



## REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

### 11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

#### PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 4.2 Supplying urban services
- 8.1.1 Playing and watching organised sports
- 8.1.3 Developing public parks and gardens

#### HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 404 Community services and utilities
- 405 Sport, recreation & entertainment

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

The City of Perth Aquatic Centre component of the place is a good example of the Late Twentieth Century International style applied to a major sporting facility. (Criterion 1.1)

The City of Perth Aquatic Centre component of *Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* is a landmark structure on a major city route because of its elevated location, substantial size, distinctive styling and setting, and with the open playing fields, mature trees and grouped plantings of Beatty Park, is an interesting landscape in which several eras of design themes are overlaid. (Criterion 1.3)

#### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

*Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* comprises the first Olympic size swimming pool, diving pool, and spectator gallery built in Western Australia for international competition, which was up-graded in 1993-94, to become a State and Australian awarded leisure centre re-named Beatty Park Leisure Centre. (Criterion 2.1)

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\* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

Beatty Park, as part of Reserve 884, was utilised for the deposit of night-soil as the City of Perth endeavoured to solve its problems of sanitation in the late nineteenth century, prior to the introduction of deep sewerage in the early twentieth century. (Criterion 2.2)

The City of Perth Aquatic Centre portion of the *Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* was built as the aquatic centre for the VII<sup>th</sup> British Empire and Commonwealth Games, held in Perth in November-December 1962, the first such international competition held in Perth. (Criterion 2.2)

W. A. Mcl. Green, the influential Town Clerk for City of Perth from 1945 to 1966, and Milton Boyce, City of Perth Architect designed the City of Perth Aquatic Centre for the British Empire and Commonwealth Games, and Lionel H. Steenbohm, Director of Parks and Gardens, City of Perth, was responsible for the design of the landscaping of the gardens. This team designed a number of major games venues and ensured the purpose built games venues were a successful part of the games. Well known Western Australian architect, Peter Hunt, was responsible for the design for the 1993-94 up-grade. (Criterion 2.3)

Beatty Park was named after World War One hero, Vice Admiral Beatty, and the pavilion in the park was named after Albert Spencer, long serving Perth City Councillor. (Criterion 2.3)

The City of Perth Aquatic Centre portion of *Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* was the first purpose built aquatic centre in Western Australia designed and built for international competition. (Criterion 2.4)

The City of Perth Aquatic Centre portion of the *Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* is one of three major projects undertaken by the City of Perth for the VII<sup>th</sup> British Empire and Commonwealth Games, held in Perth in November-December 1962, the first such international competition held in Perth. (Criterion 2.4)

### 11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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### 11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

*Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* is highly valued by the community as one of the older recreational reserves in the metropolitan areas, which has been used and enjoyed by local residents and sports people from the wider community, the latter also by swimmers and divers at State, national and international levels from 1962 to the present. *Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* is significant also for educational reasons, having played an important role in swimming education in Western Australia, including school swimming carnivals. (Criterion 4.1)

*Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* contributes to the community's sense of place as a well recognised landmark in the Town of Vincent. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12. 1. RARITY**

City of Perth Aquatic Centre is one of the group of places built for VII<sup>th</sup> British Empire and Commonwealth Games, some of which have been demolished and removed. (Criterion 5.1)

### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

The City of Perth Aquatic Centre portion of the *Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* is a good example of the Late Twentieth Century International style applied to a major sporting facility one of the major sporting venues built for the VII<sup>th</sup> British Empire and Commonwealth Games, the first such international competition held in Perth. (Criterion 6.2)

The remaining mature trees of Beatty Park, including London Planes, Monkey Puzzle Trees, Flame Trees, Moreton Bay and Port Jackson figs, and the like represent early twentieth century attempts to beautify a public park and of the plantings used by J. G. Braithwaite in Perth parks. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

The landscape environment is generally well maintained and the mature trees are in good condition.

The City of Perth Aquatic Centre portion of the *Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* is well maintained at the ground floor level internally and in the pool areas. The exterior of the street frontages is in reasonable condition and the spectator stand seating and concourses at the upper levels are in fair to poor condition. The 1994 section of the *Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* is well maintained and in very good condition. Overall *Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* is in fair to good condition.

### **12. 4 INTEGRITY**

Though the original City of Perth Aquatic Centre is no longer the premier competition pool, its intent remains undiminished. The current uses are compatible. The park remains in use for recreation and sporting purposes. Overall *Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* retains a high degree of integrity.

### **12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

The park has been modified on numerous occasions, but retains some of its early plantings. The caretaker's house, kiosk, part of the wading pool, and some other outbuildings of the City of Perth Aquatic Centre have been removed, while other buildings have been modified to suit the 1994 scheme. The change rooms and main entrance have also been altered. Notwithstanding these changes, the underlying fabric of the altered sections, the two remaining pools, and the upper levels of the spectator stands retain a high degree of authenticity. Overall *Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* retains a moderate to high degree of authenticity.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Robin Chinnery, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Philip Griffiths, Architect.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* is a recreational reserve and leisure centre. *Beatty Park*, a portion of the original Reserve 884, gazetted in 1890 (Local Board of Health - temporary), was developed as a recreational area by the City of Perth from c. 1905. Beatty Park Leisure Centre, originally named City of Perth Aquatic Centre, was built at the western portion of the park in 1962, by H. A. Doust, to designs by City of Perth Town Clerk, W. A. Mcl. Green and City Architect Milton Boyce, as the aquatic centre for the VII<sup>th</sup> British Empire and Commonwealth Games. In 1977, the Albert Spencer Pavilion was built in the park for the City of Perth. The aquatic centre was up-graded, with additional leisure facilities, to designs by architect Peter Hunt, for the City of Perth in 1993-94, and was re-named Beatty Park Leisure Centre.

From the 1860s, problems with drainage and sanitation were of increasing concern in Perth as the town grew through the 1870s and 1880s. In March 1882, by-laws were passed controlling the disposal of night soil.<sup>1</sup>

On 4 December 1890, Reserve 884 was gazetted for the purpose of Local Board of Health (temporary). A portion extended seven chains 19 links along Wanneroo Road (the southernmost portion of which later became Charles Street) to its intersection with Vincent Street, from whence the southern boundary extended west along Vincent Street for 52 chains 17 links. The total area of the reserve was 64 acres two roods and 20 perches.<sup>2</sup> Charles Street, North Perth, was named after Governor Charles Fitzgerald (1848-55).<sup>3</sup> Vincent Street was named after George Vincent, Chief Draftsman in the Lands Department, the original grantee of the land on the north side of this street, to the east of Charles Street, who named the street for himself on the issue of the grant in c. 1876.<sup>4</sup> In the twentieth century, part of the reserve, bounded on the east and south by Vincent and Charles Streets, would become Beatty Park.

In the 1890s, Reserve 884, the future Beatty Park, was utilised as a sanitary site and rubbish dump for Perth. In the late 1890s, as the city expanded towards the area, the depositing of night soil at Reserve 884 was discontinued. A pumping station was built at the reserve and the night soil was deposited in a hopper there for pumping thence to Reserve 943, which continued 'for several years'.<sup>5</sup> From the late 1890s, deep sewerage was progressively introduced in Perth. In the period 1894-1900, the original area

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1 Stannage, C. T. *The People of Perth* (Perth City Council, Perth, 1979) p. 162, pp. 170-182.

2 *Government Gazette* 4 December 1890, p. 921.

3 *Sunday Times* 4 August 1929, p. 24.

4 *ibid.*

5 W. E. Bold 'Civic Reminiscences' in *Guardian Express* 18 January 1994, p. 6.

of the reserve was reduced, as portions were set aside for other purposes, including a school site in 1894, recreation in 1897, and municipal endowment (Leederville) in 1900.<sup>6</sup>

From the mid 1890s, the Western Australian gold boom resulted in a huge increase in population and led to a building boom in Perth. There was considerable expansion of residential and commercial building in the areas to the north, east, and west of the city, and many of the large Perth Town Lots were sub-divided during the period. In September 1895, an 'Old Resident' drew attention to the 'neglect' of some of the few open spaces for public recreation in Perth, for example, the reserve at Third Swamp, and recommended that if the City Council had not yet obtained control of 'these valuable "breathing spaces" they should do so without delay.'<sup>7</sup>

In 1895, the City of Perth appointed J. G. Braithwaite as municipal gardener, and he took up his appointment in January 1896. Born in 1865, at Hornsby, Yorkshire, the son of the head forester at Hornsby Grange, from age 14 he served a five-year apprenticeship to qualify as a journeyman gardener. In 1889, he migrated to Victoria, where he worked as head gardener on estates near Melbourne. As Perth's City Gardener until his death in 1936, he was to be responsible for guiding Perth City Council's development of its parks and gardens, and supervised their laying out and planting.<sup>8</sup>

In 1896, Braithwaite found most of the parks and reserves in the City of Perth in a somewhat parlous state.<sup>9</sup> Braithwaite established the City's nurseries at Victoria Park, and Trafalgar Road, East Perth, including shade houses and hothouses, to provide plants for the city's parks and gardens, including palms and ferns, pandans, hibiscus cooperii and poinsettia, and a variety of annuals.<sup>10</sup>

In the wake of the Western Australian gold boom the City of Perth developed a number of parks and gardens, first and foremost among them being the development of the clay pits at East Perth to become Queen's Gardens and the reserve at Third Swamp to become Hyde Park. Pines, Braithwaite's favourite trees, were among the first trees planted at the latter.<sup>11</sup> The period 1898-1900, has been described as 'The Golden Age of Parks' in the City of Perth, in which the aforementioned were designed and laid out, along with others that included Wellington, Russell, Weld and Delhi squares.<sup>12</sup>

On 7 April 1905, Reserve 884 was vested in the Mayor and Councillors of the Municipality of North Perth, with the power to lease the whole or any portion of it for any term not exceeding 21 years, and the change of purpose, from Local Board of Health (temporary) to Recreation, were gazetted.<sup>13</sup> On 2 February 1906, Reserve 884 was classified as a Class 'A' for Recreational

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6 *Government Gazette* 21 September 1894, 30 April 1897 and 11 May 1900.

7 *The Inquirer* 13 September 1895, p. 8.

8 *The West Australian* 29 August 1925, p. 6.

9 *ibid.*

10 *ibid.*

11 *The West Australian* 18 July 1925, p. 7.

12 *City News* March 1998.

13 *Government Gazette* 7 April 1905, p.870 and 876 respectively.

Purposes.<sup>14</sup> It is probable that the earliest plantings at Beatty Park and its use as a recreational area date from this period.

Most newspaper reports published in the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century related to the major parks and reserves and Beatty Park was seldom mentioned. Similarly, in the City Gardener's Annual Reports, there was seldom mention of it as an individual entity.<sup>15</sup> To date, no specific records have been located regarding either the laying out or plantings at Beatty Park in the first half of the twentieth century. Mature plantings which probably date from the pre World War Two period, and which are typical of tree plantings in Perth's parks during Braithwaite's period, include Moreton Bay Fig Trees, Monkey Puzzle Trees, Box Trees and possibly some of the older London Plane Trees, Flame trees and Cape Lilacs. The two latter species were commonly planted as street trees, and their planting at Beatty Park follows the street boundaries. Monkey Puzzle trees were regarded as fine specimen trees. The considerable number of mature trees of this species remaining at Beatty Park into the twenty-first century may be significant.<sup>16</sup>

In 1920, Reserve 884, was named Beatty Park in honour of Vice Admiral Sir David Beatty (later Earl), a World War One hero, who was credited with the victory at Dogger Bank on 24 January 1915.<sup>17</sup> In the 1920s, change-rooms and toilets were built at Beatty Park, in proximity to the northern boundary. These served through to 1977.<sup>18</sup> It may have been around this period also that a kiosk was re-located from The Esplanade, Perth, to rising ground at Beatty Park. In the 1890s, it had stood at the centre of Cremorne Gardens, in Murray Street, Perth, 'a most popular resort' during the Western Australian gold boom period.<sup>19</sup> The kiosk is no longer extant in 2003, and it has not been possible to date to ascertain the date of its removal.<sup>20</sup>

In 1925, it was reported:

An imposing appearance is presented by Beatty Park, just across Vincent-street from Royal Park, its thickly planted and well developed trees promising to make it a favoured resort in the years to come.<sup>21</sup>

By the 1930s, Beatty Park had become 'a charming combination of park and recreation ground'.<sup>22</sup>

The forerunner of the British Empire and Commonwealth Games (known as Commonwealth Games from 1978) was an Inter Empire Sports Meeting,

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<sup>14</sup> *Government Gazette* 2 February 1906, p. 219.

<sup>15</sup> Annual Reports City Gardener in Mayor's (later Lord Mayor's) Reports, 1896-1960.

<sup>16</sup> Note: To date, there is no comprehensive inventory of mature trees in metropolitan parks and reserves to inform an accurate comparison with other places in which Monkey puzzle trees of a similar age survive.

<sup>17</sup> *Guardian Express* 23 November 1993, p. 11.

<sup>18</sup> *West Australian* 23 March 1977, p. 6.

<sup>19</sup> W. E. Bold 'Civic Reminiscences' op. cit.

<sup>20</sup> Site visit, Robin Chinnery and Philip Griffiths, 25 July 2003.

<sup>21</sup> News cutting, 1925, no details. Scrapbook 3, J. G. Braithwaite, 1912-39. Courtesy W. Braithwaite.

<sup>22</sup> W. E. Bold 'Civic Reminiscences' op. cit.

held in London in 1911, as part of the festival of the British Empire to celebrate the coronation of George V, in which the United Kingdom, Canada, Australasia and South Africa competed. Despite subsequent continued suggestions that a British Empire Games be instituted along similar lines to the Olympic Games, it was not until August 1930, that the first such games were held in Hamilton, Canada. Four hundred competitors representing 11 countries, including Australia, participated in six sports: swimming, diving, lawn bowling, wrestling, boxing and rowing. At the conclusion of these successful games, it was agreed the British Empire Games be held every four years, between the years in which the Olympic Games were staged. In 1932, the British Empire Games Federation was formed to oversee the future games. The subsequent Games were held in London (1934), Sydney (1938), Auckland (1950), Vancouver (1954), the latter under the name British Empire and Commonwealth Games, and the VI<sup>th</sup> were to be held in Cardiff in 1958.<sup>23</sup> Perth was successful in its bid for the VII British Empire and Commonwealth Games, to be held in late 1962. One of the 'main forces' behind Perth's bid was W. A. Mcl. Green, Town Clerk, City of Perth, whose confidence that the city would be able to construct the requisite sporting venues, i.e. a swimming pool, an athletics stadium and a residential village, 'made Perth's bid ... a successful one', and he was to be very significant in their development.<sup>24</sup>

William Allan McInnes Green (b. Port Adelaide, 1896, d. Shenton Park, 1972) served as a draftsman in the South Australian Railways for two years from March 1914, before enlisting in the A. I. F. in World War One. Following discharge in February 1920, he resumed employment with the Railways, and studied part-time at the South Australian School of Mines and Industries and the University of Adelaide (B. Eng., 1928). In mid 1928, Green was appointed designer and computer at the Adelaide City Council. In this position, he was associated with and responsible for the design of numerous large works. In 1934, he was appointed assistant engineer, architect and building surveyor to the City of Launceston, Tasmania, where he was again responsible for the design of numerous public buildings and re-modeling of the town hall. In May 1937, Green was appointed Perth City Council building surveyor, and soon thereafter also took on the position of city architect. He succeeded W. E. Bold as Town Clerk in 1945. He encouraged Professor Gordon Stephenson and J. A. Hepburn in their work towards *Plan for the Metropolitan Region, Perth and Fremantle* (1955), known as the Stephenson Plan. From 1944 to 1966, Green was 'either the designer or the adviser for practically every building constructed by the city

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<sup>23</sup> XII Commonwealth Games Brisbane 1982 The Official Pictorial History (O & B Holdings Limited, Brisbane, 1982) pp. 81-87.

<sup>24</sup> Ritchie, John (General Editor) *Australian Dictionary of Biography* Vol. 14, 1940-1980 (Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1996) pp. 318-319; and *West Australian* 17 February 1966, West Suburban Section, p. 7.

council', and, in 1963, he was awarded the C.M.G. for his contribution to the growth and development of Perth.<sup>25</sup>

Previous to the Commonwealth Games, Perth had 'almost no sports facilities of international standard' had never staged a major international sporting event on such a scale, and thus faced a huge challenge for a city of less than 500,000 people.<sup>26</sup>

The City of Perth perceived the Games as 'an opportunity for enhancing a reputation for goodwill and hospitality on an international plane'.<sup>27</sup> Almost £4 million would be spent on preparations for the Games, 'much of it on permanent new facilities', including the Commonwealth Government spending £1 million on raising Perth Airport to international jet standards, and Fremantle Harbour Trust completing 'one of the world's most modern sea passenger terminals' to cater for Games visitors.<sup>28</sup>

Proposals for building of an Olympic size swimming pool in Perth had been canvassed since the late 1940s, but had not come to fruition. Thus the opportunity to build one as part of the necessary development for the Commonwealth Games was welcomed.<sup>29</sup> To this end, Green undertook an extensive study of swimming pool facilities in Australia and overseas, and embarked on designing the facility required for the British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Perth. His initial design was for a four-pool centre, to be set in a 20 acre site in King's Park, as favored by Lord Mayor Howard. The King's Park Board agreed in principle to the proposal for an aquatic centre in the park. In August 1954, Perth City Council passed a resolution to request a long term lease of 20 acres of King's Park for this purpose. In November 1954, the King's Park Bill was passed, requiring the permission of State Parliament to such a proposal. In 1957, after Perth City Council agreed to put to Parliament the proposal for a pool in King's Park, covering around five acres with around 15 acres of the surrounding area to be landscaped gardens etc. There was considerable public opposition and committees were formed to safeguard King's Park, and, in October 1959, Parliament rejected the King's Park Aquatic Bill.<sup>30</sup> Sites that were considered as an alternative included Delhi Square (later re-developed and re-named Harold Boas Gardens), the north-west portion of Hyde Park, Bold Park, Reabold Hill, parkland near Leederville Oval, and Beatty Park.<sup>31</sup> On 5 November 1959, the selection of Beatty Park as the site of the proposed swimming pool for the Empire Games was announced. It was anticipated

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<sup>25</sup> Ritchie, John (General Editor) *Australian Dictionary of Biography* Vol. 14, 1940-1980 (Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1996) pp. 318-319; and *West Australian* 17 February 1966, West Suburban Section, p. 7.

<sup>26</sup> *A Pictorial Record of the VII<sup>th</sup> British Empire and Commonwealth Games Perth Western Australia November 22 to December 1, 1962*, p. 9.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid*, p. 3.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid*, p. 9.

<sup>29</sup> Proposed Aquatic Centre, City of Perth, SROWA AN20/5 Acc. 3054, Item 78, 1949-59.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid*; *Living Today* 30 November 1978; and *West Australian* 20 November 1954 and 21 October 1959.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid*; and memos and reports in Beatty Park, City of Perth, SROWA AN 20/5 Acc. 3054 Item 61, October-November 1959.

that about three acres of the park would be required.<sup>32</sup> Consequently, Green had to re-design the swimming centre for a considerably smaller site.

In mid December 1959, Perth City Council agreed to Green's plan of a three pool aquatic centre, with the layout as shown in the *West Australian*.<sup>33</sup> Though Green is generally given credit for the plans, Milton Boyce, the City Architect, would have had the responsibility for the detail design and implementation of the work. This layout provided shelter for spectators from the westerly winds, and the diving pool was sited facing south so that divers would not have to look into the sun. Maximum visibility for spectators was facilitated by the provision of 20ft. concourses around the pool, and the spectators' seats being set from a minimum of 7ft. above the pool. A £200,000 loan was authorised, at 5.5% interest, and repayable in 15 years. The pool was to occupy 4.5 acres of Beatty Park's 11.5 acres, in which 'as many as possible of the existing trees' were to be preserved, and the cricket and football fields at the eastern side would be unaffected.<sup>34</sup>

Around 150 residents of Leederville and North Perth presented a petition to Perth City Council objecting to the siting of the proposed aquatic centre in Beatty Park, which they maintained was an important local amenity 'already established as a rendezvous for many people, particularly young ones, who resort to this park for all forms of recreation.'<sup>35</sup> Their petition was unsuccessful, and planning for the pool at Beatty Park proceeded.<sup>36</sup>

In August 1961, the completed plans for the proposed Commonwealth Games swimming venue were released. Amongst the changes from the 1959 layout was the addition of an observation tower near the diving tower, and the re-alignment of the learners' pool to align with the main building. Three lawn sun terraces included in the 1959 plan were no longer part of the proposal. As in 1959, an outdoor kiosk was included.<sup>37</sup>

In late August 1961, tenders were called, and, in the same week, details of the swimming pool, to be built at an estimated cost of £250,000, were announced.<sup>38</sup> Seven tenders were received, the successful tenderer being the well known Western Australian builder, H. A. Doust, at £564,300.<sup>39</sup> The total cost of tenders for the various works, including the construction of the swimming and diving pools, chlorination and filtration plant (the most up-to-date in Australia), spectator gallery etc., was £614,000.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> *West Australian* 21 October and 5 November 1959, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> *West Australian* 15 December 1959, p. 2. Note: The drawings were by Milton Boyce, City of Perth Architect.

<sup>34</sup> *West Australian* *ibid.* Note: Car parking was to be provided at the southern portion of Smith's Lake Reserve, to the north of the proposed swimming centre. (*ibid.*)

<sup>35</sup> Petition, Beatty Park, City of Perth, SROWA AN20/5 Acc. 3054 Item 61; and *Daily News* 25 January 1960, p. 1.

<sup>36</sup> City of Perth, SROWA AN 20/5 Acc. 3054 Items 78 and 79.

<sup>37</sup> *West Australian* 4 August 1961, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup> *West Australian* 25 August 1961, p. 1, and 1 September 1961, p. 1.

<sup>39</sup> *West Australian* 9 and 12 October 1961, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> *West Australian* 10 October 1961, p. 1.

The large increase from the initial cost estimate and delay in commencement of the project met with considerable criticism.<sup>41</sup> In October, at a meeting of the City of Perth Ratepayers' Association the Town Clerk, Green, explained the costing of the project, noting that if the pool had been built in King's Park the cost would have been lower, as seating would have been open air. However, the proximity of surrounding dwellings at the Beatty Park site necessitated enclosed seating, and the cost of the spectator gallery and communication centre was £250,000. After taking into account Federal and State grants towards the total cost of the venue, the estimated cost to ratepayers would be around £380,000. The preparation of plans in-house at the City of Perth had saved about £35,000, compared to the cost if outside architects had been engaged.<sup>42</sup>

In October 1961, work commenced, and it was anticipated that the pool would be completed in August 1962.<sup>43</sup> In early December 1961, the first section of concrete was poured, and by late December, the roof was being fitted.<sup>44</sup>

The eight lane main pool measured 50m. x 20m., with depths ranging from one to two metres, two thirds of the pool being less than one and a half metres deep for reasons of public safety. The learners' pool was 50m. x 16m., of shallow depth for maximum safety, and with an adjacent toddlers' pool. The diving pool, designed also to meet international standards for water polo, was 30m. x 20m., with a depth sloping to five metres. A special water system to create ripples was installed to enable divers more easily to judge their distance from the surface. The 'U' shaped spectator gallery was covered for weather protection and provided seating accommodation for 5,000 people. The chlorination and filtration system had a capacity of 500,000 gallons per hour, allowing a two hour turn over of water in the pools.<sup>45</sup> Lionel H. Steenbohm, Director of Parks and Gardens, City of Perth, was responsible for the design of the landscaping of the gardens around the aquatic centre, including the plantings of native Australian trees to provide a setting for the garden café, and also for the landscaping at other VII Commonwealth Games venues. He is commemorated with a plaque on a large boulder in the garden at the south of the original main entrance.<sup>46</sup>

In 1961-62, the forthcoming Games in Perth were extensively promoted, nationally and internationally. A brochure noted that permanent legacies of the Games in Perth would be 'three of the finest sporting venues in the Southern Hemisphere - the Perry Lakes stadium, the Beatty Park aquatic centre and the Canning all-weather rowing course.'<sup>47</sup> Qantas Empire

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41 *ibid*, 11 October 1961, Editorial, p. 6.

42 *ibid*, 19 October 1961, p. 2.

43 *ibid*, 10 and 11 October 1961, p. 1; and *Daily News* 17 October 1961, p. 1.

44 *West Australian* 5 and 30 December 1961, p. 1 and p. 3 respectively.

45 'Beatty Park Aquatic Centre' Typewritten notes, no details, City of Perth Local History Collection.

46 Site visit, Robin Chinnery and Philip Griffiths, 24 July 2003; and Qantas Empire Airways Perth Games Issue Vol. 28 No. 6, June 1962, p. 7.

47 Perth Western Australia VII<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Games. Brochure, held in Battye Library, PR10285/16.

Airways Perth Games Issue reported 'Perth is providing the most modern venues ever constructed for any Commonwealth Games', and noted at the aquatic centre,

Indirect lighting on the concourse, illumination from underwater and spotlights on each competitor as well as long bands of light to light the rockeries and fountains at the glass faced entrance will give the centre a dazzling effect.<sup>48</sup>

In early 1962, the Perth City Council General Purposes Committee recommended that the aquatic centre be known as Beatty Park Aquatic Centre. However, in early February, a division of councilors defeated this recommendation, and Cr. S. E. O'Brien stated 'many people did not know where Beatty Park was. We would be losing a magnificent opportunity if it were merely named after a district.'<sup>49</sup> On 6 February 1962, it was announced that the name of the Games swimming pool would be the City of Perth Aquatic Centre.<sup>50</sup>

In June 1962, a photograph shows the spectator gallery with its roof as fitted in December 1961, and work in progress on the main pool and the diving pool.<sup>51</sup>

In July 1962, the area of Beatty Park was reduced by 21.7 perches for the purpose of widening Charles Street.<sup>52</sup>

In October 1962, the up-dated Sewerage plan shows the newly built aquatic centre, enclosed by a wire fence to the east. The main entrance is angled to the corner of Morrision and Vincent Streets, with the bitumen drive and garden area, with beds of lawn along the Vincent Street boundary. The areas around the pools are tiled. The café and the caretaker's residence are within the fenced area, and there are lawns planted in the balance of this area.<sup>53</sup>

In late 1962, photographs show the recently completed aquatic centre in Beatty Park, including the front entrance, the diving tower and pool and the spectators' gallery.<sup>54</sup> *A Pictorial Record of the VII<sup>th</sup> British Empire and Commonwealth Games* reported that the centre had been described as 'the best outdoor pool in the world'.<sup>55</sup>

In total, 1,041 competitors, representing 30 countries, participated in the VII<sup>th</sup> British Empire and Commonwealth Games, held in Perth from 21 November to 1 December 1962. The Games attracted one of the largest audiences to witness the Games to date, and well surpassed the previous ticket sales record. Australia was notably successful in the swimming and diving events. Murray Rose won four gold medals, and Ian O'Brien and

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48 Qantas Empire Airways Perth Games Issue Vol. 28 No. 6, June 1962, pp. 2-7.

49 *West Australian* 6 February 1962, p. 10.

50 *ibid.*

51 Beatty Park Swimming Centre, 12 June 1962. Town of Vincent Library, Local History Collection.

52 *Government Gazette* 20 July 1962, pp. 1803-1804.

53 Metropolitan Sewerage City of Perth SROWA Cons. 4156 Item 137. Revised October 1962 - Aquatic Centre only.

54 Beatty Park, in City of Perth Local History Collection, Negs. CV 44-47.

55 *A Pictorial Record of the VII<sup>th</sup> British Empire and Commonwealth Games op.cit.*, p. 9.

Kevin Berry each won three, Dawn Fraser won two individual gold medals and was a member of successful relay teams, and Susan Knights won the women's diving events.<sup>56</sup> A total of 30 Commonwealth Games' swimming records were broken, of which eight were new world records, four of them set by the Australian teams in relay events.<sup>57</sup>

Following the British Empire and Commonwealth Games, the aquatic centre became not only the facility for competition swimming in Western Australia, and an important part of swimming education in the State, but also a popular water recreational facility, as depicted in photographs dating from 1963.<sup>58</sup> Photographs, taken in February 1963, show various views of the place including the exterior of the building; the main entry area with its distinctive flooring and pillars featuring local stone; the pools, including the diving pool with the tower and high boards (of which the upper level was removed some years later); and the change-rooms.<sup>59</sup>

Through the 1960s and 1970s, the aquatic centre was the venue for beauty pageants, such as Miss West Coast and Miss Western Australia, and for musical performances. Performers included Roy Orbison, Rolf Harris, the Bee Gees, Suzi Quattro, the Jackson Five, the Hollies, Deep Purple, the Kinks, and Santana.<sup>60</sup>

In March 1977, it was announced that a new pavilion would be built at Beatty Park, on the site of the existing change-rooms. This pavilion, and that built at Woodville Reserve in the same period, were 'based on a standard design for all future pavilions provided on PCC reserves', and the total cost for the two buildings was \$145,000.<sup>61</sup> The pavilion at Beatty Park Reserve was named the Albert Spencer Pavilion in honour of Albert Spencer, O.B.E., the award having been made for his services to local government to the City of Perth. He was a member of Perth City Council 1943-63 and 1964-67, an inaugural member of the Metropolitan Regional Planning Authority, one of three members of the committee which devised the Local Government Act, and a past president of the Justices of Western Australia.<sup>62</sup>

From 1985, there was lobbying to up-grade Beatty Park Aquatic Centre to international standard. In 1988, such a project was considered when the Centre applied to hold the World Swimming Championships in 1991, which went instead to the newly completed Mount Claremont Superdrome (later named Challenge Stadium).<sup>63</sup> In November 1990, Perth City Council decided to proceed with the refurbishment, and set aside \$2.5million for this purpose, in anticipation that work would begin in autumn 1991. This was delayed pending the decision on a \$1million grant application to the

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56 *XII Commonwealth Games Brisbane 1982 ... op. cit.*, p. 88.

57 *A Pictorial Record of the VII<sup>th</sup> British Empire and Commonwealth Games* *ibid.*, p. 13.

58 Programmes for various competitions, Beatty Park cuttings file, Town of Vincent Library, Local History collection; and *West Australian* 4 September 1963.

59 Beatty Park Swimming Centre, 9 February 1963. Town of Vincent Library, Local History Collection.

60 Beatty Park cuttings file, *op. cit.*

61 *ibid.*, 4 September 1963.

62 *ibid.*, 1 January 1971, p. 9.

63 *Guardian Express* 14 December 1993, p. 1.

Government, which was finally agreed in late November 1992. However, in March 1993, the newly elected Court government reneged on this commitment. Consequently, in May 1993, following a Special Electors meeting which voted to make up the shortfall, Perth City Council determined to proceed with the project, the largest re-development of the place since its completion in 1962.<sup>64</sup>

The initial estimated cost of the proposed up-grade to Beatty Park Aquatic Centre was \$7.5 million. Following protests from some Perth City councilors and residents' groups, some of the extras, including a wave pool and artificial beach, were excluded from the final design. Architect Peter Hunt designed the works to up-grade Beatty Park, which he believed would be 'a tropical paradise ... the best indoor swimming and leisure pool in Australia.'<sup>65</sup> The design retained the principal features of the exterior of the centre, 'to preserve a historical look', whilst 'the blank interior facade' was to be 'punctuated with windows.'<sup>66</sup> The total cost of the up-grade was estimated at \$1million for Stage 1 and \$4.5million for Stage 2.<sup>67</sup> The six lane learners' pool was to be converted to an eight lane 25m. lap pool, with a leisure pool attached. The main entrance was re-located to this area. At the western side of Beatty Park, the area adjoining the leisure pool area, was to be utilised for the construction of a car park for 260 cars to overcome the problem of limited parking at the place.<sup>68</sup> Perth City Council also allocated \$30,000 for a public art work project at the place. Paul O'Connor was commissioned for this work, the centre-piece being 'a series of five symbolic totem poles arranged in the shape of the Southern Cross, each exploring notions of the significance of water.'<sup>69</sup> He was also responsible for art in the children's wading pool.<sup>70</sup>

Through winter and spring 1993, Beatty Park Aquatic Centre was closed as the works were undertaken for Stage 1 of the up-grade the place, which included refurbishment of the main pool and the diving pool. The work was nearing completion in mid December 1993, when it was anticipated that the place would re-open on 1 January 1994, the day on which City of Perth would officially be divided, with Town of Vincent taking over responsibility for Beatty Park.<sup>71</sup>

Stage 2 of the up-grade to Beatty Park Aquatic Centre included the glass enclosed eight lane 25m. lap pool, water slides, spas and saunas, and a kiosk. It had been anticipated that these works would be completed in April

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64 *Guardian Express* 20 November 1990, 4 August and 30 November 1992, 16 March and 6, 13 and 27 April 1993; *West Australian* 11 March 1993; *News Chronicle* 14 April 1993; and *West Australian* 13 May 1993.

65 *Guardian Express* 14 December 1993, p. 1.

66 *ibid.*

67 *ibid.*

68 *Guardian Express* 4 August 1992 and 23 November 1993..

69 *Guardian Express* 14 September 1993.

70 *ibid.*

71 *Guardian Express* 14 December 1993, p. 1.

1994; however, completion was delayed, and the centre re-opened on 1 July.<sup>72</sup>

The up-grade proved to be successful in increasing usage of Beatty Park Aquatic Centre, both for swimming and other leisure activities. In March and April 1994, more than 30,000 people attended the place, including those attending State and private school system swimming carnivals. In addition to already existing aquarobics classes, 30 aerobics classes were offered, and the Centre's first fully equipped gymnasium was opened in May. Other leisure classes were proposed for the Centre, and yoga had already commenced. A crèche was available. After the Western Australian Swimming Association moved to the Beatty Park Aquatic Centre, the centre manager, Rob McPhail, stated that it could 'boast that it's once again the home of swimming in Western Australia.'<sup>73</sup> After the completion of Stage 2, learn-to-swim programmes commenced at the Centre.<sup>74</sup> Aerial photographs show the completed works, the new car park area, and Beatty Park with the Albert Spencer Pavilion at north side and the mature trees in the park.<sup>75</sup>

Since the 1993-94 up-grade, the place has been re-named Beatty Park Leisure Centre, which reflects its changed role. In September 1997, the place won the annual award for the best indoor recreational facility in Western Australia, and later that year the top national award in the Heart Foundation's Healthy Hearts Local Government awards.<sup>76</sup>

Subsequent to the establishment of the Town of Vincent, the place has been the responsibility of the town, and, in 1995, it was included in the Town of Vincent's Municipal Heritage Inventory, with the recommendation that it be included in the State Register of Heritage Places.<sup>77</sup>

In late 1997, a class of Year 10 students from Aranmore College produced an 8 ft. long mural for Beatty Park Leisure Centre, the work being funded by a grant from Healthways through the Cancer Foundation of Western Australia and the Town of Vincent.<sup>78</sup> Works implemented in recent years include the fitting of replacement stainless steel gutters to the main pool, extensions to the retail shop, and a new fibre glass floor for the leisure pool at a cost of \$150,000 in 2000-01.<sup>79</sup> Annual attendances increased from around 400,000 in the early 1990s, to around 1.2 million before declining somewhat to around 950,000 to 970,000 in 2002-03.<sup>80</sup> Since the up-grade, the place been the venue for Dive-in movies, and Splash dance events,

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<sup>72</sup> *ibid* and 21 June 1994; and *City of Perth News*, May 1994, p. 6.

<sup>73</sup> *City of Perth News* May 1994, p. 6.

<sup>74</sup> *City of Perth News* May 1994, p. 6.

<sup>75</sup> Photographs 958 and 962, Town of Vincent Library, Local History Collection.

<sup>76</sup> *Voice* 26 September 1997; and *W. A. Business News* Vol. 27 10 December 1997, p. 23.

<sup>77</sup> Town of Vincent Municipal Heritage Inventory, Hocking Planning & Architecture, 1995.

<sup>78</sup> *Voice* 28 November 1997.

<sup>79</sup> Town of Vincent File PRO 1149 - Vincent Street 220 Lot 1618, North Perth, Beatty Park Café, December 2000 - January 2001; *Voice News* 28 July and 4 August 2001; and Dale Morissey, Manager, Beatty Park Leisure Centre, conversation with Robin Chinnery, site visit 24 July 2003.

<sup>80</sup> *ibid*; and *Guardian Express* 12 February 2002.

which have proved popular.<sup>81</sup> The place has continued to serve as the 'home' for various swimming groups and clubs, including the AUSSI Osborne Park Swimming Club, whose honour board for the period 1986-2001 is located near the present day gymnasium.<sup>82</sup>

The Town of Vincent commissioned an up-date of the Municipal Heritage Inventory, and the place was included in the Draft in October 2002.<sup>83</sup> In November 2002, the place celebrated its 40 years with a week long party.<sup>84</sup>

In 2003, a structural assessment of the place has been undertaken, and the report is awaited. A feasibility study has been carried out, and a subsequent proposal put to the Town of Vincent for an up-grade of the spectator gallery, which has remained basically unchanged since its original construction and is in need of work.<sup>85</sup> The main pool no longer meets the requirements with regard to water depth for State, national and international competitions, which require a standard 2m. for the whole pool, and consequently it is less used for competition swimming. The possibilities of up-grading the pool are being considered, including the possibility of a pool with a movable floor.<sup>86</sup> In mid 2003, Beatty Park Leisure Centre continues in use as a leisure centre, and Beatty Park continues in use for recreation, including cricket matches in summer season and soccer in winter, continuing the long term use of the playing fields for amateur and junior competitions. Currently the Perth Azzurri Soccer Club and Glendalough Soccer Club uses the reserve, and then in the summer months, from October, the East Perth Cricket Club and Grid-Iron Giants use the reserve.<sup>87</sup> The date at which the playground equipment was established at the western side of the park has not been ascertained.

### 13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* is a recreational reserve and leisure centre. Beatty Park, a portion of the original Reserve 884, gazetted 1890 (Local Board of Health - temporary), was developed as a recreational area by the City of Perth from c. 1905. Beatty Park Leisure Centre, originally named City of Perth Aquatic Centre, was built at the western portion of the park in 1962, by H. A. Doust, to designs by City of Perth Town Clerk, W. A. Mcl. Green and City Architect Milton Boyce, as the aquatic centre for the VII<sup>th</sup> British Empire and Commonwealth Games. In 1977, the Albert Spencer Pavilion was built in the park for the City of Perth. The aquatic centre was up-graded, with additional leisure facilities, to designs by architect Peter Hunt, for the City of Perth in 1993-94, and was re-named Beatty Park Leisure Centre.

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81 *Town of Vincent News* September 2002.

82 Site visit, Robin Chinnery and Philip Griffiths, 24 July 2003.

83 Town of Vincent Municipal Heritage Inventory, Hocking Planning & Architecture, October 2002.

84 *Town of Vincent News* September 2002; and *Guardian Express* 5 November 2002.

85 Dale Morrissey, op. cit.

86 *ibid.*

87 Hanna Eames, Town of Vincent 8 August 2003.

*Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* is sited north of the City of Perth and is bounded by Vincent and Charles streets to the south and east, both of which are busy urban roads, and Swimming Avenue and Morriston Street to the north and east that are quiet residential roads. There is right angle parking in Morriston Street that is part of the more recent development work. The site is a large rectangular plan, with the aquatic centre located on the western half of the site and recreation grounds on the eastern half of the site. Parking occupies a part of the site to the south of the aquatic centre and a large portion of the land to the east of the aquatic centre. There are mature plantings relating to the initial development of the recreation ground, others relating to the establishment of the City of Perth Aquatic Centre, and then more recently plantings relating to the development of the leisure centre and its car parking.

Mature early plantings include Moreton Bay (*Ficus macrophylla*) and Port Jackson Figs (*Ficus rubiginosa*), Monkey Puzzle Trees (*Araucaria araucana*), and Cape Lilacs or White Cedar (*Melia azedarach*). Plantings in the park area from the Inter-War period include Coral Trees (*Erythrina sykesii*), Monterey Pine Trees (*Pinus radiata*), Canary Island Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*), London Planes (*Platanus x acerifolia*), and New South Wales Box Trees (*Lophostemon confertus*). Some of this group may be survivals of the earlier period and it would seem from the size of the trees that the same species were planted in several different periods, with species such as London Planes being planted up to the 1990s. The early and Inter-War plantings are confined to the perimeters of the open spaces to allow the playing surfaces on the western side of the site to be laid out for football pitches. Post World War II plantings are associated with the 1962 and then 1994 periods of development of the pool complex. The first group of plantings is grouped around the 1962 pool development perimeter, the car parking to the south of the pool around the former entry and the southern boundary. The second group relates to the redevelopment of the pool in 1994 and the associated car parking.

Planting associated with the development of the 1962 pool include Casuarinas (*Allocasuarina fraseriana*), Monterey Pines, London Planes, then shrubs including Lantana (*Lantana*), Strelizia (*Strelitzia regina*), Grevillea, Cypresses (*Cupressus spp.*), Bottle Brush (*Callistemon spp.*), Yucca (*Yucca spp.*), Geraldton Wax (*Chamelaucium uncinatum*), Agapanthus (*Agapanthus africanus*), Oleander (*Nerium oleander*), Sword Fern (*Nephrolepis exaltata*), Coprosma (*Coprosma repens*), and Cannas (*Canna flaccida*). The landscape makes use of random coursed limestone walls, concrete paving slab paths, concrete kerbs, and the decorative use of large granite boulders in the garden beds around the main pool entrance area.

More recent plantings include Olive Trees (*Olea europeae*), Cocos Palms (*Syagrus romanzoffianum*), further plantings of London Planes, Asian Planes (*Platanus orientalis*), Frangipani (*Plumeria*), Agapanthus, and Bottlebrush.

The group of buildings associated with the pool is set close to Morriston Street and Swimming Avenue, with a setback to Vincent Street that allows

the building to be read in the context of a hard set down area, with a fringe of soft landscaping. The whole of the park slopes from its highest point at the Morrision Street boundary in the west, to the Charles Street boundary in the east. To create a plateau for the swimming pool development, the land was cut at the south- west and part of the western boundary. Garden beds and retaining walls take up the change in levels and sets of concrete steps with brickwork balustrades provide access down from Morrision Street to the concourse in front of the former main entry on the southern façade.

East of Beatty Park Leisure Centre, there is extensive car parking that curves around the south-east, east and north-eastern parts of the centre. The parking is laid out in an informal pattern and has been constructed to suit the ground contours, rather than on a plateau that requires retaining.

Further east two playing areas are laid out, with one marked up for football and to the north of the playing surfaces there is a small brick and tiled roof building-the Alfred Spencer Pavilion. There is no surface evidence of previous change rooms or the relocated pavilion.

### **The City of Perth Aquatic Centre (1962)**

The City of Perth Aquatic Centre was the first section of the Beatty Park Leisure Centre to be completed. The City of Perth Aquatic Centre is a three storey brick, concrete, glazed tile and fibrous cement roofed swimming pool and stadium complex designed in the Late Twentieth Century International style<sup>88</sup> completed in 1962 for the British Empire and Commonwealth Games. The group comprises a diving pool to the north-east, with grassed areas to either end of the pool, then the competition pool to the south-west. The pools are surrounded by a 'U' shaped spectators stand plan that captures the north-west, south-west and south-east sides. The spectators' stand includes change rooms, the former main entry, and rooms that have been converted for alternative uses.

The exterior faces of the building employ a variety of treatments. The public face of the building comprises a main entrance element, then the backs of the stands including the access galleries and a glazed curtain wall. The entrance comprises a colonnade of seven deep blue glazed tiled columns on a low podium, with the entrance screen, comprising aluminium framed doors and windows, set well back behind the colonnade. The floor to the first floor level extends beyond the column line to form a cantilevered canopy. The first floor then comprises the extended canopy as noted below and a curtain wall comprising aluminium framing, blue spandrel panels, a broad bank of fixed and opening lights, then a further spandrel to match the lower one, and finally a cantilevered slab to form the roof. The final device that was employed to emphasise the entry is a series of columns and beams that extend beyond the first floor roof, with beams that connect from the column tops back to the main stadium building line. Flagpoles fixed to the face of each of the seven columns are the final vertical elements. Since the completion of the place, lettering has been added over the entrance that

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<sup>88</sup> Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989. pp. 234-237.

include the words 'TOWN OF VINCENT BEATTY PARK LEISURE CENTRE', in white lettering that contrast with the blue spandrel panels.

Typical external stand elevations are treated with blue glazed tile columns and white painted brick infill panels on the ground floor, with a variety of aluminium framed windows set high in the wall. The remaining two levels are treated in the same manner as the entrance, with alternative blue spandrels and strips of glazing that includes fixed and awning lights. These section have a strong horizontal emphasis. However, within each column module the geometry is more complex, with each spandrel divided into two, reinforcing the horizontal emphasis, but the glazed sections are divided into 5 narrow windows that have a strong vertical emphasis. Spectator toilets are dealt with as vertical brick construction elements that contrast with the principal wall treatments.

The internal or pool side elevation comprises three main elements, the lower level terrace and change rooms, the tiered spectators stand accommodation, and the roof soffit. The poolside spectators terraces provide access down from the change room floor level to the pool terrace and are covered in blue tiles, and the terraces provide three levels of seating as well as steps at points of entry to the change room concourse. The concourse elevation comprises a masonry balustrade wall, fixed light glazing divided into two horizontal bands and three vertical bands. A shade cloth awning has been added to some of the terraces. Above this level the seating cantilevers out over the terraces, and rises 7 terraces to a mid level concourse, and then a further 7 terraces to the upper concourse. The balustrades are simply treated with steel balusters and rails and a plastic wrapped handrail, while the terraces are pre-cast concrete with timber batten seats on steel brackets fixed to the face of the terraces. The terraces are punctuated at intervals by brick balustrades to access steps that provide access to the mid level internal concourse. There is a set of steel columns along the middle concourse line. The upper concourse has a plasterboard tiled ceiling, with a corrugated fibrous cement lining to the main roof. The main roof cantilevers dramatically off the rear wall line and the soffit is a prominent feature of the roofscape. The leading edge is finished with blue panels, using the same system as those previously described. Six large lights are cantilevered off the roof and extend over almost to the edge of the competition pool.

The areas around the competition and diving pool are paved with concrete blocks, while the pools have raised edges that are tiled, with stainless steel rails to each starting block and stainless steel access ladders into the pool. The pools are tiled and lanes defined in the tiling. The original diving platforms have been removed and there is no longer a high board in position. Grass and Cocos Palms have been added to the open spaces around the pool.

The plan form of the original section of the pool and spectator stand area comprises the 'U' shaped plan arranged around the pools, with the central main entry area (now re-planned to provide offices for meeting rooms) including a pair of stair cases to the upper level concourse, then arranged to the south-west there is a room that is currently used for aerobics, a staff

room, minor entrance, a room that currently serves as a crèche, original male and female west change rooms (flanked by escape stairs) that remain almost in their original form, a rest room, and stair. All of this accommodation is accessible from an enclosed concourse, with a glazed screen wall that allows views over the pool area. Stairs from pool to concourse level have been remodelled to provide ramp access. On the eastern side of the original main entrance, the plan is repeated, with a gym adjacent to the entry and large change rooms beyond. These areas have been extensively remodeled, though much of the work done was to fittings and finishes.

At the ground floor level the original sections of floor in the concourse were granolithic finish in the less important sections of the concourse, and covered with terrazzo tiles in the more important areas. The western wing has new ceramic tiled floors and skirtings. The walls are painted brickwork and there are plaster acoustic tiled ceilings.

Original toilet and change room areas have a blue applied finish to floors, painted brick walls, tiled skirtings, glazed tiling to wet area walls, plaster tiled ceilings, surface mounted lavatory basins and chrome tap and pipe ware, with mirrors screw fixed to walls. There are timber batten wall mounted benches, timber batten hat and coat rails, and terrazzo partitions between toilets and showers. The aluminium framed windows have terrazzo sills and linings.

Gym areas have carpeted floors, painted brick walls and acoustic tiled ceilings.

The first floor level contains the Western Australian Swimming Association's offices which is located over the entrance foyer, the main stairs, the access concourse that extends to the full length of the 'U' shaped plan, stairs to the mezzanine concourse, paired escape stairs, spectator's toilets between escape stairs, and sets of stairs to the tiered seating. The floors are finished in granolithic and the walls remain the original unpainted pink face brick. Stairs to the upper or mezzanine level concourse are made of pre-cast concrete in an open tread format, with the treads carried on steel carrier rails, open steel handrails, and breeze block screens in front of the half landings.

There are storage spaces under the tiered seating, and from these spaces, the pre-cast elements can be read. They remain unadorned, with voids screened-off with chainlink fencing.

The main stairs are concrete construction with a terrazzo finish, mosaic tiled spine walls and a steel balustrade with plastic covered handrails.

The mezzanine concourse uses the same architectural language and materials as the lower floor, though here the columns to the rear of the tiered seating and at the point of the change in direction in the roof geometry are box steel sections. All of the steel work at this level is showing signs of rusting.

The tiered spectator section of the stands has undergone virtually no alteration since construction. Externally, all of the pink face brickwork has

been painted, and the main entry has been turned into a minor entry. On the ground floor the eastern change rooms have been altered and disabled toilet and a baby change room introduced. Areas immediately either side of the original main entry have been turned into a gym and an aerobics room. The western change rooms have been modified to create a crèche and meeting room and all of the ground floor brickwork has been painted. Administration offices have been introduced into the original main entrance foyer with brick and framed and glazed partition walls. The pool surround has been re-tiled and landscaping introduced, the original diving tower removed and the original wading pool removed.

The upper concourses seem to remain little altered.

The exterior of the building is in reasonable condition, though there is some fretting in the surfaces of the blue glazed tile that clad the columns. Exposed steelwork at the higher levels in the tiered spectator stand is showing signs of erosion and the metalwork requires attention to stem deterioration. The corrugated fibrous cement products are likely to contain asbestos. The original toilets that have not been upgraded retain authentic fittings and finishes and these are generally in fair condition. Batten seating in the spectator stand is deteriorating and will need maintenance or replacement in the short term.

### **Beatty Park Leisure Centre Additions (1994)**

Beatty Park Leisure Centre is the addition to the north-east of the original pool development completed in 1994 as part of the endeavour to save the centre and put it on a sound financial footing. The Leisure Centre component of the development is a largely single storey concrete block, wall panel, painted structural steel, and Colorbond roofed swimming pool and stadium complex designed in the Late Twentieth Century Structuralist style<sup>89</sup>. The accommodation includes a leisure pool, 25 metre pool, the original plant room from the 1962 works, slides, kiosk and administration.

The masonry walls are made of painted brick and face blockwork. Most of the less important areas have wall panels, while the walls to the major spaces are glazed, with the structural framing featuring in the architectural expression of these facades. A number of original walls are incorporated in the construction. The roofs take a series of curved forms and are a dominant feature of the design internally and externally.

The entire north-east side of the complex is taken up with the new main entrance, kiosk, office, leisure pool, 25 metre pool and slides area, together with retained elements of the original scheme, including the boiler area, plant room, switch room and chemical stores, as well as two outdoor areas. The entrance is on the south-east face of the addition, on an alignment with the original dive pool.

The interior space is formed by white painted structural tubular steel columns and trussed tubular steel beams, curved to give the internal space a varied curved ceiling series of spaces. The arches curve across the

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<sup>89</sup> Apperly, op.cit. pp. 258-261.

south-west and north-east axis, and the columns are linked in the normal direction by lattice framed trusses. All of the steelwork is painted white. Almost all of the area comprises a single continuous space, with some variation in the volumes provided by change in levels between circulation spaces and the pool area. Floors have ceramic tiles, minor spaces are created by the use of concrete block walls, and upper walls are treated with acoustic panels. Ceilings are perforated acoustic panels, other than in the lobby area where there is a flat drop in panel ceiling. Handrails and the like are stainless steel tube construction. A large spiral air conditioning duct is a prominent feature in the central curved ceiling space.

There are tiled pools, beds of indoor planting that make uses of *Dracaena* (*Dracaena Spp.*), Cocos Palms, Weeping Figs (*Ficus benjamina*), Philodendron (*Philodendron scandens*), and Agapanthus. There is a set of mosaic tiled abstract figures in the foyer.

The water slides are located in the north corner and comprise a set of steps, platform and chutes leading back down to the leisure pool.

No substantial change was noted and the area is well used and maintained and the level of maintenance high.

#### **The Alfred Spencer Pavilion**

The Alfred Spencer Pavilion is a single storey brick and tile toilet and change room building, located in the north-east corner of the site. It is oriented to face the playing surfaces to the south and would appear to have been built as a brick façade building with a series of full height sliding doors, though most of these have now been removed and the opening part bricked up and windows inserted. It has a gable roof and part of the southern roof extends out in a skillion form, supported by brick piers, to provide a verandah for part of the elevation. The building is simple and utilitarian in its design.

Changes appear to have taken place on most of the south facing opening treatments, and apart from bore-water staining, the building would appear to be in fair condition.

### **13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION**

Beatty Park, formerly Reserve 884, was developed as a park and recreation area under the direction of the City Gardener, J. G. Braithwaite, who was responsible for the laying out and development of all the City of Perth's parks and gardens in the period 1896-1936. Naming of the place after World War One hero, Vice Admiral Beatty, reflected a practice in the post World War One period in which parks and reserves were named after those who had served with distinction in the recent conflict, another example being Birdwood Square.

Whilst there are few documentary records relating to Beatty Park and the other minor parks, it is possible to draw some comparisons based on the surviving mature plantings. As Beatty Park was utilised for sporting activities, including cricket and football, the playing fields were central to the layout, and the plantings were made around the perimeters. This contrasts with the typical square layout of Russell, Delhi and Weld Squares, and the

garden layouts of Queens Gardens and Hyde Park. Some examples of the mature tree plantings at Beatty Park which date from Braithwaite's period are found also in the other parks, gardens, and street tree plantings, for which he was responsible. These include Moreton Bay Fig Trees (*Ficus macrophylla*), Coral Trees (*Erythrina sykesii*), Cape Lilacs or White Cedar (*Melia azedarach*), Box Trees (*Lephostemon conferta*), and Monkey Puzzle Trees (*Araucaria araucana*). As noted in the Documentary Evidence, no comprehensive inventory of such trees has been compiled to date. However, the number of mature Monkey Puzzle Trees at Beatty Park may be significant.

In 1961-62, the Olympic size swimming pool and the diving pool built at *Beatty Park Leisure Centre & Beatty Park* for the VII British Empire and Commonwealth Games were the first such facilities built in Western Australia. As noted in the Documentary Evidence, the centre had been described as 'the best outdoor pool in the world'.<sup>90</sup> Electronic photo-finish and timing equipment, first used at Vancouver in 1954, assisted judging in swimming, athletics, and cycling.<sup>91</sup> Further research would be necessary to ascertain specific details of other outdoor pools used for international competition in the 1960s.

In the early 1960s, Perth City Council built a swimming pool at Sommerset Street, Victoria Park, at a cost of £60,000, which was of smaller scale and did not have extensive provision for spectators as it was not intended for international competitions.<sup>92</sup> Other swimming pools built in the metropolitan area were also intended as local facilities.

Subsequently, following the up-grade and incorporation of additional leisure facilities at Beatty Park Leisure Centre, the emphasis has altered accordingly. The place remains significant as the first aquatic centre of an international standard in Western Australia.

### **Other Games venues**

Perry Lakes Stadium, the Beatty Park Aquatic Centre and the Canning all-weather rowing course were among the larger enterprises built for the hosting of the VII British Empire and Commonwealth Games. Other purpose built facilities included the boxing stadium, also at Perry Lakes, and the Velodrome east of Lake Monger in Leederville. A Games village for accommodating visiting competitors and officials was built at City Beach, on land donated by the City of Perth, valued at £200,000. This facility included almost 150 houses and a village centre. The Commonwealth Government made a £865,000 loan for building it, and also donated £160,000 towards the cost of the Games.<sup>93</sup> The houses were offered for sale through the Rural and Industries Bank on completion of the Games. Existing facilities utilised for Games competition included South Perth Civic Centre for weightlifting, Victoria Park Drill Hall for fencing, Royal King's Park Tennis

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<sup>90</sup> *A Pictorial Record of the VII<sup>th</sup> British Empire and Commonwealth Games op.cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>91</sup> XII Commonwealth Games Brisbane 1982 op. cit., p. 88.

<sup>92</sup> *West Australian* 15 December 1959, p. 1.

<sup>93</sup> *A Pictorial Record of the VII<sup>th</sup> British Empire and Commonwealth Games op. cit.*, p. 9.

Club for wrestling, Dalkeith Bowling Club for bowls, and King's Park for cycling.<sup>94</sup>

Other sporting facilities built by the City of Perth in the late 1950s-early 1960s included three oval grandstands at Leederville, Perth and Lathlain Park football grounds using a very similar design theme to that used at Beatty Park and Perry Lakes.

#### **13.4 KEY REFERENCES**

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#### **13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

Further research may reveal additional information about Beatty Park, in particular during the period prior to 1962, and about the former Cremorne kiosk. Extensive further research in City of Perth records would be required to ascertain the specific details of the various sporting events conducted at the Beatty Park playing fields in the twentieth century and those held at other similar venues in Perth for comparative assessment.

An inventory of trees in Beatty Park has not been completed.

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<sup>94</sup> Brochures and maps, British Empire and Commonwealth Games, Perth, Western Australia, November 22- December 1, 1962. Batty Library, PR 10285/1-10.