of Beatty Park is the only time I ever played 'hookie' from school with my best friend in 1963. Every other class was doing 'something' for end of year – our teacher suggested we all just share our lunch. One kid attended school that day. My friend and I spent the day jumping from the high tower.

Rhonda Simmonds

Lynette Chester and many other young people of the time also saw it as a place to gather and meet friends.

I used to meet all my boyfriends at Beatty Park and friends as well - groups of friends. We used to love it. All the young people used to smoke then and we'd all sit there and smoke and then go for a swim. It was a good time you know but it was about 1963, and Cook (serial killer, Eric Edgar Cook) was around then. We all used to get scared at night because back in those days we still used to walk around the streets at night.

Lynette Chester

*We would go there in the summertime and swim and meet the girls. In the summertime Beatty Park was **the** spot for the girls.*

Jim Downey

However, Jerry Hatzis, who worked there for over 30 years said there were problems with one segment of the community:

*With the culture that was back in the 60s and 70s we didn't have all these places where young people go today and play computers and all that kind of thing. Beatty Park was **the** place. They would come in, pay the two shillings to get in and they would just sit there and cause trouble all day. At night they wouldn't go home. It would be the manager or the assistant manager and mind you the life guards were employed because of their strength. You had to be strong to look after yourself.*

Jerry Hatzis



Bathers taking refreshments at the kiosk, 1963
(Courtesy State Library of Western Australia, Battye Library, 340575PD)

The people that ran the kiosk were Steve and Nancy Boyatzis. As well as milk shakes, soft drinks and ice creams, they had good hot food. You could sit down and have a cup of coffee and a pie and sauce. Chips were always there, of course. It was always a fast food outlet but it was very, very well done. The Boyatzis and the Pampacos families – Nancy was a Pampacos – were just so well versed in fast food as the Greek community in old Barrack Street always were and they brought those skills to Beatty Park with them.

Rod Hounslow

Staff

As Assistant Manager I was responsible for recruiting the huge casual staff that we relied on. It was my job to supervise them and roster them. We had huge hours in those days. We were opening up at 5.30 every morning and working through until 10 o'clock at night, seven days a week. There were only two days that the centre didn't open: Good Friday and Christmas Day. So 363 days a year the place was open from 5 o'clock in the morning until 10 o'clock at night... If you didn't open up at 5.30 in the morning in those days, people that were interested in early morning swimming training would just about knock your doors down.

Rod Hounslow

Manager Ray Martin established training to ensure high standards of operation in the staff.

At that time training or qualifications were not as accessible as they are now. All staff were required to go through further training and induction. I was instrumental in introducing lifeguard qualifications and pool operations training.

Ray Martin

Casual staff had to be prepared to do everything from cleaning to setting up the sound system to assisting with cash counting and balancing.

We used to be very skilful in setting up the sound systems, the amplifiers and things like that. We all needed a bit of knowledge, how to set them - otherwise nothing worked. Even the electronic timing equipment we had for the races, we used to set it all up. They had some specialists to come in if anything went wrong but we had to do all that.

Jerry Hatzis

Swimming pool attendants Ross and David Hounslow, nephews of manager Rod Hounslow, were members of this casual workforce and Ross went on to become Swimming Pool Manager at Fremantle. John Boyd who became the manager of the Somerset Street Swimming Pool was another early pool attendant as were Vernon Oliver, the youngest of the Oliver family, and twins Ron and Ian Atkinson, who became permanent members of staff.

Ron became the manager of the Inglewood Pool when it was built – where he stayed until my retirement in 1986 – and then he won that job after it was advertised. He came into the role of Manager of Beatty Park/Supervisor of City of Perth Swimming Pools when I retired.

Rod Hounslow

Merle Barker was the first member of the administrative staff.

She came in to start with as a casual and was so successful that she was very quickly taken on as a permanent member of staff. The other permanent member of staff that I should mention was the widow of Lionel Steinbohm. Lionel was the Director of Parks and Gardens who was responsible for all the landscaping at Beatty Park and the other Commonwealth Games venues. He had an untimely death with a heart attack on City Beach. His widow came to work as a cashier at Beatty Park from that time and stayed with us.

Rod Hounslow



Coogee Street neighbours who often walked to Beatty Park for a swim during the school holidays: Jeffery Sinclair, Simon Hamilton, Rebecca Hamilton and Heather Sinclair, 1966

(COV PH 03515 donated by Rebecca Joel)

Another early member of staff was Gwen Mulcahy.

Gwen's son was one of our swimming pool attendants – Philip Mulcahy. He said to us during the arduous hand counting of the 20 and 10 cent pieces that filled the coin canisters at the turnstiles, 'I can get Mum to come in and help. She's an office assistant and has been working in office accounting and cash balancing for many years.' So we said, 'well you had better tell Mum to come and give us a hand'. So Mrs Mulcahey was the third member of the administrative ladies who came in casually in the first instance but was then made permanent. She ran the office and the daily cash balancing of the Beatty Park Swimming Pool until she retired sometime in 1987.

Rod Hounslow

Press Room

Once the Games were over and done with the press room became the best utility room that was left for the promotion and development of other activities – and the Royal Life Saving Society started to play a big part with people doing Royal Life Saving qualifications.

Rod Hounslow

First Aid

The centre had been built with two very good first aid rooms - one at the male end of the concourse and one at the female end. With the move to public swimming we had huge numbers because it was the first Olympic swimming pool in Perth and it had such a tremendous amount of interest. We were having 5,000 swimmers a day and up to 10,000 during the heat waves and just getting people used to taking it easy and not running. There were kids colliding on the concourse and falling over. Our first aid rooms were very busy with what were essentially abrasions. We were forever patching kids up. We had very, very good volunteer St John's Ambulance manning the first aid rooms and helping out in those early days. Everybody was looked after very well if there was an accident.

Rod Hounslow

In November 1966 Rod Hounslow (then 32 years of age) was promoted to manager, succeeding Ray Martin. By then Beatty Park had a staff of 20 and it was believed to be the biggest swimming centre of its type in Australia.

HOUNSLOW GETS BIG POOL JOB

By Syd Donovan

ONE of WA's greatest surf swimmers has been appointed manager of the Beatty Park swimming centre.

He is 32-year-old former State champion and Australian team representative Rod Hounslow who is still competing in surf-ski events.

After a year as manager of Somerset Pool, Victoria Park, Hounslow succeeds Ray Martin at Beatty Park.

For three and a half years after Beatty Park opened in 1962, Hounslow was assistant manager. He had managed the Merredin district pool from 1956-62.

New Somerset pool manager is John Boyd, who was assistant manager at Beatty Park.

At the same time, Beatty Park staff man Ron Atkinson leaves to



◆ ROD HOUNSLOW

become manager of the Inglewood pool. He was a member of

the WA surf team in 1951.

A competitive surfer at Cottesloe for 26 years, Hounslow is now in charge of a staff of 20 at the biggest swim centre of its type in Australia.

For 14 years he has held the record of winning the WA junior and senior surf championships and the junior belt championship on the one day.

State belt champion in 1956, he was WA's only representative in the eight-man Australian team which competed in Melbourne during the Olympics.

Hounslow and partner Geoff Campbell are still representing Cottesloe in double-ski events.

Daily News 29.11.1966



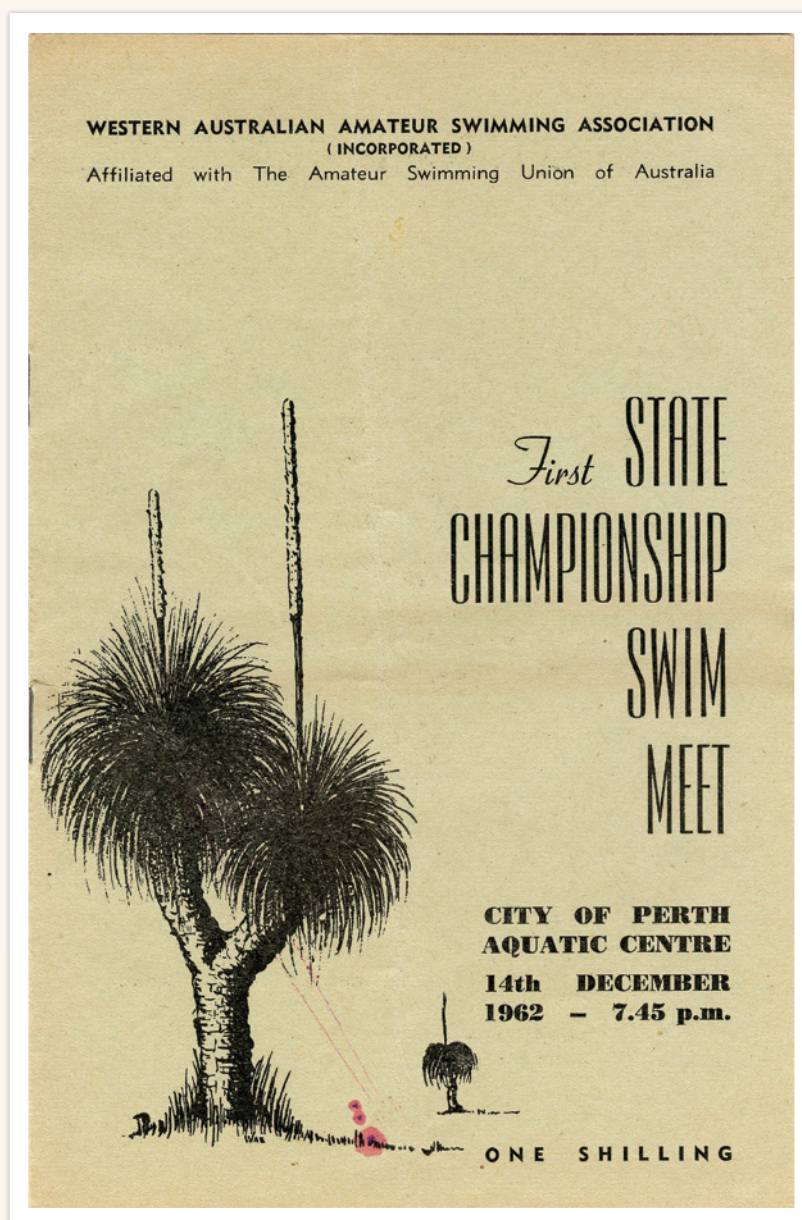
Pool Manager's house as seen from the courtyard, 1962
(Courtesy State Library of Western Australia, Battye Library, 340560PD)

There was a house in the grounds and I brought my family there. I have three daughters – Gemma, Peta and Susan – and they all lived and went off to school and university from that house at Beatty Park. It was in a very pleasant location and there was plenty of shade from the Moreton Bay fig trees. It has all gone; it is a car park now.

Rod Hounslow

Events

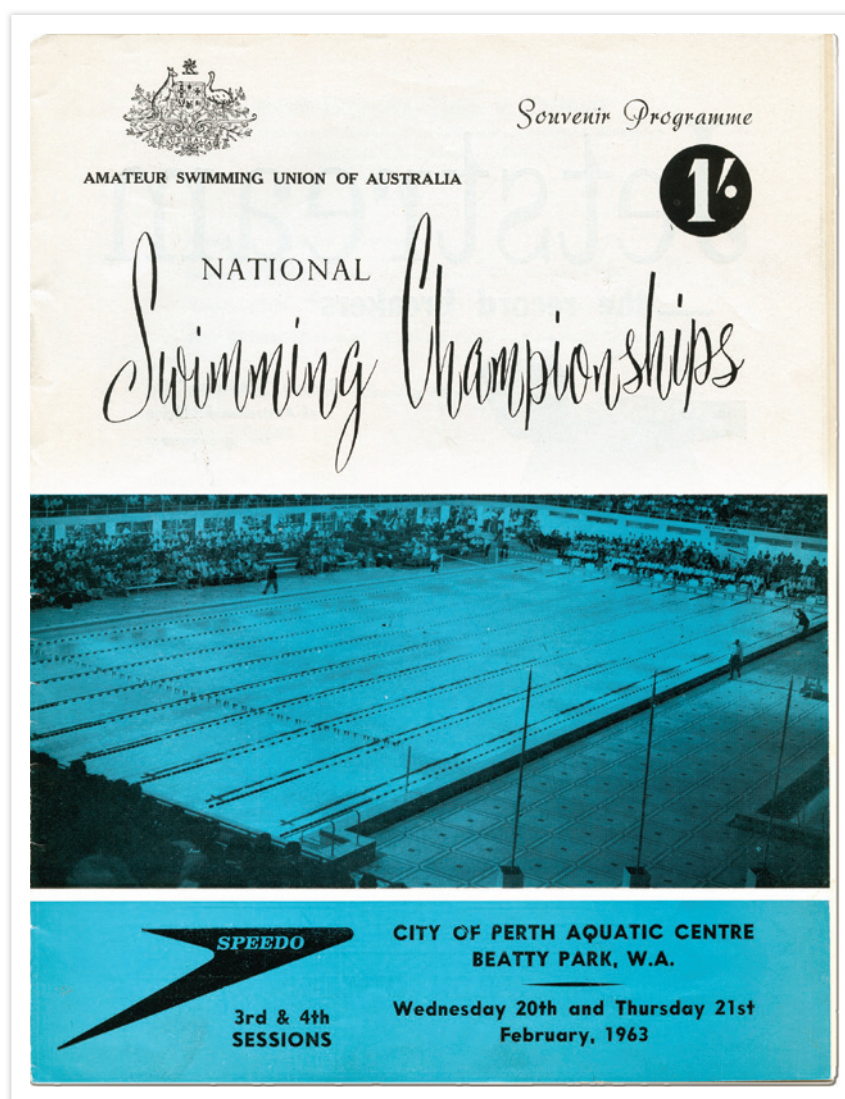
The first State Championship Swim Meet held in the new venue took place in the evening on 14 December 1962.



The touch boards used during the Games had only been on loan and the cost of installing them permanently proved too expensive, so local firms were sought. New ones were installed by S W Hart & Co. and Lusterite Plastic Products in January 1963 in time for the Australian Championships held in the February. Jobling & Co won the contract

for the construction of an enclosed VIP area in the spectators' area at roughly the same time. This cost £190. A timing clock, which was donated by Speedo Knitting Mills, was also installed in 1963.

The first National Swimming Championships to be held at the Centre were in February 1963.



Swimming Squads

Early coaches at Beatty Park were Kevin Duff, Harry Kelly and Tony Howson. They obtained licences from the City of Perth and training programs began as soon as the Games finished.

Kevin Duff coached a squad of swimmers in certain lanes which were set aside for him in the main pool.

It was called the Aqua Club. I think they had to pay to use a certain amount of lanes. Kevin used to have three.

Belinda Foley

Lanes one, two, three and Harry Kelly used to have four, five and six, which we never thought was good because in the championships, lane four was always the fastest. We used to say, how come they can train in lane four and get used to lane four? We want to be swimming in lane four, that sort of thing. And I think the other coach, Tony Howson, he had some far lanes over the other side too. He had seven and eight and Harry initially was down in the warm-up pool down the bottom.

Elsma Merillo

There was a 50 metre pool down there as well and sometimes we'd go and do our warm-ups down there. We didn't like that pool because it didn't seem to be as warm as the other one. Then we'd use the diving pool – obviously the divers weren't training on those days – and we'd swim. I think that was 25-30 metres across.

Belinda Foley

So we'd do repetitive sprints in the diving pool. Kevin was a very educated coach; he was like the up and coming scientific man for his time.

Elsma Merillo

I would still say he is one of the best coaches in Australia and I think well before his time because his commitment was to get the best out of a person's stroking.

Belinda Foley



Female members of the WA Junior State Swim Team, 1965
(All were members of squads that trained at Beatty Park)
L-R: Margaret Whealand, Elsma Harris, Margaret Moss, Frances Payne, Sue Howson,
Jenny Stratton, Lee-Ann Mayne
(COV PH03467 donated by Elsma Merillo)

The other thing in our squad was the fact that we had such a good social group and that was partly due to Kevin and his wife Jill. Swimming can be a very individual sport but with our squad and with Kevin, and Jill in particular, it was like a family. It was fantastic.

Elsma Merillo

The City of Perth Swimming Club was the first official club at the pool.

The City of Perth Club had always operated at Crawley Baths and for some time I think there was both Crawley Baths and Beatty Park but once the Olympic pool was made available to them on Sunday mornings they definitely moved out of Crawley Baths.

Rod Hounslow

I was just so excited about being in a brand-new environment where you could see the line at the bottom of the pool and not swallow jellyfish and blowies and you would come out of Crawley Baths with that grime on you too.

In December you would do your heavy miles and then in January and February those distances would become shorter but with more sprinting. So when the National Championships came in February – in the middle of February – you had your power then for your sprint and to cope with your finish.

Oh yes, we used to do lung busters. Lung busters were swimming from one side of the pool to the other but under water, not on the top.

Belinda Foley

The Moscarda family belonged to City of Perth Club and were coached by Bob Devon and then Kevin Duff. Club swimmers competed on Sundays against West Perth and Tuart Hill clubs.

I worked at the West Australian Newspapers all night and would then go home and change into my "White Knight's" uniform. We used to call it a White Knight – a white shirt, white pants, white socks and tennis shoes. I used to come home and the kids were ready to go. Then I took them down to the pool and organised them there with the coach. Then I started working, doing my job down at Beatty Park there – watching the kids and all that. When they finished swimming I used to take them home, it was half-past seven or eight o'clock and then I would go back down to the pool again.

Silvio Moscarda

Robin Bennett was another coach:

Robin Bennett was a state butterfly swimmer and a coach. She was the niece of the great Percy Oliver and her sister, Helen, was also a state champion. She was a state champion back-stroker; she had a little team that she trained as well.

Terry Stokesbury

The Beatty Park lifeguards were required to be very fit. All members of staff had to keep their St John's Ambulance Certificate up – this was renewed every two years.

They used to make us do two laps of back kick, two laps of freestyle – five or six laps every month or so. It is very important because if you got one in the middle you had to swim yourself and handle the other person.

Silvio Moscarda



Beatty Park lifeguards Jerry Gaffney, Don McManus and Denny Bennett near the entrance, 1960s
(COV PH03554 donated by Denny Bennett)



Junior life savers, 1969
(COV PH03643 donated by R Worth)

Some of us from St Hilda's did life saving in 1961-64 at Beatty Park – Madame de Mouncey Trophy and others. My team had a great disappointment one year. We got out of sync as to whose turn it was to swim out to the buoy and be carried back. My partner swam out, out of turn, and I then had to swim out and carry her back. Exhausting to do three out of four carries, not two and, as we were incorrect, we were disqualified even though we were completely ahead of the opposition.

Helen Bunning

Swimming lessons

In 1963 nearly 2,000 school children attended Education Department swimming classes around the Metropolitan area, with large numbers enrolling at Beatty Park.

Mine is a simple but happy memory. Attending Wembley Primary School in 1962, we were the first to have swimming classes in the beautiful Beatty Park. After previously using dirty, slimy Crawley Baths, we were thrilled to use the new clean facilities. Congratulations!

Margaret Coen

Around about 1962-3 I remember bringing my two young sons to summer swimming lessons. Such good times and we used to stay here all through the holidays almost every day. They and I have loved Beatty Park all our lives and still come to swim regularly.

Sheila Baldwin



Beatty Park during the school holidays 1965-1966
L-R: Les Head, Cheryl Rixon (in yellow bikini), Josephine and Kerry Head, Marilyn, Tracey and Brett Rixon
(Photograph courtesy Cheryl Rixon)



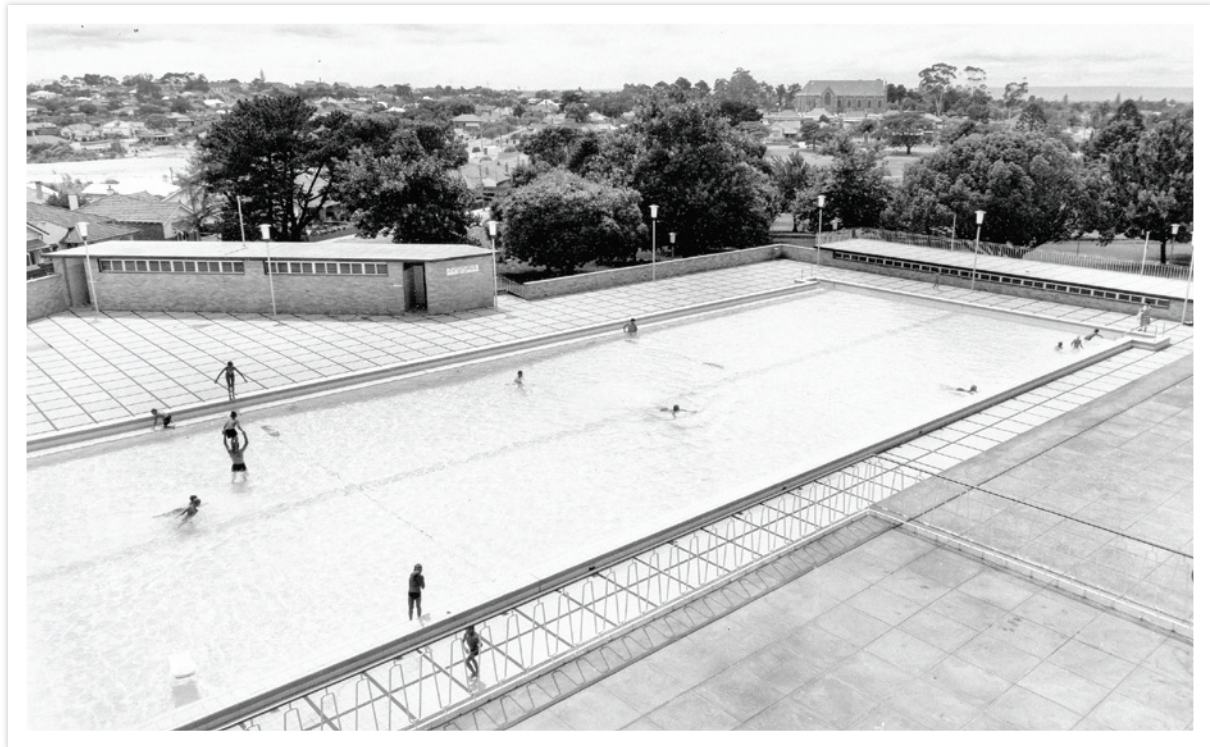
Savas Spartalis in the 'babies pool', 1967
(COV PH02701 Photograph donated by Sophie Spartalis)

We used to go there regularly for swimming lessons and on this occasion met our cousins afterwards for lunch on the lawn. Mum had parked us on the wall for safekeeping while she was in line at the food kiosk to fetch our Chico rolls, pasties and meat pies. I can recall the aroma of the pies mingling with the chlorine and pink zinc.

Cheryl Rixon

I, like many kids, went to vacation swimming classes at Beatty Park in the years 1966-1972. I hated it! I was not a good swimmer and while my school friends got promoted I stayed in the learners' pool down the steps behind the diving pool. I remember one teacher who was brown and tough and yelled a lot. I finally got my Junior Certificate at age 12.

Nona Oliver



Learners pool, 1963
(COV PH00013)

I rode my bike. It was probably a 10 or 15 minute ride from where I lived, so that was quite okay. Traffic wasn't like it is now but the big change Beatty Park made for me was that I could then go there for swimming lessons in the Christmas holidays. Previous to that it meant catching two buses each way to go to Crawley Bay or Crawley Baths. So every January my mother – she also had younger children – she made the effort to take us in two buses each way to swimming classes. As soon as Beatty Park opened, easy – on my bike, on my own, independent, and off I went.

Geoff White

Carnivals

The Public Schools Association (boys) began to hold their inter-school swimming carnivals at Beatty Park from 1963. The schools competing were Scotch, Hale, Christ Church, Aquinas, Wesley and Guildford.

The boys' inter-school sports were held there – all the boys were in school groups with their banners. We used to dress up and hope one of the swimming champs would notice us.

Helen Bunning



Pass to inter-school swimming sports, 1964

(Courtesy Scotch College Archives)

In my last year at Beatty Park in my inter-school sports I was the first private school swimmer (Scotch College) ever to break an open record. No one else had broken a State open record at the inter-school sports and I just smashed it.

Peter Evans

Twelve years old, first year high school, inter-school swimming competition at the new Beatty Park. So big, so clean, so scary! We felt like champions, just being there.

Geraldine Ryan



School children at a swimming carnival, c.1967
(Courtesy State Library of Western Australia, Battye Library, 345251PD)

Swimming carnivals against other schools: Highgate was always versus Leederville, CBC Fremantle and "the Terrace". We had our swimming sports at Beatty Park. It was fantastic because they had the grandstand and everything else there. You would get into your teams or your schools and chant the victory song and everything else.

Peter Kora

The Independent Girls Schools Sports Association also had their school and inter-school carnivals there and the following is an extract from an article which was printed in the “Women’s Magazine” section of the *Sunday Times* on 10 March 1963¹:

It has been a week of wonderful weather for swimming and St Mary’s Church of England Girls’ School was one of the many schools which chose this week for their swimming sports. The prospect of the attractive Beatty Park Pool was too inviting for country mothers to miss and many came up for the occasion.

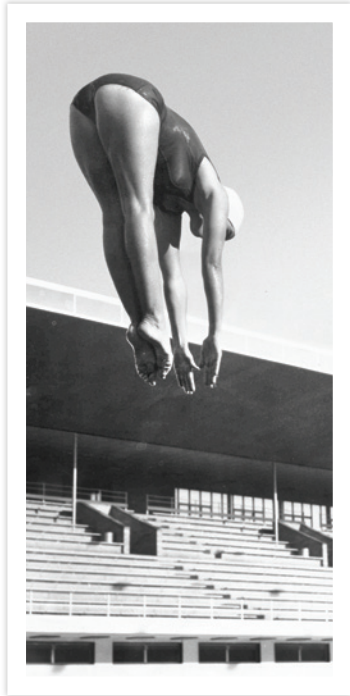
A list of some of the country mothers who attended followed. They had travelled to Perth from Kellerberrin, Brunswick Junction, Albany, Northam, Geraldton, Bolgart and Northampton.

The Aquatic Centre was a huge part of my life growing up in Mount Hawthorn as it provided a facility for our school swimming lessons and inter-school swimming carnivals. Sometimes I had diving practice in the early hours before school during week days in preparation for inter-school competitions. It also afforded us the luxury of having lessons in a pool and not having to go to the ocean for classes. It also served as the setting for many a romantic fantasy during those years of an adolescence spent in increasingly smaller swimwear ascending the heights of the higher boards in pursuit or ever increasingly difficult dives where only the most daring wandered.

Cheryl Rixon

¹ *Sunday Times* 10.3.1963, p. 19

Diving



Robyn Bradshaw doing a forward dive with pike from the three metre board
(COV PH00941 donated by City of Perth Swim Club)



Diving boards, 1963
(COV PH00017)

When Robyn Bradshaw made the Olympic team in '64 she trained at Beatty Park. Sue Knight came over in the August and we trained through terrible outdoor conditions but they did a really good program. She became the first Australian diver to 'final' in an Olympic Games.

Bruce Prance

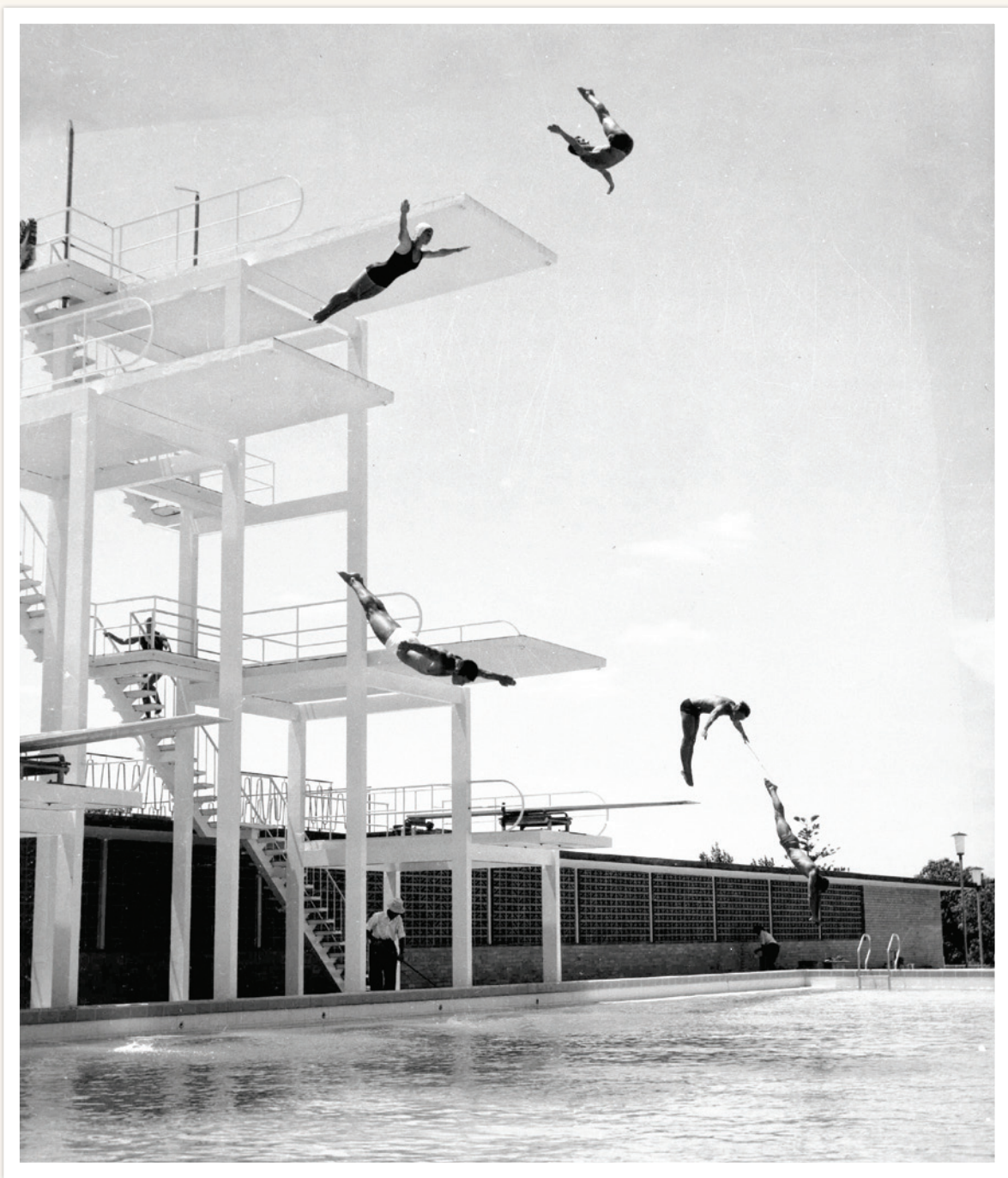
I'd use the diving area as much as the pool because they had a one metre and a three metre board and a ten metre tower. One of the big achievements in those days if you could do it – was to duck dive

and touch the bottom of the diving pool, which was quite deep.

Geoff White

I have very happy memories of carefree days spent in the sweltering heat, swimming laps of the Olympic length racing pool, braving the various spring boards and high boards to try our gymnastic skills on new dives, noses full of burning chemicals while our skin bubbled up with blisters that we peeled off each other's backs. Glamorous stuff!

Cheryl Rixon

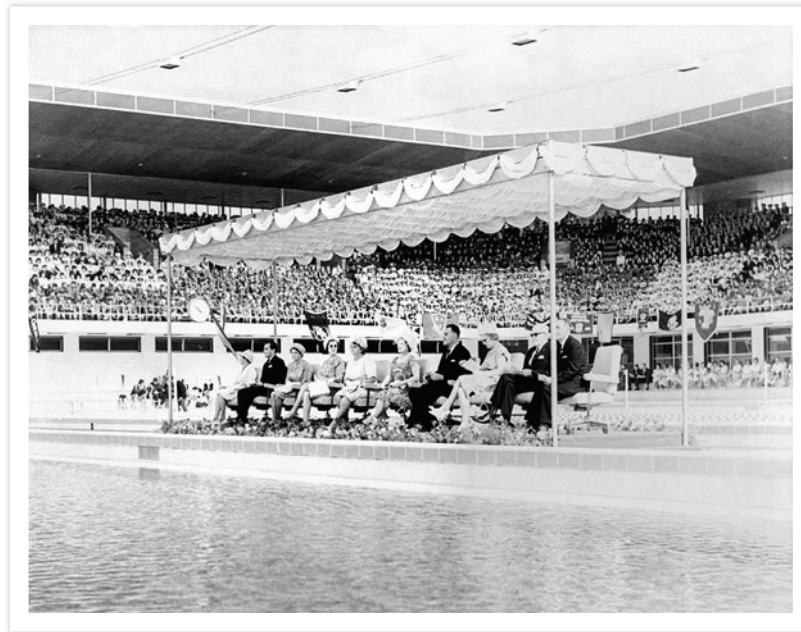


Diving exhibition
(COV PH00886 donated by City of Perth Swim Club)

Diving exhibitions were a regular feature of royal visits, Miss West Coast and other special functions, with commentators such as coach Bruce Prance generally set up in the diving room behind the tower. One of his divers was Raelene Tilbrook:

Bruce's squad of divers performed exhibitions for nearly all of the major attractions held in the centre, including the annual beach girl pageant, even one for the Queen!

Raelene (Tilbrook) Lyon



Her Royal Highness the Queen Mother at Betty Park, 31 March 1966
(COV PH00948)

The Queen Mother watched us doing life-saving and resuscitation. She took particular notice of my son doing resuscitation on a manikin and was so intrigued by what she saw, that she stayed whilst the newspaper took a photo.

Ray Martin

In 1966 the main pool was shortened.

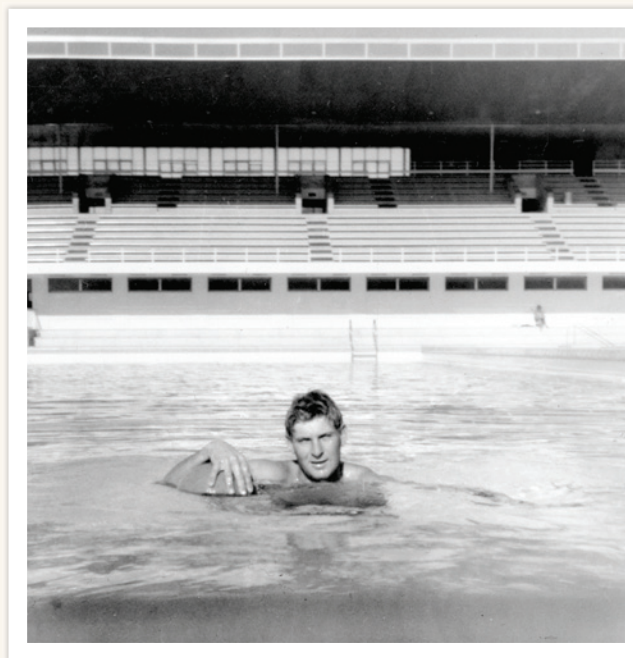
The Commonwealth Games in 1962 used Imperial measurements, so the pool was 55 yards. After the Games we went metric. It was done with a removable piece of equipment that filled in that extra number of inches to make it 50 metres. This proved very inefficient because of the labour involved in getting this damned stuff in and out. We stood down for a couple of weeks each winter for general maintenance and so that everything could be checked out. In our 1967 stand-down we had it filled in properly by the Engineering Department. Afterwards you could look at the shallow end of the Beatty Park main pool and still see where it was thicker and had been made to exactly 50 metres.

Rod Hounslow

There was no need to make any changes to the diving pool as it had been built to metric measurements because international water polo was using 30 metres by 20 metres and 5 metres deep. The diving boards and tower were also metric. The diving pool was also used for water polo and scuba diving lessons.

Jack Sue had a business in Subiaco on Hay Street and as well as selling scuba tanks and flippers and masks and all the air valves and equipment that was required Jack was in there with his school, teaching people. And what a wonderful job he did.

Rod Hounslow



Water polo player Denny Bennett, 1960s
(COV PH03553 donated by Denny Bennett)

Events

In the 1960s and 70s the swimming centre was used as a venue for many local events including graduation ceremonies, beauty pageants such as the finals of Miss West Coast and Miss Western Australia, and also for visiting musical artists. Those artists known to have performed there in the 1960s were:

The Shadows 2 & 3 June 1967

Johnny O'Keefe 1968

Billy Daniels 29 January 1968

The Seekers 9 February 1968



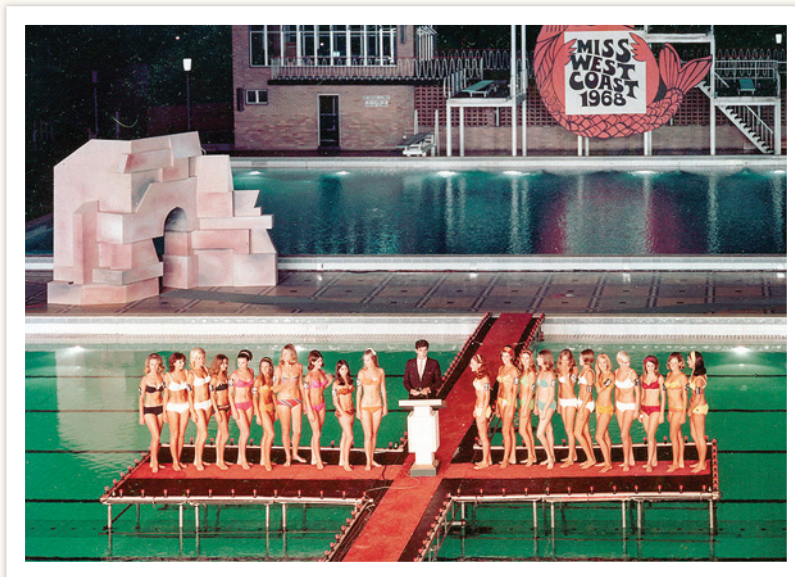
We went to the Seekers and they had part of a stage across the big pool. I can picture them performing on a bit of a stage across the water. The audience just sat in the normal seats you would watch an aquatic event. It was obviously a warm summer's night.

John Maiorana

What a night to remember – walking across the water at Beatty Park in December 1968. Over 600 Teachers' College students graduated that balmy evening. To receive our prized certificates we promenaded across platforms temporarily constructed over the main pool. Bright lights, water sparkling – magically watching our youthful spirits and dreams!

Marg Lundy

Well Channel 7 was really the driving force. Where the concerts came from was Channel 7 and their Miss West Coast Competition. They came in and hired Beatty Park for the promotion of Miss West Coast and in those early days they built their stage over the pool. Channel 7 and Miss West Coast year after year – they were the biggest days of the calendar for Beatty Park.



Miss West Coast 1968, with host Gary Meadows
(Photograph courtesy Channel 7 and WA TV History)

Then the ongoing concerts that were held with Paul Gadenne as their organizer; we certainly had a wonderful run. Then, because of the success of those shows, Channel 7 got the Entertainment Centre up and running and the Perth City Council got the Perth Concert Hall up and running, so that was gone. But in those early years we had the lot – there was nowhere else to go.

Rod Hounslow

Beatty Park was the place to be on those hot summer nights of the 1960s when very few houses had air-conditioning.

If we were into a heat wave we would just be flat to the boards with thousands of people coming through and they would be spread out on those lawns and down into that treed area. There would be hundreds of people bringing their picnics and their picnic rugs so that the children could cool off in the pool and Mum and Dad would have a swim too. They would also bring their tea and be down on the grassed areas under the trees and stay because there were park lights. It was well lit - we had pole-top lights, which were all part of the original set-up and it was really a great joy to see the place being used the way it was.

Depending on the summers we were having up to 400,000 customers a year through Beatty Park. The run-of-the-mill annual attendances were 300,000 but, depending on the number of heat-wave days, we had up to 450,000 through Beatty Park in a year.

Rod Hounslow

We were at the pool when Meckering was the centre of an earthquake (14 October 1968). I remember the ground looking like waves of water, and needless to say we went home to find out there had been a devastating earthquake.

Barbara Tuxford

By the end of the 1960s when attendances peaked at the Centre, the annual attendances had risen to over 600,000 people. It had completely usurped Crawley Baths as the main venue for competitive swimming.

According to Belinda Foley the squads trained twice a day, six days a week in the 1960s and 70s as did fellow Olympian and medal winner, Lyn McKenzie.

I think Beatty Park is a wonderful icon for WA...It holds so many wonderful memories for me.²

Lyn McKenzie

² Guardian Express, 3.2.2004, p.43

The 1969 opening concert and official launch of the 17th annual Festival of Perth were held at Beatty Park on Sunday, 2 February. The Festival was officially opened by the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor of Perth, Thomas E Wardle.

The program began at 7.30 pm with a display of synchronized swimming.

**OFFICIAL OPENING
CONCERT**

COMPERES:

Peter Harrison **John Fryer**
(by courtesy of the ABC) (by courtesy of 6IX-WB-MD-BY)

*Between 7.30 and 8.15 p.m. there will be a display of synchronised swimming
and the Western Command Band will play a selection of popular music
(Bandmaster Lt. R. L. Taylor)*

PROGRAMME
Arranged by Harry Bluck

THE PERTH LIGHT CONCERT ORCHESTRA
Conductor: Verdon Williams

<p>OKLAHOMA SELECTION SOME ENCHANTED EVENING WALTZ OF MY HEART PARADISE FOR TWO</p>	<p>The Orchestra BRUCE MARTIN MEGAN SUTTON BRUCE MARTIN MEGAN SUTTON</p>
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JAZZ JAMBOREE ALLSTARS
Conductor: Jim Riley

<p>TIJUANA MEDLEY BEWITCHED A MAN AND A WOMAN</p>	<p>Jazz Jamboree Allstars JOY MULLIGAN Jazz Jamboree Allstars and the Ballet Workshop Dancers</p>
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THE FABULOUS IMPs
A juvenile acrobatic presentation by the Trembath School of Dancing
accompanied by the Jazz Jamboree Allstars

OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE FESTIVAL OF PERTH
by the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor of Perth
T. E. Wardle, Esq.

THE 1969 FESTIVAL OF PERTH PAGEANT
A colourful preview of some of the main attractions
in the Festival's Drama and Dance presentations
arranged and co-ordinated by Frank Baden-Powell

<p>HENRY IV (Part I)</p>	<p>THE CREEPER</p>	<p>THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING FESTLE</p>
<p>TOM JONES</p>	<p>CYRANO de BERGERAC</p>	<p>ARCHIE AND MEHITABEL</p>
<p>BALLET WORKSHOP</p>	<p>W.A. BALLET COMPANY</p>	<p>BALLROOM DANCERS</p>
<p>THE IMPOLA SONG AND DANCE ENSEMBLE</p>		

JAZZ JAMBOREE ALLSTARS

<p>DIXIELAND SELECTION CANADIAN SUNSET WHAT NOW MY LOVE (Samba)</p>	<p>Jazz Jamboree Allstars BILL MITCHELL Ballet Workshop Dancers and the Jazz Jamboree Allstars</p>
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THE PERTH LIGHT CONCERT ORCHESTRA

<p>THE CAN-CAN CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN I GOT 'PLENTY O' NUTTIN' IF I LOVED YOU</p>	<p>The Orchestra MEGAN SUTTON BRUCE MARTIN MEGAN SUTTON BRUCE MARTIN</p>
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THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

*The Festival of Perth Committee wishes to thank the Australian Broadcasting Commission
and Channel 9, Perth, for their co-operation and assistance.*

Festival of Perth Official Opening Programme, 2 February 1969

1970s

Following the venue's success the previous year, the Festival of Perth opened its 1970 season at Beatty Park on 1 February with fireworks and other celebrations.

Other festivities were staged during the 1970s to honour Royal visitors, culminating with Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II celebrating her Silver Jubilee in 1977.

The place was packed, packed. That was incredible then because Rod Hounslow (the manager) said to me, 'the thing is just to stay up on the top'.

If you don't know, it is very dangerous. He said there would be someone next to her but, 'if anything happens and you see her lose her balance, for goodness sake get into it'. The steps were going down and before she came to the last step, she lost her balance. It wasn't very far so I rushed in to hold her. She turned around and she said, 'thank you, thank you very much' or something like that. She was happy anyway that she didn't fall down and I thought, that's good I have even touched the Queen.

Silvio Moscarda

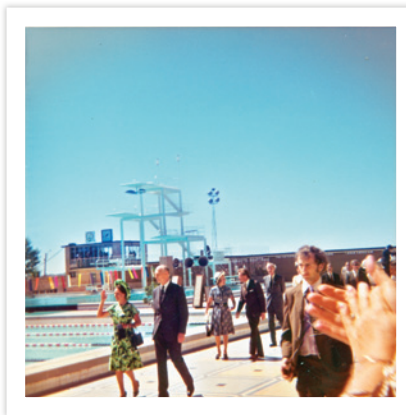
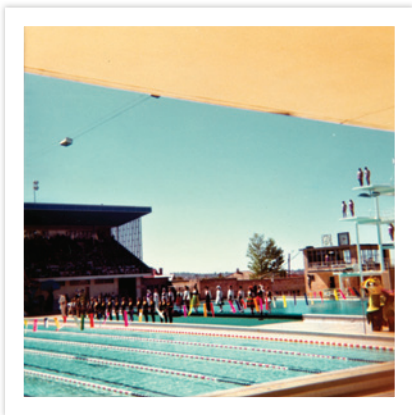


Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II during her 1977 visit
(COV PH02303 donated by Silvio Moscarda)

Her Royal Highness, Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon and The Earl of Snowdon paid an official visit to Perth in 1972. Amongst their official engagements was a night of entertainment at Beatty Park. The first item on the program for the Royal couple was a 400 voice children's choir from a number of primary and secondary schools presenting songs portraying the Australian character. These were followed by folk dancing and musical items depicting the influence of migrants on Australian culture, and the comradeship and hard work of the early British settlers. There was also a diving display presented by a group of students from a number of Perth schools under the direction of coach, Bruce Prance of the WA Diving Association, calisthenics directed by Mrs Pauline Ashworth and swimming demonstrations by students from 23 different schools.

Princess Margaret visited Western Australia in 1972 and there was a reception at Beatty Park. School kids from various schools were bussed in for the event. I remember we stood in lines waiting to go in for ages in the hot sun! Then we sat for what seemed like hours and I was very bored. I was more interested in the geography teacher from Armadale High School who was herding his charges – none other than Rodney Marsh, Australian wicket keeper who was still working and juggling a job.

Nona Oliver



Princess Margaret and Lord Snowden's visit to Beatty Park Pool, 13 October 1972
(L-R COV PH03537, COV PH03536 and COV PH03540 donated by Amanda Williams)

Performers from Perth Modern School, under the guidance of Mrs Margot Henshaw (PE teacher) performed national dances from various countries, as part of the pageant for Princess Margaret's visit to Perth.

Amanda Williams

I remember an afternoon in 1972 when I came to Beatty Park for the WA Children's welcome to Princess Margaret and Lord Snowden. The stands were full, we clapped and cheered and sang. Princess Margaret smoked a cigarette in a long cigarette holder.

Digby Claydon

Prince Phillip returned to Beatty Park Aquatic Centre 11 years after he opened the VIIth British Empire and Commonwealth Games.



Prince Philip signing the visitors book at Beatty Park Aquatic Centre on 6 November 1973 with Ernest Le Steere CBE (later Sir Ernest) and Rod Hounslow, Manager (right)
(COV PH00890)

We had a Visitor's Book at Beatty Park and we had Prince Phillip twice. He was the person who opened the Commonwealth Games in 1962. There was another occasion where he and the Queen were in Western Australia on their Royal Visit and the Education Department had a special day for them. We were able to have everybody that ever came as a VIP of great note. They were always invited to sign the Visitor's Book.

Rod Hounslow

More famous visitors

Other visitors who caused a stir were the various pop and rock stars who performed at Beatty Park. Prior to the opening of the Perth Entertainment Centre in late December 1974 the aquatic centre was seen as an ideal venue to accommodate large audiences. Decking was laid across the pools to form a stage for many of the events. A flat fee of \$120 was charged.

Beatty Park was the only place that you could sit 5,000 or 6,000 people. So we picked up all of the concerts. Paul Gadenne would come to Beatty Park with a request for a concert and what he required. The recommendation would go forward from my office for a particular date – it was invariably not the swimming season.

Rod Hounslow



A fan attempting to get into a concert without paying
(COV PH00897 donated by Paul Gadenne)



Stage erected in front of the diving boards
(COV PH00896 donated by Paul Gadenne)

The Beatty Park Aquatic Centre proved to be an excellent concert venue at a time when Perth was without any other venue of suitable size to host some of the world's biggest names of music. It did at times look spectacular with the image of what was happening on stage being reflected on the water of the main swimming pool and adding to the ambience of many a memorable concert.

Paul Gadenne

Santana - it was a fabulous experience. It would have to be one of the top five concerts I've been to.

Robert Williams

Heavy rock concert 1970 - Deep Purple – oh yeah – Free, Manfred Mann – Long hair – huge wall of sound – jumping excitedly in pool – and no Kylie being only two at the time!! Purple memories of Beatty Park.

Keith Chilton



1972



1974

I went to see Suzi Quatro. She was a bouncy little thing and she wore five or six outfits. I think it was because she sweated through them. I do remember one outfit was a leather jump suit.

Deanne Ketting

Musical acts known to have appeared at Beatty Park in the 1970s:

Frigid Pink 12 September 1970
Daddy Cool 1971
Deep Purple March 1971
The Everley Brothers 30 June 1971
The Bee Gees 21 July 1971
Cilla Black 23 September 1971
Rolf Harris 16 October 1971
The Kinks 1971
Santana 1971 or 1972
Roy Orbison 28 September 1972
The Hollies 12 May 1973
The Jackson Five 29 June 1973
Suzi Quatro 18 May 1974
Alvin Stardust 24 September 1974



The Everly Brothers performing at their "One Night Stand" concert at Beatty Park, 30 June 1971
(COV PH 00898 donated by Paul Gadenne)

This event attracted almost 5,000 people.

The Everly Brothers were unique to the music business not only for their commercially crafted recordings but also because they were one of the first consistently successful rock n' roll acts to come out of Nashville. They left their mark on both the pop and country music charts.

www.rockabillyhall.com/EveryBros

Growing up it was the location for most of the music concerts I attended. The Bee Gees come to mind as the first I attended there. Sometimes areas of the pools were covered by temporary stages and sometimes partial catwalks crossed over the pools for a pretty effect, such as those that were devised for the Miss West Coast finals.

Cheryl Rixon



Bee Gees concert at Beatty Park on 21 July 1971

(COV PH00899 donated by Paul Gadenne)

The Bee Gees group was formed by brothers Barry, Robin and Maurice Gibb. The trio were successful for most of their 40 plus years of recording music. They experienced great success as a pop act in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and then later as leaders of the disco music era in the late 1970s.

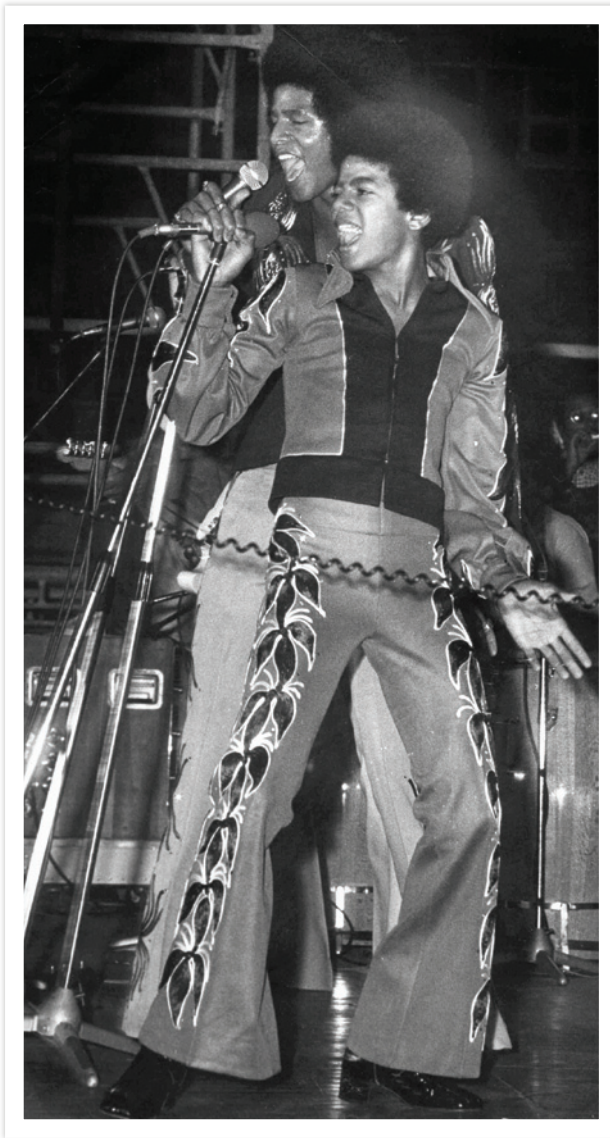


Jackson 5 performing at Beatty Park, 29 June 1973

(COV PH00906 donated by Paul Gadenne)

The Jackson 5's first album was "Diana Ross presents the Jackson 5" which was released in December 1969. They became an instant sensation with "I Want You Back" and the 1970 singles "ABC", "The Love You Save" and "I'll Be There" all going to number one on the Billboard Hot 100 and becoming successful internationally. "Jacksonmania" swept the nation, and within a year of their debut, they were amongst the biggest names in popular music.

[Wikipedia](#)



Michael Jackson
(COV PH00903 donated by Paul Gadenne)



Michael Jackson with promoter Paul Gadenne
(COV PH03909 donated by Paul Gadenne)

The year was 1973 and Beatty Park was thrown into chaos with large crowds all coming to see the Jacksons perform. They sang like angels but I will remember them for their other performance especially Michael who used to pretend he was drowning and wait for someone to save him.

Silvio Moscarda

Beauty Pageants

The Miss West Coast beauty pageant was run by television Channel 7 and radio station 6PR with a number of sponsors including Walshs men's store and Jeans West. It later became known as the Jeans West Miss West Coast and Jeans West owner Alistair Norwood was one of the judges. Stephanie Quinlan, model, fashion promoter and

TV presenter was another judge. Heats were held at various popular beaches such as Cottesloe and Scarborough and the finals were held in January each year at Beatty Park. The view across the still water of the pools sparkling under the bright lights made it a stunning location for the event.



Miss West Coast finalists 1973 with Jeff Newman and winner Sue Kay (centre)
(Photograph courtesy Channel 7 and WA TV History)

By the time I participated in the pageant I had been crowned Miss Subiaco and had become a regular fixture on Perth's modelling scene. I'd had numerous magazine covers and was thoroughly engaged in the local runway parades and newspaper assignments. It seemed only natural to go down to the heats at the beaches to join in the festivities of the Miss West Coast selection process. It was a lot of fun and I felt more like it was just being a part of what was happening than being in an actual competition. I thoroughly enjoyed all of it. Many of my friends from school and from modelling were also contestants and it was just a fun adventure together.

Cheryl Rixon

Brian Smith, who worked for TVW7, recalled:

Miss West Coast was probably the first major production I was given to do in the 1970s for Channel 7. At Beatty Park they were spectacular shows. I liked doing themes.

One story I was doing – Miss Australian Beach Girl – we only did two of those and they had the finalists from all around Australia. I decided to do an ancient Roman theme and so that means you had to have a horse and chariot. You had to have someone like Caesar in the chariot and with last year's winner all glammed up.



Miss Australian Beach Girl (1970s)
(Photograph courtesy Channel 7 and WA TV History)

We did a Venice theme where we turned canoes into gondolas and had them going up the competition pool. I remember John Farnham, who was King of the Pops at that stage, was the guest artist and he sang two or three songs but I always got the guest artist to be in the opening number. So I got him to sing "Forniculi Fornicula" and we had girls with tambourines dancing around him. We used other pop stars like Mark Holden when he used to wear his pink carnation and Debbie Byrne (or Deborah Byrne as she is now called). We always seemed to get whoever was the main Australian pop artist over.

The special guest to perform at the Miss West Coast Final in 1975 was Kamahl, who sang the World Children's Day song, 'One Hundred Children'. Children from a local dance school who were as young as three were given the opportunity to dance on stage in national costumes.

Well there was the little kid that represented Australia. She had like a pole with a swag on the back of it and corks hanging off a hat. When she came out the crowd just went wild. So he was delighted I think that the song was presented like that.

One time we built a pirate ship with a gang plank. We had a sword fight and a pirate fell into the water. We also did like a sideshow alley and built a merry-go-round. We did a Hawaiian theme and I remember we got a champion diver. He had two flaming torches and went up to the tower and he took off. He worked out that he had to drop the torches just before he hit the water so that he wouldn't injure himself. Those little things just put pizzazz into a show. I always believed you shoot for the stars, you can always come back a little bit but if you do the safe thing, then it can get mediocre.

Brian Smith

Carnivals

As the premier pool in the metropolitan area, Beatty Park hosted many swimming competitions, such as weekly club and inter-clubs events and the annual school and inter-school carnivals. More unusual events were the Royal Australian Nursing Federation annual Inter-Hospital Swimming Carnivals, and the Inter-Forces Swimming Competition in 1974.



360334PD

Inter-Forces Swimming Competition at Beatty Park, 1974



360333PD



360336PD

(Photographs courtesy State Library of Western Australia, Battye Library)



360338PD

School Swimming carnivals

At high school (City Beach SHS) we had the annual swimming carnival. We sat in the stands. City Beach did very well – the school had several good swimmers while I was there and also Raelene Tillbrook who went on to win medals at the Commonwealth Games in diving.

Nona Oliver

Beatty Park was the most incredible stadium to perform in because of the way it was built and the way the whole audience wraps around. You know, you have got an end here and an end there and a horseshoe coming around. That was where we had the Inter-school Sports.

There is this very famous quote of mine. They were saying, 'what was it like? What was it like?' after I had won the Olympic gold medal and I said, 'it was just like the Inter-School Sports' and it was.

I mean Beatty Park with the schools – each one of the schools was there – and you had the war cries and chanting. It was like being in a gladiator's arena. Then all your parents' friends and everybody – it was really that the whole community was at Beatty Park. So I loved it and that's really where I learnt to race.

Peter Evans

Neil Brooks who swam for Hale School was the top swimmer in freestyle, backstroke and butterfly but breast-stroke was a different matter.

Neil Brooks was the champion kid swimmer of his age. He dived in thinking he was going to win and all he could see was my feet. He and I got the Gold Medal together in Moscow in 1980. So that was funny how the first time we ever swam, that we ever competed, was at Beatty Park.

Peter Evans

State Championships

In the 1973 WA State Championships, Kathy Fenner (nee Pengelley) then 14 years old, won the Women's freestyle open 200 metres, 400 metres, 800 metres and 1,500 metres titles. She then reluctantly qualified for the last event, the women's open 100 metres freestyle final. This she also won, swimming in lane EIGHT!

Bruce Pengelley

In my last year of school I started training at Beatty Park. We would have to drive there at like 4.30 or 5 o'clock in the morning. It was just insane. It was pitch black. My Dad would wake me up and I would go, 'aaagh'. He would drive to Beatty Park and he would sleep in the car outside Beatty Park and I would train. So I trained with Kevin Duff at Beatty Park. That started in probably 1976 or 77 – somewhere around there.

Peter Evans



1979 State Championships at Beatty Park Aquatic Centre
Medal presentation for the winners of the 50 metres men's freestyle event: 1st Neil Brooks, 2nd Mark Selfe and 3rd Jim Gerritzen. Brooks (City of Perth Club) had just broken the record, making him the fastest junior freestyle swimmer in Australia at that time

(COV PH03455 courtesy WASA)

Swimming Clubs

1970. Dawn breaking, icy toes, shock at 6am! Lap pounding, tumble turns, deep gravelly gasps of air, chlorine coloured hair, training, training. Club meets – scream for team, age group medals, water polo Sundays! I live in this pool!

Stacey-Jane Willis

Our children belonged to the swimming club because they were racing here at Beatty Park. We did get involved for the children. My daughter not very much, my son about four times a week. In summer they would race on Tuesday night and in winter on a Sunday morning. I was time-keeper. It was West Perth Swimming Club.

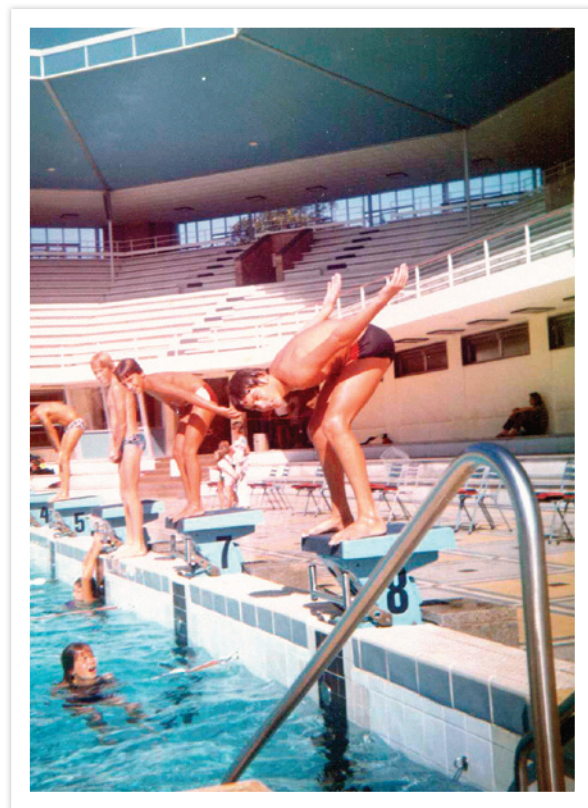
All the older ones had their own coaches because they were doing it competitively but mine were like the juniors. They had Mrs Evans, she was good with the children, very good with them and, of course, West Perth Swimming Club, they were all from Beatty Park.

Anna Monastra

The Scherini boys, Robert and Johnny, were keen swimming club members who lived in Mount Hawthorn and trained at Beatty Park in the 1970s. Their mother Olivia recalled the effect that this had on her life:

They would get up in the morning at 5 o'clock, I'd have to have their bags ready with the bathers and towel and have Sustagen or Milo and something to eat. They'd go off for two hours and do seven miles every morning. Come home. I'd have to have their lunch ready for school, their bag ready, and they'd get changed quickly. And they used to eat. This was the breakfast: a bowl of stewed fruit each, cereal, two eggs, two toasts and bacon, a glass of milk. Then they'd be off to school. In the meantime I would have to wash their bathers and towels and get everything ready for when they came home from school. They'd have something to eat and off training again. Every night they did training and then there was Club every Sunday morning at Beatty Park. Then they'd have all these pennants - at night when they'd compete against other clubs.

Olivia Scherini



Bob Scherini at Beatty Park, 1975
 (COV PH00485 and COV PH00486 donated by the Scherini family)



Swimming lessons

All the pools were used for the Education Department's vocational swimming classes.

In those days it was huge. I remember probably 40 teachers teaching four or five lessons a morning. The class sizes varied but from memory I would have said 15 to 20 in each class. So with five classes going it was a significant number of children but that's how important Beatty Park became.

An important plus with teaching in a swimming pool environment, was safety with the children because you could see them. Even if they were under water you could see them. Whereas when you are teaching in the sea or the river – not that I ever taught in the river but I taught in the sea at Albany, you are always worried whether you have actually got all your crew on board.

Geoff White



Junior Swimming Certificate
(Donated by Nona Oliver)

I remember I had some really lovely teachers. You would lie on the really hot concrete and do pretend strokes. That was usually early on before we were allowed to get in the pool. Everyone was dying to get in the pool and they would make us sit on that concrete and do those pretend strokes.

Nicole Humphry

Memories

My strongest memory of Beatty Park is at a school swimming carnival, my friend and I decided to climb to the highest diving board, which was unimaginably high. We were standing at the top and a voice came over the loudspeaker “the two girls standing on the top of the diving board tower – come down immediately”. We froze and realised everyone in the stands was watching us. My friend went back and climbed down the ladders but I jumped into the pool, the only time I jumped from the top board. I have no recollection of being told off afterwards.

Early memories are of family members coming home covered in blood after being pushed off the side of the lower diving board and hitting the pool edge. It was an exciting and dangerous place. We caught the bus in Scarborough to Beatty Park – it was an outing we as children were allowed to do without any adults, the older kids in charge of the younger. My estimation is that my older sisters might have been about 11 and 13. I was under 10.

Sally Lake

I also remember the diving boards at Beatty Park. We had to queue for ages to have a go at the spring boards on the lower levels. I jumped off the second highest level, 22 feet I think but never found the courage to jump from the top 30 foot tower.

Bruce Cadee

In 1970 I was eight years old. As a family we would all go to Beatty Park. My brother and I would race each other in the 50 metre outside pool. This particular day, whilst racing, my Dad’s false teeth fell out. My brother had to duck dive to retrieve them. We laughed a lot and have retold this story often.

Robyn Sherde

In 1971 the main pool was drained and repairs made to the tiles, which had probably been damaged by the 1968 Meckering earthquake and in 1975 a new timing system was installed.

Jerry Hatzis worked at Beatty Park from 1962 at the time of the Games until 1993 when he retired. He worked in various roles and witnessed many events and changes over the years. Later his son Chris also joined the team.

The entrance coming in from Vincent Street was a roundabout; it was really beautiful. There was a gardener, Louis. He used to do such an excellent job with the flowers and everything that people would come into Beatty Park just to look at the gardens. Tourists were driving in with the buses and stopping to see. It was the place to see in the 1970s.

During those years we had Premiers, Prime Ministers coming through. There were footballers like Italian footballers, West Australian footballers,

American national team, the Dutch national team. There were Olympic swimmers like Janet Evans – you know the big names of the days. Lyn Clements used to coach sometimes as well.

On top of that you had like the life saving groups. Jack Sue – he was the very first scuba instructor, he started scuba diving there. Then the people he trained took over from him.

Jerry Hatzis

I grew up in Beatty Park Pool pretty much from a young age. I used to actually help my Dad, I do remember the turnstiles and emptying them and I used to help him count them when I was a little kid. I used to work the till at the front even as an eight, nine, ten year old – just to help out because he was on his own. Just taking the money as the people came in. That was sort of unofficial and then in 1987 I worked in the kiosk for a couple of years.

Chris Hatzis

1980s

In the 1970s and early 1980s, other local government authorities established swimming pools, enticing those who were not locals away from Beatty Park.

The Western Australian Swimming Association, which was formed in the early 1920s, located their

administration at Beatty Park from 1962 when the venue was opened. It remains there in 2012 operating as Swimming WA. This meant that many of Western Australia's best swimmers continued to train there with their coaches.



In October 1983 Olympian Lisa Curry visited Perth promoting the Queensland Tourist Bureau. She is seen here at Beatty Park Pool with Stuart Blackwell and Natalie Morris
(COV PH03458 courtesy WASA)

We used to go with my Dad in the mornings. About five o'clock I used to get up. We used to train with the City of Perth Swim Club back in those days with Neil Brooks and all those guys. Obviously they were older, we were younger. Kevin Duff was the coach at that time. Then after swimming training we used to go to Greek School.

Chris Hatzis

Over 50 swimmers, coaches, club officials and Western Australian Swimming Association members attended a 'Think Tank' on planning for the 1980s, which was held at Beatty Park on Sunday 30 May 1982.



Swimmers who were in attendance:
Back row: Thomas Stachewicz, Andrew Stachewicz, Wayne Smith, Barry Armstrong
Front row: Darren Wright, Michelle Wytenburg, Jane Pole, Shelley Taylor, Steven Cornelius, Steven Morris
(COV PH03456 courtesy WASA)

Michelle Wytenburg, who was a member of the Think Tank, wrote the following in 2011:

My fondest memory of Beatty Park swimming pool was when I became the first West Australian woman to break the minute for the 100 metres freestyle in the time of 59.41 on 9.1.1983. I was 16 years old. Breaking the minute was a major milestone for me and at the time for West Australian women. It was something that I had battled to break for some time, swimming one minute point something on at least six different occasions in major events. In the heat in the morning I swam a 1.00.03, if I remember correctly. My swimming coach Barry Rose put his hand through the ceiling in the grandstand and my father Hans Wytenburg, who was an official starter at the time, was not allowed to start my race or a number of races afterwards due to the excitement. The summer swimming championships of 1983 were my most successful as I recall entering 20-odd events and winning up to 17 medals in the range of gold, silver and bronze, both individual and team. The main pool was taken by the coaches Gerry Stacowitz, Kevin Duff and Lynne McFarlane (if my memory serves me right). I swam with the Pitcher squad and we trained in the bottom pool, quite a challenge as it was freezing, never getting sun in the afternoon. The wind whipped right across it and was so shallow at the first and last thirds of the pool that your hands touched the bottom on the pull through. It certainly made us bend our elbows. Just before major events we were able to have a lane in the main pool so we could get the feel of the diving blocks and the pool itself.

To walk in after school and see all those other swimmers, eating afternoon tea, the coaches yelling at them to get in the pool, too bad if it was cold, mums and dads sitting on the side patiently waiting, sipping hot tea, bags and towels everywhere added the atmosphere of a wonderful space. Come competition time every squad sat in "their space" in the grandstand, marshalling was done at the shallow end and then we walked towards the deep end for the start of our race.

Cont...

At the Winter Championships it was often freezing with all swimmers being rugged up in Ugg boots, beanies and tracksuits right to the very last minute before getting on the blocks. The presentation dais was also at the deep end of the pool right out in the open for everyone to see.

I remember when they got the electronic touch pads installed, gone was the guesswork of who touched first and as swimmers we had the thrill of seeing our names coming up in lights on the score board, showing either our disappointment or elation at our times and places. I can still picture the entrance with the turnstiles to enter, turning left for the boy toilets, WASA office and the deep end of the pool; right for the girl toilets, which were long and draughty and at the shallow end. I recall winter training sessions where the hot showers would certainly get a good workout, often in the middle of a training just to warm up! Down at the bottom pool area there was also a grassed area where during the summer families would sit under the trees with picnics...

During my career I was a member of the Target squad, along with Barry Armstrong, Andrew Taylor and Neil Brooks, all Olympic competitors. We would travel to invitational events at distant clubs and it was quite a buzz to be recognized for our achievements. I represented Western Australia at a number of Nationals and had the privilege of being a member of a very large Pan Pacific School Games squad sent to Brisbane. I was also selected with other age group swimmers from various states for a training camp in Brisbane, where we had the opportunity to meet Robert De Castella and learnt valuable information in regard to our training program and swimming careers. I went to the Institute of Sport in Canberra for a two-week introduction when it first started operating and had to stay at the University Campus as the accommodation was not yet complete. Deciding it was too far from home, I opted to continue my training with Barry Rose.

Beatty Park was and always will be for me the place where I broke records, made friends and it gave me my little spot in the history books for being the first West Australian woman to break the minute.

Michelle Wytenburg



Swimming coaches, 1982
 L-R: Tom Lyall, Bernie Mulroy, Gerry Stachewicz, Jim Sharland, Brian Moebius, Russell Pitcher, Ric Turner,
 Alex McKenzie
 (COV PH03464 courtesy WASA)

When I was 11 I was recommended to join a training program run by Kevin Duff and Bernie Mulroy, which was based out of Beatty Park. Kevin was the head coach when I first started. He basically handed the reins to Bernie Mulroy and he coached me for about 10 years.

Bill Kirby

Swimmers of the era who were entered in the Swimming WA Hall of Fame were Olympians Peter Evans, Neil Brooks and Tom Stachewicz:¹

Peter Evans

Peter is one of Australia's greatest swimmers. He was the only male swimmer in the world to win an individual medal and relay medal at both the 1980 Moscow and 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. Peter also represented his country at the 1982 Brisbane Commonwealth Games.

Neil Brooks

Neil first represented Australia at the 1979 FINA Cup in Tokyo, before moving on to the 1980 Moscow Olympics at the age of 17, taking gold in the 400 m medley relay team. Brooks took four medals at the 1982 Brisbane Commonwealth Games, and won silver and bronze medals again in the relay events at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics.

Tom Stachewicz

Tom is a triple Olympian who represented WA at the 1984 Los Angeles, 1988 Seoul and 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games. Stachewicz also represented Australia at the 1986 Edinburgh Commonwealth Games taking home bronze in the 800 m freestyle relay. At the 1990 Commonwealth Games, he walked away with four medals.



Peter Evans with his gold medals
(COV PH02734)

¹ Extracts from Swimming WA Hall of Fame, <http://wa.swimming.org.au>



Peter Evans, Thomas Stachewicz and Neil Brooks with Olympic Swimming Team Manager and WASA President, Thomas Brazier, prior to 1984 Los Angeles Olympics

(COV PH03460 courtesy WAASA)

It was a really good pool. You swim in a lot of different pools and some feel fast and some feel slow. The way the water ran over the edge was very advanced at that time. It just fell straight over – good drainage. There was like a three-foot trench on either side of the pool, going the whole length and the water would just drop over that.

Peter Evans

In the early days it was just the sheer size of it. I don't think I have been to any swimming pool yet that has that awesome structure with seating around the top of the pool, enveloping three sides of that 50 metre pool. You just don't get that anywhere else in the world. I don't think I have ever swum in a pool that has been able to get such an atmosphere as that one.

Bill Kirby

Raelene Tilbrook started out as a swimmer and then switched to diving. She competed both in Australia and overseas, with a great deal of success. Her coaching career began at the age of 14 when she formed her own squad.

My earliest memories of Beatty Park begin in the swimming pool with Kevin Duff. My first coach, Percy Oliver, recommended I transfer to Kevin and to Beatty Park, as I had a strong aversion to the jellyfish at Crawley Baths!

While I began as a swimmer, my interest was always diverted to the acrobatic activities in the diving pool, and it wasn't too long before my

parents enrolled me in diving classes with coach Bruce Prance in 1967. For the next 20 years most of my time outside of school and home was spent at Beatty Park!

Beatty Park was the 1st diving pool in Australia to install a "bubble machine" which released a massive compressed air "mattress of bubbles" used as the equivalent of the gymnastics "foam pit" as a training aide. Apart from its use as a training aide, the poolies would occasionally allow the public to jump into the bubble cushion for some thrills!

Although the diving towers are long gone, Beatty Park will always hold a special place in my heart.

Raelene (Tilbrook) Lyon



Medal winners at the Juvenile State Championships, 1967

Alison Dale (top left), unknown, Raelene Tilbrook (seated). This was Raelene's first ever medal (bronze)

(COV PH03915 donated by Raelene Lyon)



Raelene Tilbrook practising with David Higbee
(COV PH03912 donated by Raelene Lyon)

My best memory is watching Raelene Tilbrook dive at our interschool swimming carnival. She did a triple hip somersault etc, etc, etc and silenced 3,000 high school students who had come to watch. Awesome!

Jen Townsend

While competing and coaching Lyon (Tilbrook) also became a diving judge and administrator, a role she continues today... On one European tour Lyon served as a competitor, coach and team manager. She became one of Australia's few master coaches, having coached for more than 30 years and nurtured national champions and international representatives. She has judged at international competitions since 1997, including the Beijing Olympics.

Chris Leitch (inmycommunity.com.au)



Judges by the pool
L-R: Robyn Arlow, Shane Budd and Raelene Tilbrook
(COV PH03913 donated by Raelene Lyon)

It was a real breeding ground. I was 12 or 13 and in the pool we had Paul Lee who was a Commonwealth Games swimmer; Peter Galvan, who was a Commonwealth Games swimmer and an Open-water Australian representative; and Shelly Taylor-Smith who was probably by far the greatest Open-water swimmer that Australia has had, if not the world. We had Dean Peters who was a Barcelona Olympian and Australian Surf Title holder four years in a row. Dominic Sheldrick at the time was the fastest 100 metre freestyler in Australia. We had James Legge who was in probably the top three breaststrokes in Australia. Before that time you had Peter Evans, you had

the famous Neil Brooks. I am probably missing a good half a dozen. They were the top rung and as a young kid I was chasing those guys. If you stepped out of line the coach wouldn't have to say anything because the swimmers would.

When I got serious we started training about nine times a week. I think there were 11 sessions on offer. During camp times we would do about 13 swimming sessions a week plus we'd use the gym. Bernie built an old gym in one of the old store rooms down the bottom. So we used to visit that three times a week in the vain hope of getting some bigger muscles. But yes, a lot of hours spent swimming up and down that black line.

Bill Kirby

Rachel Harris started training at Beatty Park in the late 1980s. She went on to win a gold medal in the 800 metres freestyle at the 1998 Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur and competed at the Sydney Olympics in 2000.

I started swimming at Beatty Park in Shell novice meets when I was less than 10. My earliest memories are of sitting in the sun on the tiled steps of the pool concourse, waiting for my event with other swimmers sitting around me looking like they knew a lot more about racing. I can remember sitting near one swimmer in my age group who cracked her knuckles whilst waiting for the race to start, and thinking that if I did that too, I'd be sure to win like she did.

I remember being so in awe of the complex, the huge stands towering metres above. I couldn't

believe that they had been, or would ever be full of people watching swimming events.

We arrived for our morning sessions at 05:20 hours to do plyometric warm-ups, where we would do a circuit of medicine balls, skipping, stretching. And every day there was a line at the front entrance, waiting for the doors to be opened. I could never believe how quickly some of the members of the public managed to get in that front door and into the pool.

I also remember being a bit older, and attending club pennant meets there. I swam for Claremont Swimming Club at the time, and it was always such a great atmosphere. I loved the change rooms. They were massive, had huge areas of lockers, heaps of showers, and the women's change room took up the entire eastern end of the grandstands.

Rachel Harris

Lessons at Beatty Park

Nicole Humphry was a vacation swimming teacher at Beatty Park in the late 1980s and early 90s. She taught young children and adults swimming, and life saving to young adults.

Adults who had never swum before – that was the best. I mean the kids are really good because they get so excited and they draw you pictures and stuff but the adults who had never swum before and

had made their own decision that they wanted to conquer their fear of water or something. That was a really good class. That was just teaching them how to swim basically. For their last day they'd go in the diving pool and the big pool and they would have to jump off the board. I remember that was a really good feeling because they all did it. They were all able to jump into that deep water.

Nicole Humphry



Vacation swimming lesson in life saving skills
(COV PH03585 donated by Mary Boyd)



Vacation lessons at Beatty Park in the 1980s
(COV PH03587 and COV PH03586 donated by Mary Boyd)

They made me head of the swimming pool attendants for Vacation Swimming. I was responsible for that and to accommodate all the kids, all the instructors, all the parents and make sure they were no problems. I used to walk about – I am not exaggerating – about 50 or 60 kilometres a day, working.

Jerry Hatzis



(COV PH03588 COV PH03583 donated by Mary Boyd)

Happy Memories: Tramping off to the pool from North Perth Primary School. The learners' pool was freezing but the five minutes of "free play" once the whistle blew was worth it. Then it was through the foot-cleaning pool into the change rooms. Finally, back to school, eating "play lunch" on the way.

Carol Resnick

In the late 1960s and early 1970s I attended life saving lessons at Beatty Park during the Christmas school holidays. I remember the smell of chlorine in the water, in the change-rooms, in your hair and on your towel. In 1987 I helped build and manage the first chlorine production facility in WA and our product was used to chlorinate the water at Beatty Park.

Bruce Cadee

Initially when I started I would have been 16. My first day was as a lifeguard. They didn't realise I was 16 and you had to be 18 to actually work as a lifeguard. It was funny because on my first day I had to actually pull someone out of the pool. A little kid dived off the top tower. Six metres and he hurt his shoulder when he went under.

White Knight – that was our nickname – we had white shirt, white shoes, white everything. I took them all off, dived in, pretty much pulled him out of the water and they found out that I shouldn't have been on as a lifeguard. So they ended up putting me in the kiosk for the next two years until I reached 18. Then I became a lifeguard.

So while I was going through University I was working at the pool as well up until 1993.

Chris Hatzis

The children of lifeguard Sylvio Moscarda also worked there while they were students.

Linda was working there. She was in the office and she did quite a bit of work there. They did a bit of paper work when they had a competition and in the school holidays they had quite a bit. Michael worked on and off as a pool attendant until his death in 1983 and he used to do different jobs. There was a huge tank they were cleaning; they took all the old stuff off and put the new sand in the filter.

Sylvio Moscarda

I went through a period where I was doing laps, when I got quite seriously involved in laps. It was a thing that probably lasted a few years. I would come and do the laps as the preferred exercise. I'd be perhaps coming three times a week to do that but during summer with the kids – back in the 80s before the pool was renovated – we'd come down a couple of times a week during summer.

Then at that stage you wanted to compete with your kids and have races against them, so you started swimming.

Hon. Alannah McTiernan

AUSSI Masters Club

The first AUSSI Masters Club opened in WA in 1977 and the Perth City AUSSI Swimming Club the following year. The Perth City AUSSI Swimming Club has called Beatty Park home for many years. Anyone over 18 can join the club, which trains two nights a week and Saturday mornings. Membership entitles the swimmers to free coaching, lane hire, equipment usage and insurance. The club regularly takes part in competitions and a number of the members take part in the Cottesloe to Rottnest Swim each year.

We are a club of about 80 swimmers with members of an average age in the low thirties but with members also in their low twenties, and over fifty and beyond. We do all our training at Beatty Park... All the officers in the club are volunteers, and donate their time to the running of the club, which keeps the costs down and makes it accessible to more swimmers. All AUSSI clubs are run this way.

Our club trains specifically for the Rottnest Channel Swim in January and February, and in 2008 we had nine solo swimmers complete the crossing. The

rest of the year we compete in carnivals (usually five), middle distance pool events (400, 800, 1,500 m) and other open water events. We also have about six club dinners, which have the best attendance of all our events.

Perth City AUSSI website (pre 2009)

In 2009 the club changed its name to Perth City Swim Club.

Today there are 33 AUSSI Masters clubs in WA and 1,400 members state-wide. Most of their members are there for fitness and health reasons as well as the competitions but there is also a social side to most of the clubs.

Because I enjoy my swimming I signed up for AUSSI Masters, which is a group Australia-wide. It is for people to do some sport and compete. I signed up for that and I did a lot of training at Beatty Park. I think I was part of a relay and I was swimming freestyle. We ended up having the actual Masters Games at the one in Mount Claremont. The new pool there – Challenge, but I did most of my training at Beatty Park.

Nicole Humphry



Mature swimmer Myrtle Wright (aged 80) shows her delight after winning her fifth gold medal at the AUSSI Veterans Swimming Championships held at Beatty Park in March 1989
(COV PH00950)

Nicole Humphry was a contestant in a Donnybrook Marathon; she did the swimming leg in an all-girl team. Again she did her training at Beatty Park.

I would have done that at Beatty Park as well because that was all in that year when I did the swimming teaching and then I did scuba diving. Then I did some training for that AUSSI Masters and I was living in Leederville for a patch there. So that was the convenient swimming pool.

Nicole Humphry



AUSSI swimmers training at Beatty Park (Percy Oliver third from right)
(COV PH03858)

I joined PC AUSSI 18 years ago. My first inter-club competition was 50 metres freestyle. At the finish, I was out of breath and gasping, and I promptly lost my dentures. Everybody out! Not me. I am duck-diving to find my teeth. My swimming has improved, age 76 I still swim at Beatty Park three times a week.

Rita Kempers

Water sports

Scuba diving lessons were available at Beatty Park from the 1960s.

About 1989 I did a diving course. I signed up to this club and they organised their lessons at Beatty Park. They provided all the equipment, the tanks and everything and taught us how to use them. We had to swim with the tanks on in the lap pool but mostly we were in the diving pool. Sitting on the bottom of the diving pool, which was really fun.

Nicole Humphry

In the evenings and weekends the dive pool was filled with divers training, one night I remember counting 70 on the bottom of the pool.

Karin Kelly

Underwater hockey, which is also known as Octopush or water hockey, is played with two teams of six. It is played with a short stick and a lead puck on the floor of the pool. Players wear a diving mask, snorkel, a cap with ear guards and flippers. They free dive during play while trying to move the puck towards their own goal or obstructing the opposition's moves.

I remember them actually playing underwater hockey. They used to book it out, usually at night-time. It is very skilful sport but you can't really see from on top of the water what they are doing underneath. They had half of the size of the pool with goals.

Chris Hatzis

Underwater hockey was very big when I was there; they trained late in the evening. I believe they were World Champs and remained undefeated for years around that time, all categories.

Karin Kelly

They used to have water-skiing there as well. In the lower pool they used to have skis and they used to have a machine at the other end. They used to pull you like you were water skiing to the other end. Cable Water Skiing – it is the same guy. He first started up there back in the 1980s. It was 20 cents a ride.

Chris Hatzis



(COV PH03684)

There are two water polo clubs based at Beatty Park. Triton is a very strong club – men, ladies, juniors – and then you have got Phantoms which is just men and ladies.

Dale Morrissy

There used to be a State Schoolgirls training squad on a Sunday afternoon. My daughter Wendy joined them and represented WA at the Schoolgirls Australian Championships.

Karin Kelly

In 1981 when I was 15 years old I travelled from Adelaide for the first Schoolgirls National Water Polo competition which was played at Beatty Park. Twenty years later we moved to Perth and now my children are learning to swim there.

Nicola Pennell



'Polo Madness'
(COV PH 03477 courtesy Amanda Sutton)

Karin Kelly started work at Beatty Park in 1988 as a pool supervisor and was Acting Centre Manager in 1994 when the centre closed for its first refit. Her memories of those days are:

The culture of the Centre was like a big family. We (the supervisors) used to have morning tea and afternoon tea with the office staff, Manager and Assistant Manager; if you didn't come they would page you and wait for you. A very clever way of pulling key staff together for an unofficial staff meeting; we used to talk about all sorts of stuff (work related). We used to collect drink cans and had a great Christmas do every year.

The lights over the main pool would blow from time to time always late at night. We would have to get in the pool and pick up the glass bits so the kids could train in the morning. We always loved it if under-water hockey were there because they would pick the glass up for us.

Changing the overhead lights: we would have to wind down the cables supporting the lights. Being small, I was sent up into the roof with Ray Nankerville to wind it down. I always hated it as it was hot and dusty. The stronger and taller staff would have to get in the water on ladders and stands to hold the lights so the electrician could change the globes.

Aqua Club: Colin Raven (who used to work at the morgue at Sir Charles Gairdiner Hospital) used to bring 'body bags' from his work to store the kickboards in.

City of Perth Swimming and Life Saving Club: There used to be kids everywhere, 'squillions'! Most were really nice, so were their parents. They used to have a room (old toilets that they had set up as a kitchen and would make coffees and breakfasts for the kids before they took them to school). It became part of the gym. I was instrumental in starting up the first pre-school classes there, used to go teach.

The kiosk was a transportable donger on the main concourse near the dive pool. It was a goldmine - very busy during the summer months. It had a tiny dinky chip fryer, sold sooo many hot chips from there. There was a small serving area, very little room to swing a cat in. We used to sell coffees, ice creams, drinks, lollies, crisps and the legendary hot chicken roll.

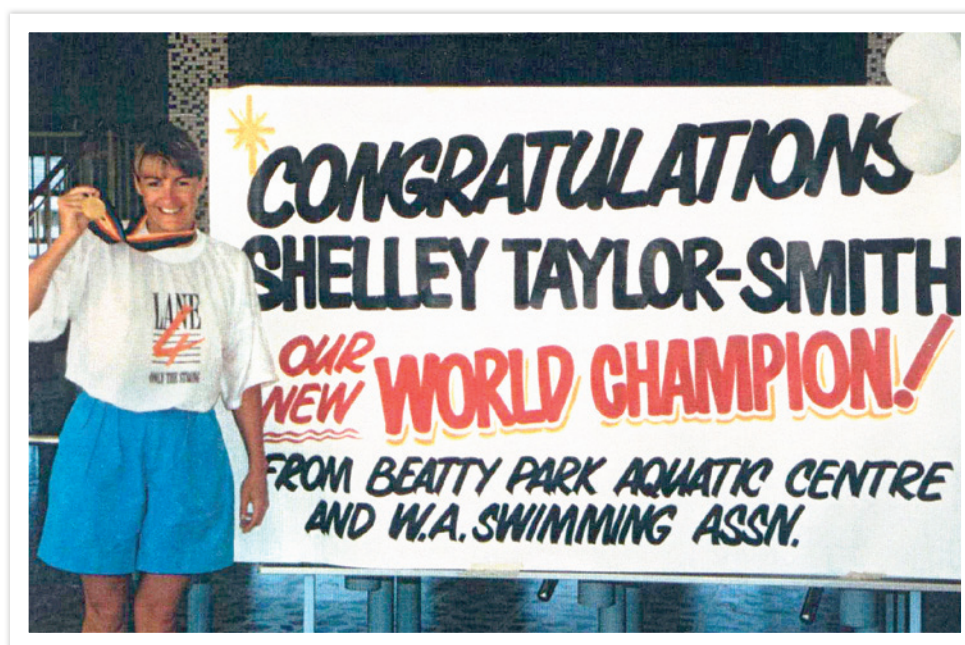
Karin Kelly

1990s

The City of Perth had hoped to upgrade Beatty Park with a view to hosting the 1991 World Aquatics Championships in Perth. In 1985 a design was prepared for that purpose but a new international standard facility was constructed at Mount Claremont instead.

The Championships were held in Perth between 3 and 13 January 1991 with a total of 1,142 athletes taking part. Australia came fifth out of the 19 participating countries, winning three gold, five silver and two bronze medals. Shelley Taylor-Smith, who trained at Beatty Park, won a Gold Medal in the 25 kilometre women's Open-water event.

Gold	Silver	Bronze
		
Shelley Taylor-Smith (AUS) 5:21:05.53	Martha Jahn (USA) 5:25:16.67	Karen Burton (USA) 5:28:22.74

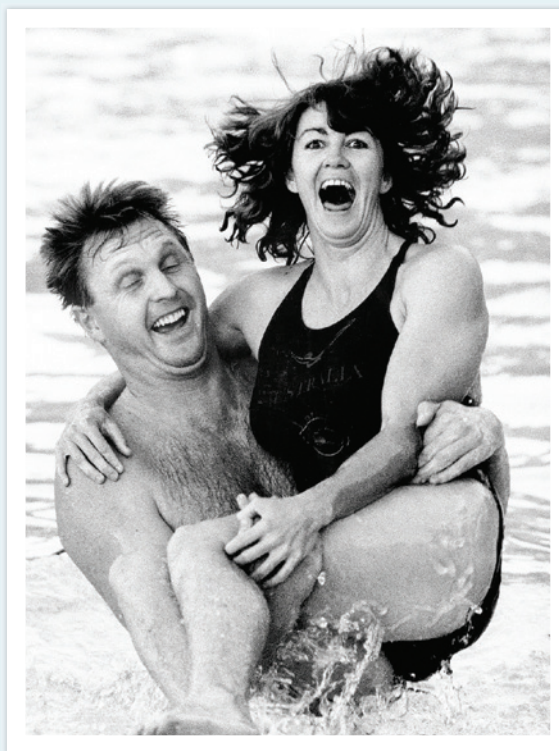


(COV PH00893)

Shelley Taylor-Smith (born in Perth on 3 August 1961) suffered from scoliosis, an abnormal curvature of the spine, throughout her school years. The condition required her to wear a back brace but in spite of this she was successful in national age group swimming competitions. While on a swimming scholarship to the University of Arkansas in the United States, the heavy training regime caused a lower-body paralysis. During her recovery, her coach noticed that her swimming improved at greater distances, and he encouraged her to take up marathon swimming; a sport which would also allow her to avoid potentially back-damaging tumble turns.

Taylor-Smith's first major achievement was breaking the world four-mile record in 1983. Subsequently, she won the Manhattan Island Marathon Swim five times, breaking the world record in 1995 by covering the 48 kilometre distance in 5 hours, 45 minutes and 25 seconds. She also won the Australian Marathon Swimming Championships three times, and seven consecutive FINA Marathon World Cups. She won a gold medal in the inaugural Open-water swimming event at the 1991 World Aquatics Championships in Perth, and a bronze at the 1994 Championships in Rome.

(Wikipedia)



Neil Brooks and Shelley Taylor-Smith enjoy a lighter moment away from their training sessions at Beatty Park Pool, c.1991
(COV PH 00951)

The City of Perth was disappointed at not being able to host the 1991 World Aquatics Championships and there were people that wanted to demolish the complex. After a period of public consultation the Council made the decision to renovate the existing centre, and the Federal Government contributed \$250,000 towards the redevelopment.

There was talk with some people pushing to totally close Beatty Park down and build another facility up around where the City of Vincent chambers now are but I didn't like that idea. So I then started really campaigning for a massive upgrade. We had a series of public meetings and honestly had overwhelming support. I mean we had hundreds of people come to those meetings and just overwhelmingly say, 'Look we want Beatty Park. We think this combination of having the traditional outdoor 50 metre pool and an indoor facility for year-round, and for kids and for elderly people, it is just absolutely the best combination'.

So it was hotly fought and it really took quite a number of years. Then there were big issues

about how we were going to fund it but we did have some fairly sizeable reserves in the City of Perth. I was on the Tech Services Committee and the Beatty Park sub-committee. So I was intimately involved in the development of the design and working with the architects and working out what would happen, what we would have and what we wouldn't have.

In part of this process we went and visited a lot of pools around Australia. We really saw what was on offer and the more you saw of what people were doing you realised it was a necessary facility. Really important for kids swimming too because what the swimming teachers were telling us is that where you have a situation where the kids only learn in summer – and they don't come in winter because it's too cold if you haven't got an indoor pool – that the rate of progress of kids learning to swim is severely compromised. The other powerful argument was the elderly and the importance of a heated indoor pool for elderly people who basically are just trying to preserve their mobility.

Hon. Alannah MacTiernan

In August 1992 the concept plan submitted by Peter Hunt Architect was approved and Universal Constructions Pty Ltd of Osborne Park won the tender (circa \$5.3 million). Work commenced on the site on 1 June 1993. This included a new area on the north eastern side with a 25 metre leisure pool (converted from the learners' pool), an indoor adventure playground with water slides

and a beach-type entry. A steam room, sauna, spa, crèche, kitchen, kiosk and dining area, retail shop and new offices (including the Western Australian Swimming Association office) were also included. At this time a new main entrance was constructed on the eastern side plus a car park. It took 13 months for the project to be completed.



New main entrance to the leisure centre
(COV PH03563)

The '93 addition was probably one of the first indoor swimming centres of that type in Perth. Peter Hunt was the architect. The handover was just upon the creation of the Town of Vincent and I was involved in that.

John Giorgi, JP (CEO)

The facility is unique in that it has maintained its historical traditional links to the past and developed a new leisure and dry-based fitness aspect to the complex. I am pleased that Beatty Park, with the new changes, continues to meet the needs of those groups who have been part of Beatty Park for so many years. The centre now caters for the needs of the total cross section of the community successfully.

Robert McPhail (Manager)

The centre closed for most of the period of the upgrade, reopening again on 1 July 1994. It was at this time also that artist Paul O'Connor was commissioned to design a public art work; \$30,000 was allocated for this and for the art in the wading pool (mosaic tiles in the form of a treasure hunt). Paul's main piece was a combination of five 2.7 metre totem poles covered in mosaics and stained glass. They were topped with a wrought iron and glass symbol and arranged in the shape of a Southern Cross in the new foyer, the entrance to which was on the eastern side of the new building. His installation was described as:

Five mosaic water totems anchored in a reflective constellation of the Southern Cross. These five totems symbolise the tree of life; the diver's buoy; the distressed hand; the sun cycle; and the moon cycle.

Paul O'Connor

Stage II of the new facilities (total cost \$5.75 million) and the new art works were officially opened on 1 July 1994. A plaque was unveiled at the ceremony by the Hon. Alannah MacTiernan, MLA and Craig Lawrence, Chairman of the Commissioners at the City of Perth (the City was undergoing a split to form four separate councils at that time) and an informal tour followed. It was at this time that the centre was renamed Beatty Park Aquatic Centre and from 1997 Beatty Park Leisure Centre.



Totems
(COV PH003677)



Hon. Alannah MacTiernan and Craig Lawrence opening the indoor facilities, 1 July 1994
(COV PH03887)

By that stage I was an Opposition Member of Parliament and I had been very opposed to the breaking up of the City of Perth but I still thought it was a very gracious thing that the Commissioner did to acknowledge that I had been probably the major player in pushing this forward.

Hon. Alannah MacTiernan

The new facility was launched with a free Open Day on Sunday 3 July and approximately 6,000 people visited the centre to enjoy the entertainment provided. This included scuba diving and an underwater “dinner party” by 30 qualified scuba divers (spectators could view this through

the window in the diving pool). There were also water polo demonstrations, jazz and bush bands, a “Speedo” fashion parade, “Battle of the Sexes” (City of Perth Swim Club), aqua aerobics and an accident simulation.



Underwater dinner party
(COV PH00891 and COV PH00892)

We lost count of the number of people who came but we estimate about 6,000. It was fantastic. Usually at these openings people come and go – at this, they just came and stayed. I’ve opened seven centres and this was the biggest I’ve seen – we still had people knocking on the door for a look at 11.30 pm.¹

Robert McPhail

The diving towers were pulled down during the 1994 renovations and three smaller boards set up, but they were not available for general use.

¹ Guardian Express, 12.7.1994



Beatty Park Leisure Centre, c.1994
(COV PH00965)

I started working at Beatty Park in 1992. I was a trainee centre supervisor and basically we ran the day-to-day operations of the pool. There were three centre supervisors and they brought in a fourth one to learn the job, fill in when people were on leave and hopefully step up when someone moved on because it was a sort of a transient industry at that stage. People moved from pool to pool from time to time. The manager was Geordie Thompson and it was still owned by the Perth City Council. It was just about in the transition stage – they were talking about dividing the Council.

Dale Morrissy

New indoor pool



(COV PH03567)

My memories of Beatty Park are that they had a little whale slide that I loved. When I got older I liked the water slides and how they squirted you when you were about to go down. And also the springy diving board that I used to do pin dives off.

Jarrad Sarafino (age 9)



(COV PH03569)



(COV PH03566)

The Learn-to-Swim program caters for a whole range of participants from three months of age upwards. In each section; parent/baby, pre-school, school-age, mini squads and adults the participants can progress at their own pace.



(COV PH03568)

Fitness facilities

The modern crèche made it very easy for young mothers to join the fitness classes or indulge in fitness or social swimming during the day. (It had previously been located in the old manager's house.)

I had a toddler and Beatty Park was the only place that had a pool and a crèche where I could swim. So I walked in and walked out with a job. I was just teaching classes and the crèche was there, so that was wonderful. My littlest one, Oliver – he is now 20. He was in nappies when I first started at Beatty Park.

Elizabeth Bentley

When I started there in '92 there was no gym. There was just a small corner of one of the rooms around the grandstand that the clubs actually used. It had probably about 10 pieces of equipment - really old stuff that they used for their swimmers for training and the staff used to jump in there from time to time and have a go but in '94 when we

upgraded the facility we put in a new gym. That was about 320 square metres at that stage and we have been fitting pieces of equipment into there like puzzle pieces ever since to try to get more room out of it because it's just so busy and it just gets busier every year.

Dale Morrissy

Olympian Bill Kirby not only trained intensively all year round in the pool but also worked at Beatty Park firstly as a lifeguard and then later as a gym instructor whilst studying at University.

All of the staff have their gym accreditation but combined with that we have a fifth year medical student on staff, a qualified physio, a masseur and another one of the instructors is completing a Ph D in diabetics. We offer a wealth of information on health, fitness, diet, general well-being and training methods.²

Bill Kirby

² *The Voice*, 3.7.1997

Deb Van Rol was appointed manager in 1996. The following year the Centre won the Heart Foundation's Healthy Hearts Local Government Award for the best recreational facility.

*The judging panel assessed many aspects of Beatty Park's operation, including the diversity of health and fitness programs, the range of facilities, the diversity of people who visit the centre, accessibility for people with disabilities, staff training programs, marketing and promotions and financial performance.*³

Deb (Van Rol) Vanallen

Heart Foundation coordinator Susan Wall said the award had been made because of the quality of the facilities and the range of programs offered for a broad section of the community.⁴

A personal training course was introduced for gym instructors in the late 1990s.



(COV PH03843)



(COV PH03841)

I initiated that course in 1999 and Derek Gibbons who is a lecturer at the University and is also working as an aqua instructor, he did the course for us and it was certified. I think there were about six of us that came through that first personal training course. From there, of course, the personal training courses have been offered through TAFE and the like.

Elizabeth Bentley

³ WA Business News, 27.11-10.12.1977, p.23

⁴ The Voice, 26.9.1997

In 1996 at the age of 46 I was involved in a serious car accident. I had a long list of injuries including head, chest, back, leg and knee injuries. I was under several specialists and on 15 medications. Three or four years later I was taken to The Beatty by a friend. The dedicated and professional staff there cared for and encouraged me.

I am now 62 and I have for some years dispensed with the services of all the specialists.

I owe by far the greater part of my recuperation to the availability of the Beatty Park facility and its dedicated staff.

Tom Pearce

Sun message in mural



Artist Ricky Arnold gives Aranmore college students Min-jung Han and Ian Cartwright a helping hand.

Aranmore students (Year 10) produced an 8 foot long mural in 1997, which was funded by a Healthways Grant and the Town of Vincent. Artists Bronwen Gray and Ricky Arnold helped the students with their ideas.

Aqua Club

The City of Perth Swimming Club coaching group was called Aqua Club and its slogan was 'it's the performance that counts'.

Bill Kirby

Bernie Mulroy, Colin Raven and Gary Shaw were the Aqua Club coaches and were at the pool every morning and afternoon, Monday to Friday, plus Saturday mornings.

Colin Raven looked after the younger kids and Bernie Mulroy was more the elite ones. So the younger kids might be in lanes 1 to 3 and the elite kids would be in 4 and 5 but they were all part of the one squad.

Dale Morrissy

I used to love Thursday mornings training, as the breaststrokes and those that swam medley trained in lane 1 with Mr Raven. We did a session completely different to everyone else, doing drills and kicks in breaststroke. It was a really fun bunch of swimmers in lane 1 for those sessions.

It was a great group of people that I trained with over the years there from 1994-2001. We had Bill Kirby, Richelle Jose, Julia Greville, Samantha Mackie, Antony Matcovich, Jono van Hazel and Rob Sharp making national teams, and we all pushed each other to go faster and train harder. Bernie also had a really special bond with all of his ex-swimmers and we sometimes had people come and join us at the pool for sessions.

Rachel Harris



School Carnivals

*Interschool Swimming Carnivals at Beatty Park
Part of the swimming team, told to swim like a shark,
The crowd cheers, heart starts to flutter,
On goes my swimming cap, legs feel like butter!
Up on the starting block, heartbeat gets faster,
Race to the finish without a disaster!*

Sophie Considine



Independent Girls Schools Sports Association Swimming Carnival, 1994 (won by Methodist Ladies College)
(COV PH00887)

Everyone focussed on the pool, watching you swim. There was dead silence right before each race, and then the screaming would start. When progressive scores were read out, each school would scream louder and louder. It was a real highlight of my swimming career to be at those meets. It was electric.

Rachel Harris

I would just take the whole lifeguard team out while we were waiting for them to do their presentations. We'd stand out by the pool deck and they'd sing the National Anthem and the hair on your arms would be standing up - all these school kids singing the National Anthem and just belting it out as loud as they could. Magnificent!!

Dale Morrissy



Public Schools Sports Association of Western Australia 89th Annual Swimming Carnival, 1994
(COV PH00888)

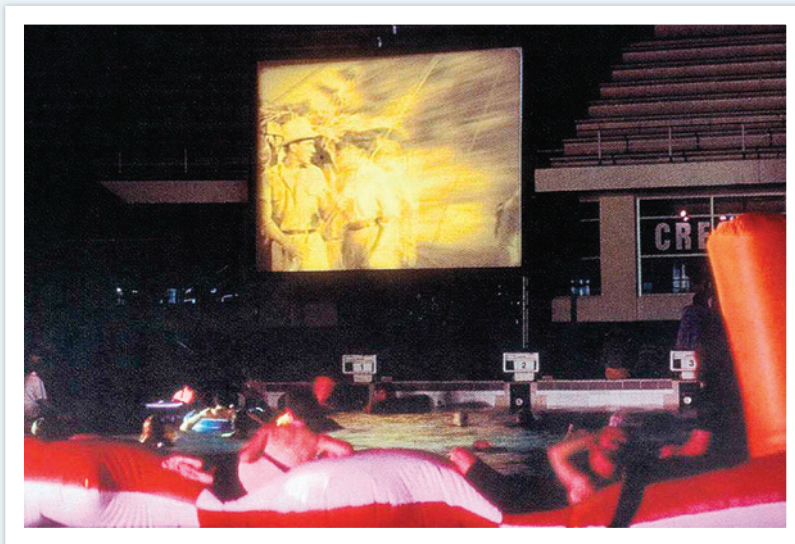
Nearly 4,500 boys cheered their schools on from the stands as Aquinas won the carnival for the second year in a row (1993 and 1994) with the narrowest of margins from Christchurch, Hale, Trinity, Scotch, Guildford and Wesley.

It was funny. I used to be on security detail sometimes and we used to try and keep people out because for the girls' carnival there would always be young boys trying to get into the swimming pool. So we had to man all the entrances and exits and make sure they didn't get in. I remember on one occasion we had guys who dressed up as girls to try to blend in so they could actually get into the centre but we caught them.

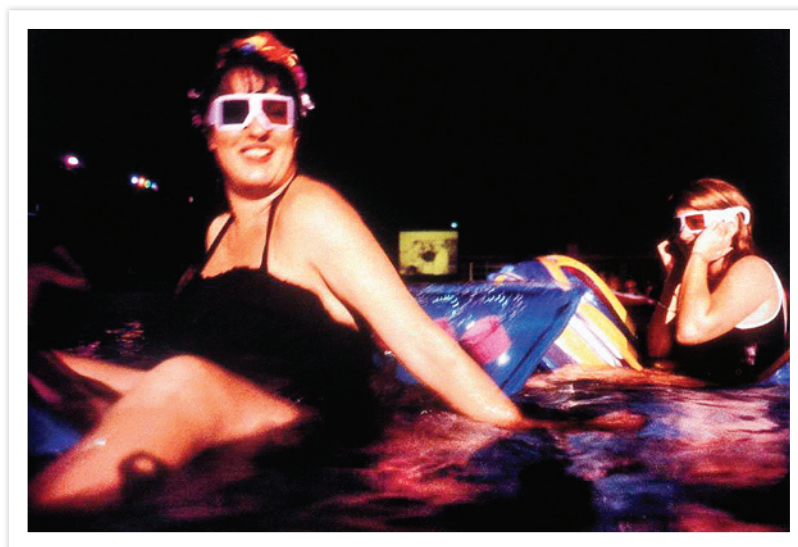
Chris Hatzis

Dive-in Movies

A fun innovation in December 1997 was the *Dive-in Movies*. Films could be viewed whilst floating in the pool, sitting in the grandstands or on the grass in the open area. One of the movies screened was *Spice World: The Movie*, which starred the English group, The Spice Girls.



(COV PH00955)



'Dive-in' movies screened at Beatty Park with the added dimension of 3D, December 1997
(COV PH00954)

The funniest incident I remember is someone coming and telling me, 'I have lost my eye. Please help me, I have lost my eye' and having to dive into the pool to find his eye.

Jerry Hatzis



Aerial view of Beatty Park and surrounds, c.1994
(COV PH00958)

2000s

In the 21st Century Beatty Park continues to welcome new generations of swimmers following in the footsteps of their forebears. Following is a memoir written by a young mother as an entry for the Beatty Park 40th Birthday Memories Competition in 2002.

I bring my son to Beatty Park these days and the very fact that he's six and playing in these waters, as once was I, truly fascinates me. I muse as I watch him: what is time, how does it dissipate so, so that I once was a little girl standing barefoot here, and now I hold my son's hand here? We don't know streets full of kids as happened in my childhood, there are more life guards than I ever remember necessary, kiosk treats are more expensive, and we dare not go barefoot too far or wide. Things have changed. Some would say 'as they must'. I cannot give my son what I had; too much has changed. However what I can give him is a "Beatty Park experience". I'm so glad you live on. Though you've changed with the times – your improvements are great – there is maintained within these grounds a wonderful free, fun energy. I feel it as I lie on the grass in the sun with my eyes closed. I'm sure I'll be visiting Beatty Park through to old age. What can I say, in 40 years my own son may recall his childhood here in some future competition.

Noeleen Ginnane

Another entry took the form of a poem:

*Swimming lessons in summer as a child
Fun jumping off the tower as an adolescent
Taught how to teach swimming as an adult
Doing laps when pregnant
Water aerobics after having babies
Now my children enjoy the pleasure of Beatty Park
It holds a very special place in my heart.*

Unknown



(COV PH03705)

Olympic Torch Relay, 2000

Vincent and a number of other West Australian communities played host to the Olympic Torch Relay on 7 and 8 July 2000.

I can recall that we had the Olympic torch coming through. Beatty Park was one of the official stops. A big occasion, a function there, and hundreds of people came to that. I carried the Olympic torch in Fitzgerald Street. John Hyde who was the Mayor at the time, I handed it to him. You had someone running with you, next to you and he was your bodyguard. I have still got the torch at home.

John Giorgi, JP (CEO)



Olympic Torch bearers pose for the cameras outside Beatty Park
(COV PH03942)



Mayor John Hyde presenting swimmer Rachel Harris with her Certificate of Life Membership of Beatty Park during the Olympic Torch Relay, July 2000
(COV PH00848)

I was honoured to be made a life member of the pool after making my first national team in 1995, and I love that my entry pass says expires 20 May 2045!

Rachel Harris

Other Life Members are Neil Brooks, Lynette McKenzie, Lyn Bates, Julia Greville and Bill Kirby. It is open to all Olympians.

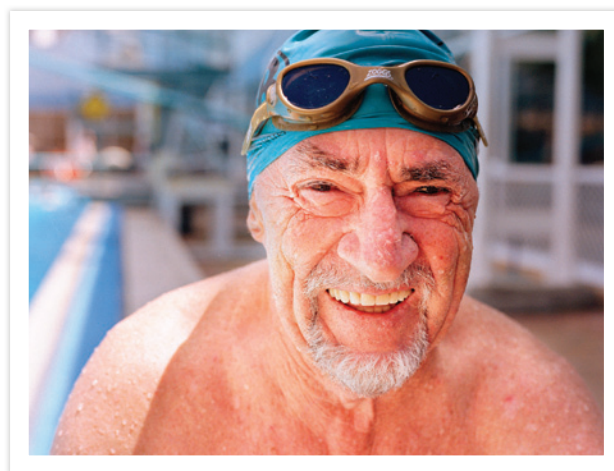
Beatty Park also celebrated the success of the 2000 Olympics by hosting a breakfast event with Bill Kirby as the guest speaker in 2004. Bill competed at the Sydney 2000 Olympics as a member of the Australian World Record breaking 4 x 200 metres Freestyle Relay team and had a number of other international successes, including a gold medal in the 4 x 200 metres Freestyle Relay at the 2001 World Championships.

My first Australian team ever was in 1993. As a young 17-year-old I made the Pan Pacific Championships which went to Japan. So that was a competition against the Americans, Canadians, New Zealand and Australia and I think the Japanese and the Chinese were there as well. That was a pretty eye-opening event. The year after was the Commonwealth Games and I went in 1994. I also went in 1998. In '98 I won the Silver Medal in the 200 butterfly – Commonwealth Games. The biggest competition I have ever competed in would be the Olympic Games, which was Sydney 2000. I competed in the 4 x 200 freestyle relay there.

Bill Kirby



Bill Kirby speaking at a breakfast in the café, August 2004
(COV PH03853)



Percy Oliver after training at Beatty Park, November 2002
(COV PH03706)

Percy Oliver, gold medallist and life-long competitor, was an outstanding swimmer from his primary school years. He held State and Australian swimming records and competed in the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin and won Gold and Bronze Medals at the 1938 British Empire Games in Sydney. He became a high school teacher and following that, administrator of the Education Department's vacation swimming program. He passed away in July 2011.

The indoor pool was closed for a month in July 2001 while it was resurfaced with fibreglass and some new water features installed. Four new water slides, giant mushrooms, palm trees, waterfalls and two serpent-like creatures formed a play area for children. An Open Day followed on 12 August when the entry was just \$1 with a clown, music and free ice creams provided.



Lighthouse and mushrooms
(COV PH03647)



Creatures in the shallows
(COV PH03650)

The water playground is designed so that hazards are avoided. Children won't be able to hurt themselves.¹

Deb Vanallen



(COV PH03646)

¹ *Voice News* 28.7.2001, p.5

Celebrating 40 years

A party was held to celebrate the centre's 40th Anniversary in November 2002. Events included carnivals, face painters and a number of competitions. Participants received a free show bag. Displays were given by many of the groups that use the pool, including the swimming, scuba diving and water polo clubs. There was also a swimwear fashion parade and a rock band played on the pool deck.

It was a big open day, a lot of people coming through... A significant event.

John Giorgi, JP (CEO)



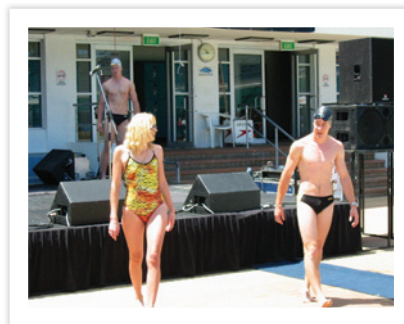
"The OLDS" (Jeff Fondacaro on drums)
(COV PH03855)



Aranmore Catholic College performance



Newman College cheerleaders



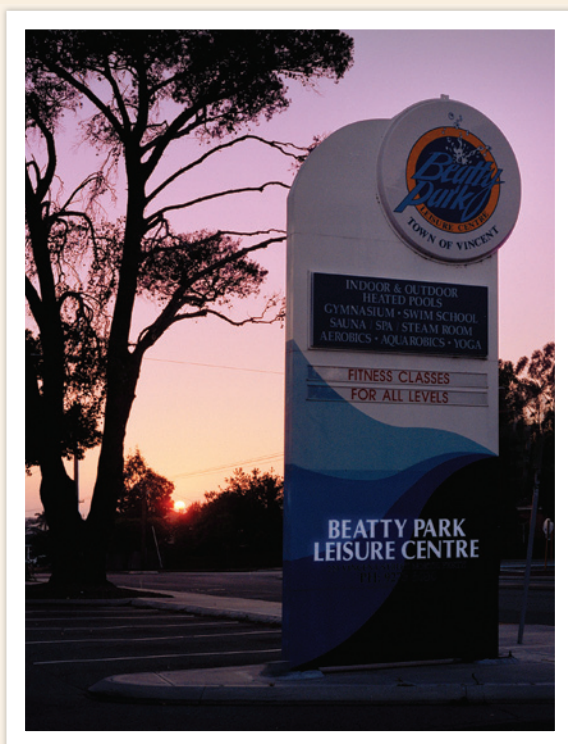
Fashion parade



Mad Cow challenge

A day in the life of Beatty Park Leisure Centre, November 2002

Beatty Park celebrated its 40th birthday in 2002 with a week-long party from 18 to 24 November. The following photographic study entitled 'A day in the life of Beatty Park Leisure Centre, November 2002' was taken by photographer Martin Davidson to mark the celebrations.





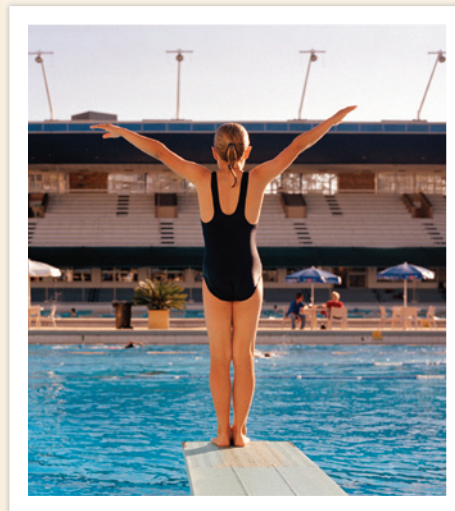
Coach Bernie Mulroy





On a December morning she gingerly lowered herself into the deep swimming pool, unaware of the eyes tenderly looking at her. All shapes and sizes had gathered for their deep aqua class; to relax, tone and socialise.

Josephine Ruddle



At the age of 13 I was standing on the first diving platform with some friends, admiring the view of the diving pool. My father saw me and yelled "get down from there!!" I did. I jumped!! We laughed about it after. It wasn't what he had in mind.

Sandy Vlatko



My best memories of Beatty Park Pool are fond memories of my youth and growing up in the area. From primary school until I got married (1960s-70s) I lived in Bulwer St with my family. For pleasure on weekends my friends and I would walk to Beatty Park to meet up with other friends, swim, sunbake and “be seen” wearing the latest bikini bathers.

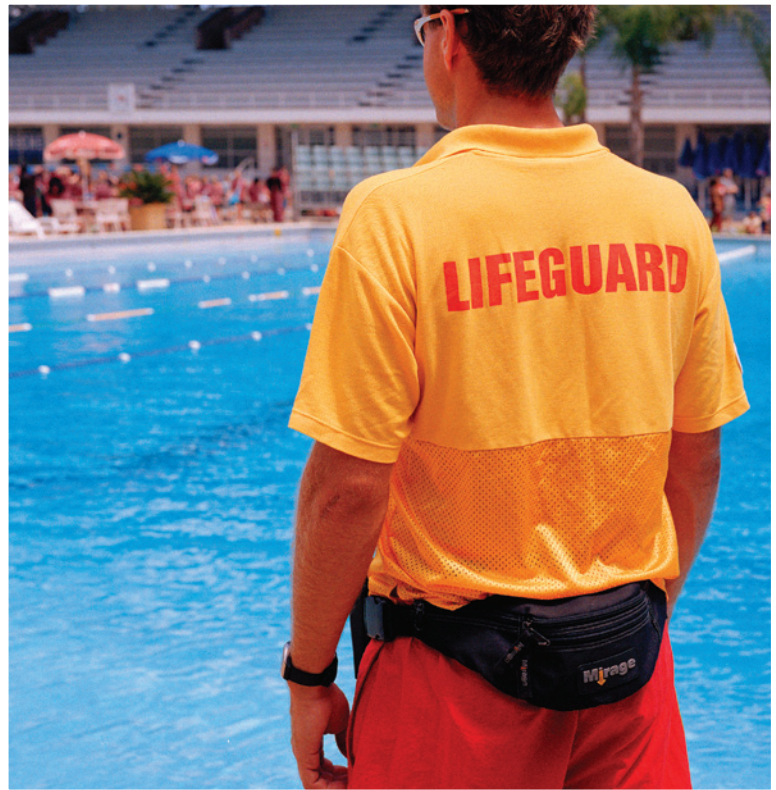
Grace Pachioli





We have usually got two lifeguards on deck unless it is a busy day and then we might have a couple more. There is one on the outside pool and one on the inside pool and they rotate every 15 minutes from inside to outside. They move around and keep an eye on everybody.

Russell Skerry



We use a radio system now because you need instant communication; hand-held two-ways. It is a part of our emergency response procedure that we call for help and we communicate that way. We use the internationally-recognized lifeguard colours of yellow and red, red shorts, a yellow shirt and they have "lifeguard" on the back.

Jeff Fondacaro



My best memory was taking my godson and my 105 year old Nanna swimming. Jesse, my godson, would slide with me down the blue tube, and he would slide into the arms of his great-great Nanna. Memory lane lives forever at Beatty!

Lisa Duffy

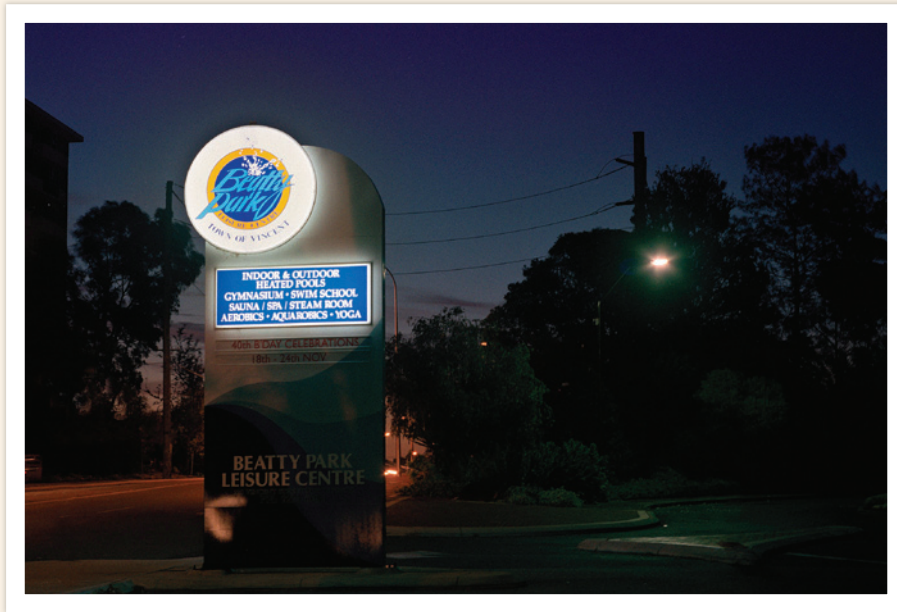
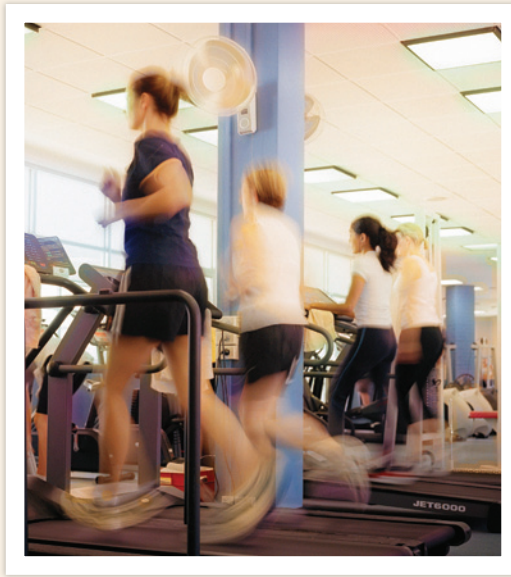
My daughter attended swimming lessons from the age of six months. At the end of one particular term – whilst I was having a coffee – she took her first steps. She toddled around the tables here. I will never forget it and Beatty Park.

Suzanne Worner



Aged 60 years I joined adult swimming classes in the old learners' pool at Beatty Park. My lifelong ambition was to learn to swim. Under the kind instruction of Helen and Jo step-by-step I learned a few strokes. One year later, I swam 50 metres. What a thrill!

Roma Heaton



One of the things I remember about it was the chlorine smell as soon as you walk in. It was like a reminding/takes-you-back smell. It just makes you feel good when you go in there because it has been there all your life – it has got the same smell.

Nicole Humphry



Official ceremony for the listing of Beatty Park Leisure Centre on the State Heritage Register, 2004
L-R: John Hyde, MLA, Mayor Nick Catania, Lyn McKenzie (nee McClements), Hon. Tom Stephens
(COV PH03825)

Beatty Park Leisure Centre was the **1,000th** place to be assessed for inclusion in the State Register of Heritage Places and was included on a permanent basis on 27 December 2004. (It was included in the City of Vincent's Municipal Inventory in September 1995.)

Its heritage place registration will help ensure the protection of an important reminder of WA's achievements in hosting a very successful international sporting event and in building a world-class aquatic venue.²

Hon. Tom Stephens (Heritage Minister)

² Guardian Express, 3.2.2004, p. 1

Two major incidents occurred within a short period in early 2002. On 25 January, a seven year old girl tragically drowned. She had been in the indoor pool with a supervised party of 48 young people and 11 supervisors when a young boy, not with the party, noticed her at the bottom of the pool. Eight year old Sean McLaughlin dived to the bottom of the pool and tried to pull her out before calling for a lifeguard. Sadly, and despite the best efforts of the lifeguards and ambulance officers, she was unable to be revived.

Soon after, on 6 February, 22 year old overseas student Christian Cassinelli was duck diving in the five metre deep diving pool and lost consciousness.



Beatty Park staff recognised for their efficient actions on the day. L-R: Ron Gardner, Carl Dyde, Ray Scott, Cameron Pratt, Rebecca Powell and Lisa Davies
(COV PH03859)

Lifeguard Carl Dyde dived in and brought him to the surface. Several other lifeguards assisted Carl with resuscitation until an ambulance arrived and took him to hospital. Christian subsequently returned to Beatty Park to meet and thank the people involved in his rescue, including the young girl who first raised the alarm.



Sean McLaughlin was presented with awards for his bravery by the Royal Life Saving Society and the Town of Vincent
(COV PH03941)



Christian Cassinelli with lifeguard Carl Dyde, who brought him to the surface
(COV PH03580)

PoolWatch/Watch Around Water

The PoolWatch program came out of an incident there where we had a drowning – the one and only drowning at Beatty Park. It was a YMCA outing and this young little girl, a non-swimmer, had obviously strayed from the main group.

John Giorgi, JP (CEO)



Launch of *PoolWatch* program with television presenter Christina Morrissy, her son Flynn, Mayor Nick Catania and a symbolic Dolphin, 2002

(COV PH00942)

PoolWatch is an exciting safety initiative because it's effectively turning all pool users into guardians of the pool.³

Alex McKenzie (Royal Life Saving Society President)

In 2003 *PoolWatch* won a national Local Government award and a WA Local Government Best Practice Award.

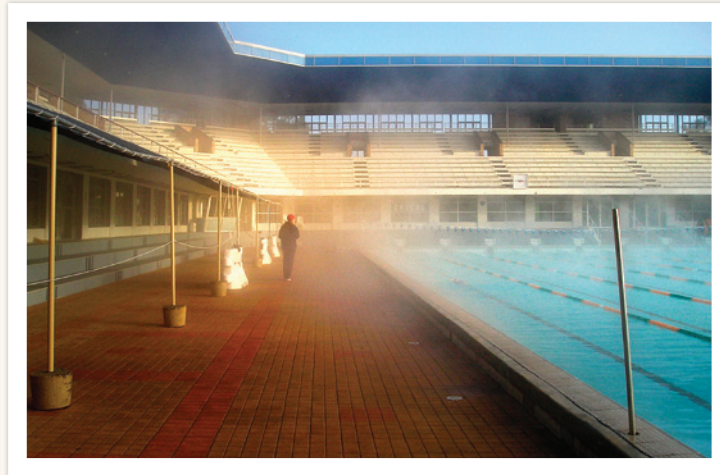
This program encourages everybody to look after everybody at the pool, not just rely on the lifeguards. We also brought in the message that children under five need to be supervised within an arm's reach of an adult at all times; children under the age of 12 need to be supervised in view of an adult at all times. The program evolved into the Watch Around Water Program and it is now pretty much in all pools in WA. It's into Victoria, into pools in Queensland and New South Wales. So it has gone national and that's because it works!

Dale Morrissy

³ *Voice News* 5.10.2002, p.1

In 2003 a new hot water boiler was installed – the previous one had only been running at 30% capacity and the warmer temperatures in the outdoor pools could not be maintained during the winter months. Nevertheless, Coach Bernie

Mulroy and his charges continued their training programs morning and evening. Amongst his more recent successes were Olympians Rachel Harris, Bill Kirby, Jono Van Hazel, Travis Nederpelt and Antony Matkovich.



Dedicated swimmers on a cold misty morning at Beatty Park, June 2005
(COV PH03747)



(COV PH03748)



Pool blanket
(COV PH03746)

Insulating pool blankets were installed on the indoor pools in 2003 and the outdoor pools in 2004. Water-saving shower heads were installed around the same time. This and other efficiency/conservation measures led to a State award:

We won a Water Efficiency Award in 2007 for reducing our water use by two thirds in the last four years. The main thing was putting pool blankets on the pools, which we thought would actually save our gas costs. It did that but it also saved our water loss through evaporation. We adjusted a few of our other procedures such as back-washing. We started changing our shower heads to some lower-flow ones; we found some good ones that aerated the water. Also dual flush toilet systems and waterless urinals.

Dale Morrissy



Presentation of the Water Efficiency Award to Vincent staff
Mike Rootsey (Director), John Giorgi (CEO),
Jeff Fondacaro (Co-ordinator Operations and Aquatics)
(COV PH03943)

We were successful because we were one of the first centres to recognise that you could save a lot of water. That was certainly a credit to the staff – Dale and his team at the time.

John Giorgi, JP (CEO)

The centre is frequented by a number of groups servicing people with disabilities and a number of clubs catering to children and adults with disabilities are regular users. A battery-operated hydraulic hoist was installed in 2005 (to coincide with the International Day of Disability on 3 December) with interchangeable legs for each pool. The cost - \$10,000 - was funded partly by

the proceeds from a quiz night organised by the Leederville Lions and as part of a Disability Services Commission grant.

The installation of the hoist has had a wonderful flow-on effect for special-needs children who have been able to participate in swimming lessons with their classmates.⁴

Nick Catania



Russell Skerry, swimming teacher and pool patron, using the lift, aided by Jeff Fondacaro
(COV PH03827)

Fold-down shower, bench seats and handrails were installed in the change rooms the following year (2006) to further aid the disabled.

⁴ *The Perth Voice*, 3.3.2007, p.7

A new aqua playground was purchased for the outdoor pools in 2006.



Spring fun in the pool, October 2006
(COV PH03752)



(COV PH03751)

Beatty Park's Angelfish Program won Swim Australia's Award for Outstanding Community Service in 2010.

This is an integration program for kids with disabilities coming through and trying to get into main-stream classes. So they don't feel like there's a segregation type thing. You have got 110 kids

in that program in just under two years. That has only just started. Things like that have changed dramatically. When I started we wouldn't have even thought about a program that would promote that type of integration; it has been great for patrons and staff.

Dale Morrissy

Swim School

My grandson, young Jack: I take him down to swimming lessons with his mother and his grandmother and I must admit that I do sneak in the pool occasionally.

Terry Stokesbury



Baby swim class, 2006
(COV PH03771)



Toddler swim class, 2005
(COV PH03849)

Now we've got the parents and bubs classes happening. We now have Sunday swimming lessons. People think, 'this is fantastic, now we can come on a Sunday!' What we find is the dads are now taking a very active role. It used to be just mums but now the dads come on a Saturday and on a Sunday. They make a family day of it and it's really successful.

They do adult lessons and we've had some senior citizens come in that couldn't swim and for whatever reason they wanted to know how to swim. So we have had people come in at a very late age and learn to swim, which is fantastic. It is very good to see. So they have bubs all the way through to the oldies – the old oldies.

Jeff Fondacaro

The centre is one of the largest of the State Government's VacSwim centres with around 1,200 swimmers a season and 15 teachers. The training for these teachers is also held at the centre where they are required to complete a Teacher of Swimming and Water Safety Certificate course which takes about 22 hours.



Beginners swimming lesson, 2006
(COV PH03872)



Swimming lesson, 2005
(COV PH03852)



Lesson in progress, 2008
(COV PH03847)

In 2012 Swim School coordinator Bev Christmass received an award for 'Meritorious Service to the Teaching of Swimming in Australia' and the Swim School received an 'Outstanding Community Service Award' for their volunteer work in Vietnam in January 2012.

Teachers have to requalify their resuscitation once a year. They are traditionally AUSTSWIM qualified and a lot of those courses are conducted at Beatty Park. So a lot of them have come up through the training there and picked up jobs there.

Jeff Fondacaro



Adult swimming class, 2005
(COV PH03854)

Coaching

Bernie Mulroy took up a consultancy role with the Australian Swimming Association. Matt Magee moved in and he is an up-and-coming coach in Australian standards. He's now at Beatty Park (2012) and he's got three or four world-class swimmers that he's looking after plus the normal squad kids who are trying to work their way up to that level.

Dale Morrissy

Matt Magee has coached a number of successful City of Perth swimmers including Blair Evans, Reece Mainstone, Heidi Gan and Brianna Throssell. In 2010 Matt was appointed to the Australian Coaching Team for the Pan Pacific Championship in the United States and in 2012 he was the Malaysian Open Water Coach for the London Olympics as well as preparing Blair Evans for the Games. In July 2012 the Lawley Aquatic Swim Club and City of Perth Swimming Club merged to become the Perth City Swimming Club, based at both Perth College and Beatty Park.

Queen's Baton Relay, 2006

An official relay visited Beatty Park in 2006 in the lead-up to the XVIIIth Commonwealth Games in Melbourne. It began in London and on Day 18 of the 50-day Australian sector it travelled through Vincent. The route taken by the runners was along Leederville Parade, turning into Oxford Street and

then into Vincent Street. There was an official stop with a short ceremony held at Beatty Park before the relay moved on to Bulwer Street. To celebrate this historic event the Leisure Centre held an open day with free entry, visiting sporting personalities, live entertainment and a free sausage sizzle.



Queen's Baton being carried into Beatty Park for a short ceremony
(COV PH03831 and COV PH03846)



Mayor Nick Catania participating in the ceremony before the Queen's Baton leaves the centre
(COV PH03834 and COV PH03835)

Splashdance

Splashdance was launched on 20 April 2001. Parties were held monthly from 6 pm for small children and 7 to 9 pm for those from eight to 16 years of age. While the children had free run of the centre, most of the activities took place in the indoor area and consisted of music and dancing (with a DJ), water games and giveaways.



Toucan and Yogo entertain the young children at Splashdance, 22 December 2004
(COV PH03738)



(COV PH03732)



Splashdance, 12 December 2003

(COV PH03735)



(COV PH03733)

Retail services



Beatty Park shop
(COV PH03761 and COV PH03763)

Beatty Park's retail shop became one of the largest swimwear and swimming accessories stockists in the State. In late 2008 the shop went online.



Café Vincent
(COV PH03787 and COV PH03794)

The menu has been changing over a number of years. We have tried to be responsible community citizens and say, well we have got a selection of healthy items and we have reduced the number of "tempting items". So that's why we have gone to the Menu-Wise Program. It has affected our sales

a little bit because there were that many different sizes of chips but we don't sell chips before 11 am anymore and we have cut back on potato chips and the range of chocolate bars and things like that.

Helen Smither

Group fitness

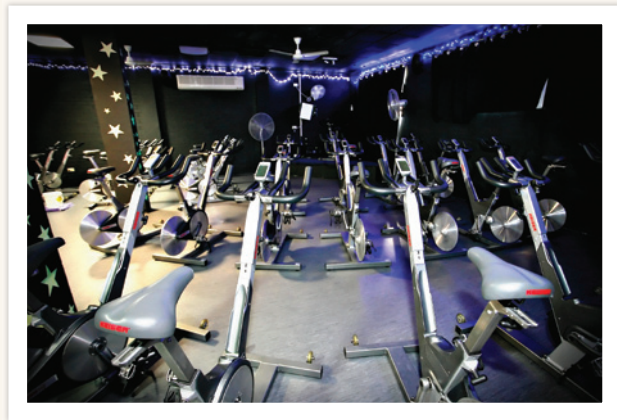
Our aerobics program Body Pump would be our most popular class. That is when you use the bars and the plates and it's a resistance class. It is something like you would see in the gym except it is in the group fitness room and it is to music. They use lighter weights and it goes for an hour. It goes through all your muscle groups like your chest, your legs, your biceps, your triceps, shoulders. Each track has a different orientation. So it might be a shoulder track, chest track or something like that. That would be our most popular class.

Elizabeth Bentley

Other group fitness classes include RPM, CXWORX, boxing, body attack, Zumba, water aerobics (in all around 100 classes per week) and once the new centre is fully opened regular children's classes and aqua zumba are planned.



(COV PH03806)



RPM™ room
(COV PH03801)

Gymnasium, 2010



(COV PH03804)



(COV PH03805)



(COV PH03807)



(COV PH03802)

Some of the strength things like the leg extension have been there 18 years. We didn't have any treadmills back then; steppers and bikes – that was it. Then gradually the cross-trainers came in – the ones we use for arms and legs – and then the treadmills. We used to just add and add and we had it in there like Lego. The new gym is three and a half times as big – 750 square metres. So everything is going to be increased basically – three times as much equipment.

Elizabeth Bentley

Awards

- 2003 National Awards for Local Government – Winner of the Information Services Category – *PoolWatch*
- 2003 Heart Foundation Awards – WA winner – Recreation Facility
- 2003 WA Local Government Best Practice Award – *PoolWatch*
- 2003 Sport and Recreation Industry Awards – Facility Management Finalist
- 2004 PRIA (WA) State Awards for Excellence – Issues and Crisis Management – Highly Commended.
- 2007 WA Water Award – Water Conservation and Efficiency
- 2009 Count Us In Awards – Finalist in Local Government Category for Angelfish Swim Programme
- 2010 WA Pool Lifeguard Challenge – Winner
- 2010 Swim Australia Awards – ‘Outstanding Community Service Award’ for Beatty Park Swim School – Angelfish Swim Programme
- 2011 Vincent Improved Access Awards – Award of Excellence – Angelfish Swim Programme
- 2012 Swim Australia Awards – Outstanding Community Service Award for Beatty Park Swim School – Volunteer Work in Vietnam

Swim School Coordinator Bev Christmass was presented with the 2012 Australian Swim Coaches and Teachers Association Award for *Meritorious Service to the Teaching of Swimming in Australia* at the ASCTA awards dinner. The presentation was made by Ross Gage (CEO ASCTA and Swim Australia) and Laurie Lawrence at the Sofitel Hotel in Broadbeach Queensland.



Bev Christmass at the ASCTA awards ceremony
(COV PH03948 courtesy Bev Christmass)

In May 2011 a much-awaited upgrade was announced at a cost of \$17.5 million. It was funded by a combination of City of Vincent reserve funds, a State Government grant and loan funds.

Great news, the Council decision to approve the redevelopment ensures the future of the centre and will provide the community with a first class facility.

Mike Rootsey (Director Corporate Services)



Funding announcement at Beatty Park, 23 August 2011
L-R: John Giorgi (CEO), Nick Catania (Mayor), Colin Barnett (Premier), Terry Waldron (Minister),
Dale Morrissy (Manager Beatty Park)
(COV PH03910)

The architects for the new centre were Peter Hunt Architects and the builders were Perkins Builders. As the centre was forced to close for an extended period (except for the gym, RPM and crèche), members were offered a choice of suspension of their membership, a refund or an extension.

COMMENCING SEPTEMBER 2011



- new larger gymnasium with state-of-the-art equipment
- new group fitness rooms with views over park
- new 50m x 10 lane outdoor pool (2 extra lanes)
- new 12 x 12 program pool
- new change-rooms and toilets
- new family change-rooms
- new entry, café and retail facilities
- new crèche facilities
- refurbished indoor pool
- refurbished 30m outdoor pool
- geothermal heating system
- new solar panels



Visit www.beattypark.com.au for more information

beatty park leisure centre redevelopment



CITY OF VINCENT



CITY OF VINCENT

peter hunt architect

Prior to the 2011-12 renovations and the introduction of a geothermal bore, Beatty Park was spending \$375,000 a year on heating the pools and indoor pool hall. One of the features of the new complex is a geothermal heating system for the pools and in September 2011 hay bales were delivered to the site. They were stacked three high outside the main building and in an article in the *Guardian Express*⁵ Vincent's CEO John Giorgi explained:

The hay is being used to provide an efficient and cost-effective insulation against sound that may be caused during the geothermal drilling process. (Noise levels had been measured at 65 in the compound and 50 on the outside.) The consideration of local residents has been an integral part of managing this project.

John Giorgi, JP (CEO)



Hay bales placed in front of the original building,
September 2011
(COV PH03944)



The main swimming pool after being drained,
September 2011
(COV PH03949)

Construction commenced in September 2011 and the project will run until December 2012.

⁵ *Guardian Express* 3.1.2012, p.4



New themed water playground
(COV PH03945)

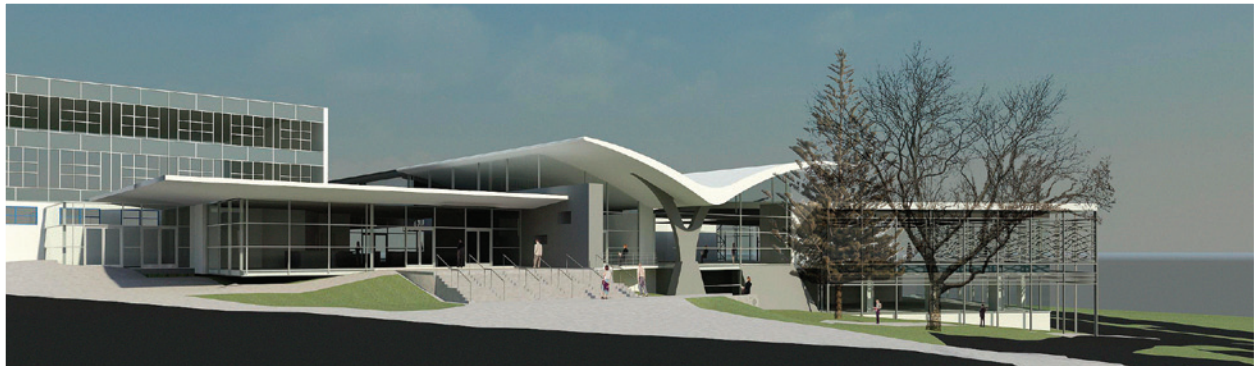
The indoor pool area reopened in July 2012.

Swimming lessons recommenced, adults could once again use the lap lanes and young children were happy to explore the new play equipment which included 'tipping bells', an anaconda water snake and a giant frog slide.

The outdoor pool area and new spacious gym remained under construction, with completion expected by the end of 2012.



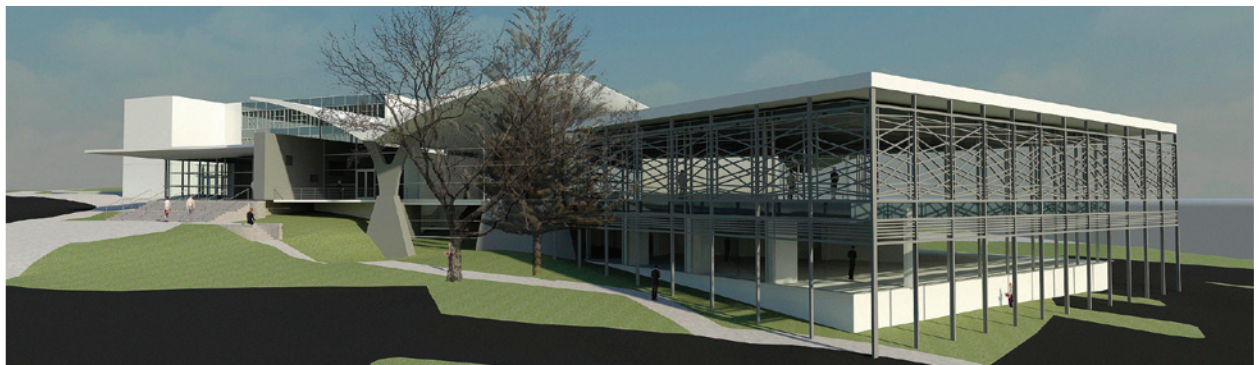
Site inspection of the main pool area, June 2012
L-R: Dale Morrissy (Manager Beatty Park), John Giorgi (CEO), Alannah MacTiernan (Mayor), Terry Waldron, MLA
(Minister for Sport and Recreation)
(COV PH03939)



I think aquatic recreation is going to be an incredibly important part of what we do. I think it is fantastic that the Council has locked in a sustainable future for Beatty Park by going geothermal. I think that was a very enlightened decision that was made by the previous Council and I really want to acknowledge them for that. We are an increasing population density around here. The need for a first-class facility is without doubt and particularly with the fabulous new gym and the wider 50 metre pool, it is going to be more popular than ever.

I think it is an incredibly important part of the offering that local government delivers to its community. I think it is money well spent and it adds real value to the community. The extraordinary thing is – unlike many other facilities – that from babies to people in their nineties, it is a facility that is enjoyed. You know, right across the life span – less than one year olds enjoying it and elderly people sitting in the spa warming up their arthritic joints. Throughout all phases of your life the pool has got something to offer you.

Hon. Alannah MacTiernan



Impressions of Beatty Park Leisure Centre redevelopment, 2012 by Peter Hunt Architect

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The City of Perth Aquatic Centre - now Beatty Park Leisure Centre - was constructed in 1962 as a venue for the VIIth British Empire and Commonwealth Games. Located within Beatty Park on Vincent Street, North Perth, it provided Perth with international standard facilities and was considered the best in Australia. It soon became affectionately known as 'Beatty Park Pool'.

During the 1960s and 1970s, it garnered widespread recognition from the people of Perth not only for its first class swimming facilities but also as a great venue for events, such as music concerts, before the construction of the Perth Concert Hall and Entertainment Centre.

In the mid 1990s, the Centre underwent a major renovation, which included the addition of indoor pools and gym facilities. The new name Beatty Park Leisure Centre echoed community desires for both fitness and leisure facilities. Ownership changed to the newly formed Town of Vincent (now City).

In 2012, its 50th year of operation, Beatty Park has undergone a major redevelopment creating a more sustainable building and once again transforming itself to reflect the modern needs of a very diverse, and growing, City of Vincent.

