

Pre Olympic Swimming Pools in Victoria



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M. ICOMOS

Biography

Lisa is the Coordinator of City Strategy at Warrnambool City Council. Lisa has been involved in implementing the Warrnambool Heritage Gap Study undertaken by Heritage Matters Pty Ltd and has a special interest in industrial heritage, swimming pools, sites linked to Swiss Italian migration to Victoria and the history and development of Victorian mineral springs.

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Introduction

The popular image of Australia is dominated by sun and surf. Swimming is core to this identity. In a country that values sporting achievement swimmers have long dominated our sporting success at Olympic level. In fact the freestyle stroke was originally known as the trudgeon stroke or “Australian crawl”. (White Hat Guide) Names such as Durack, Charlton, Kellerman and Beaurepaire, included in the International Swimming Hall of Fame (International Swimming Hall of Fame), did not come to prominence in an “Olympic Swimming Pool” as we now know.

Australian’s swam in a variety of pools which can be categorised as:

- Ocean enclosures
- River / creek enclosures
- Quarries & Lakes
- Small concrete structures (often with an inflow and outflow to a creek), often built post world war one and two with funding from the Commonwealth of Australia. (Memorial Pools)

Despite the importance of swimming to the Australian identity, of the 327 pools assessed as part of this paper, there is a small minority that have been identified on HERMES as sites under the Item Group “Recreation and Entertainment” and the Item Type “Baths / Swimming centre”. Of these, even fewer have a form of statutory listing.

Many heritage studies undertaken in Victoria have utilised the *Australian Historic Themes* (Australian Heritage Commission, 2001). Swimming, baths and pools do not appear in the thematic structure. The closest theme is Theme 9: Developing Australia’s Cultural Life

which has a subtheme of “going to the beach”. This does not naturally lead to the identification of swimming infrastructure not related to ‘the beach’. With the introduction of standard heritage themes for Victoria’s – *Victoria’s Framework of Historical Themes* released in 2010 swimming pools are clearly identified in Theme 9: shaping cultural and creative life; Sub theme 9.1 Participating in sport and recreation. The Heritage Victoria Database “HERMES” has a the ability to categorise as place under the Category “Recreation and Entertainment” and the sub category “Baths/swimming centre”.

It is my belief that most Australian’s have a strong association to swimming and swimming pools. The pool is a place where you congregated with family and friends – as a child; a teenager or a parent. My memories of Ash Wednesday are linked to the, now demolished Kew Olympic Pool where I watched they sky change colour and smelt the ash in the air. Each subsequent fire event reminds me of the Kew Pool, who I was with and what we were talking about.

My interest in pre Olympic pools stems from the Hepburn Pool. I would often think my father, grandfather and great uncle were pulling my leg when they would tell me that they swam there. I saw no pool of my experience – concrete, turnstiles and the smell of chlorine. The Hepburn Pool had closed the year I was born due to the opening of the Daylesford Olympic Pool. Like many preolympic pools it was seen as obsolete and unsanitary. In the decade that followed farm and other effluent and soils had washed down Spring Creek to fill the structure to the point that all I could see was willows and mud.

In the mid 1990’s the Hepburn community got together to clean out the pool and repair the structure. In 1996, post restoration and local government amalgamations it was slated for

demolition. Hepburn Shire Council had requested a report from Surf Life Saving Victoria that stated that the pool was not chlorinated and therefore did not meet *Lifesaving Victoria* requirements. Upon Council reporting insurance cover was removed from this section of creek and moves to “dismantle” the pool initiated. (State of Victoria, 2006)

It was at this point that my interest in preolympic swimming pools began with my involvement in the campaign to save the pool. I nominated the pool to the Victorian Heritage Register, undertook an initial comparative analysis (Gervasoni, 1999). The pool was subsequently included on the Victorian Heritage Register as H1865 on 9 March 2000. In 2004, the Year of the Built Environment, over 400 nominations of the Hepburn Pool were received as part of the ‘Favourite Built Place’ process. Hepburn Pool was chosen as the regional winner and then was named Victoria’s Favourite Built Place over the MCG, demonstrating the resonance of the strong association of the community to the place. The Minister for Planning, implemented a process to restore insurance to the site in 2006. (State of Victoria, 2006)

Hepburn Pool is not alone in engendering a strong ‘community response’ to its loss. The closure of the Footscray and Sunshine Pools has gained much media attention, including a full front page of the Melbourne *Age* Newspaper. In a repetition of the pattern of demise of preolympic pools, the Olympic Pools are being closed due to construction of indoor heated swimming pools, often of 25m in length.

This paper will look at the development of swimming as a sporting and recreational activity in Victoria, the influence of Beaurepaire and the Department of Education in promoting swimming and swimming facilities and to make recommendations to heritage authorities in

Victoria regarding identification, protection and interpretation of pre Olympic swimming pools in Victoria.

Development of Swimming in Victoria

A search of images in Trove will demonstrate a strong representation (or over representation) of pre Olympic pools in Victoria. While local and state heritage studies have considered sites on a case by case basis, the consideration of why Victoria in the first half of the 20th century developed such a wide range of swimming infrastructure has not been considered in depth. Reference is made to Victoria's one famous swimmer in this era, Frank Beaurepaire who would be influential over many decades in the development of swimming and swimming pools in Victoria. My research leads me to believe his influence is only part of the story.

Department of Education.

The Victorian *Education Gazette and Teachers Aid* from the early 1900's into the 1940's demonstrates the role of the Department of Education in promoting swimming and lifesaving skills in Victoria. May Cox, Supervisor of School Swimming, reported in the July 1922 *Education Gazette and Teachers Aid* that swimming clubs were established in 1898. Until 1910 they were organised by a voluntary committee. May Cox was appointed to the specialised role in 1910 and Frank Beaurepaire was recruited, to work alongside Miss Cox, in 1911.

Prevention of drowning was a key objective and in 1903 the Minister for Education had created a certificate for all pupils who could '(a) swim 50 yards in a reasonable time; (b) can float for at least one minute; and (c) can enter the water by a fairly neat dive.' (Department of Education, 1903). Many *Education Gazette and Teachers Aid's* listed student activities in

lifesaving, and the July 1922 edition reported that for the period 1915-1922 students of the program averaged 83 successful rescues a season.

In order to be able to teach swimming, facilities for swimming were required. In 1906 the *Education Gazette and Teachers Aid* had discussions of facilities for learning to swim as follows,

‘ the importance of teaching children to swim has been vividly impressed on the public mind by the sad drowning fatalities ... where, on account of the depth of water, it is unsafe for a beginner to venture, the following plan, suggested by Lieutenant – Colonel Williams, the head teacher of the Macedon School, is worth of consideration. Use rows of strong wire netting laced together by strong galvanized fencing wire, and stretched across pools, dams, creeks etc, at a depth of about 3ft. The ends of the wires would be securely fastened to posts of trees. .. slips of leather rather wider than the foot could be worn on the soles of the feet for protection from the netting’ . (Department of Education 1906)

This method is included via photograph in a 1914 *Education Gazette and Teachers Aid* as being in use in Cressy.




Frank Beaurepaire, was appointed “Organiser of Swimming”. (Department of Education, 1903-1911) This appointment temporarily ended Beaurepaire’s Olympic Swimming Career as he was declared “professional”. (Poynter, RJ). His term with Department of Education was of short duration, with Beaurepaire enlisting for active service in 1915. His time spent at the education Department created a more professional approach to the teaching of swimming, which was continued in the following decades by May Cox. Articles appeared during this period describing technique, hygiene and how to create a bathing place. In his later years as a councillor and businessman, these issues would see Beaurepaire champion a more hygienic “Olympic” pool.

is docile and will rest on his back, his arms being extended to the rescuer's shoulders. Such a method should be most effective in a case of cramp, or in rescuing a tired swimmer. The other methods were effectively explained and demonstrated, and clearly showed that a knowledge of swimming can be many-sided, surely making an individual a distinct asset to a community.

Dr. Sutton demonstrated practically the correct way of performing the Schäfer method of resuscitation. He made it clear that the operator must be careful to see that the pressure is applied, not on the spine or shoulder-blades, but directly over the 8th, 9th, and 10th ribs.

The Doctor dwelt on the merits of the breast stroke, and, by demonstration, showed that this exercise is a splendid corrective for irregularities of the spine, since the action of forcing the head back and the arms well out drags the body into a perfectly upright position. He gave it as his opinion that, from a physical point of view, too much importance cannot be attached to this method of swimming.



THE CRAWL STROKE.

Various swimming strokes and methods of diving were explained and demonstrated. The crawl and the trudgen* both of which strokes have brought fame to Mr. Beaurepaire, were effectively demonstrated by him. The timing of the leg and arm movements and the correct method of breathing appear to be the chief difficulties of these strokes. It was shown that, in the crawl stroke, when the right arm is thrown forward, and the head is turned backward, a quick gasp is taken into the lungs. As the body turns, the left arm rises, the head is twisted down,

* The trudgen (often erroneously spelt "trudgeon") stroke is named after the famous amateur swimmer Trudgen.

SWIMMING CLASSES.
ORDER OF STUDY.

Suggested Items and Order of Study for First-year Swimmers.

1. Floating drill on land.
2. Floating drill and practice in the water till proficient.
3. Sculling drill on land.
4. Sculling drill in water till proficient.
5. Swimming drill on land (breast stroke).
6. Breast stroke (drill and practice) in water till proficient. To swim 50 yards.
7. Diving from a low height.
8. Resuscitation (practical).

NOTES.—1. Head teachers who applied for directions regarding land and water drills are notified that these directions will not be issued in pamphlet form, seeing that they are dealt with in the present number and last month's number of this paper.

2. It will be noticed that the subjects of instruction embraced by this program are essential to the gaining of the Department's Junior Certificate (Swimming 50 yards), diving, floating, or sculling, resuscitation.

Items five, six, and eight are dealt with on pages 57 to 84 of the *Royal Life Saving Society's Handbook*, which may be had on application to the Department.

Floating and sculling drills are dealt with in the *Education Gazette* of September, 1913.

Second-year Swimmers.

(Junior Certificate holders or those who can accomplish the first year's program of work.)

1. Back-stroke drill on land.
2. Back stroke (drill and practice) in the water.
3. Jumping.
4. Swimming in clothes.
5. Land drills of rescue and release methods.
6. Rescuing the sunken dummy.
7. Resuscitation (theory).

NOTES.—Items 5 and 7 will be found on reference to pages 21 and 42 of the *Royal Life Saving Society's Handbook*.

The program of the second year is made out to embrace the work of the Senior Certificate (conditions in *Education Gazette*, November, 1912).

Excerpt from Education Gazette and Teachers Aid, 22 October 1913 p429

More formalised pools began to be promoted in this era, but the Education Department still promoted making use of natural water bodies such as rivers and lakes. The 1914 *Education*

Gazette and Teachers Aid demonstrate a river enclosure, close to the bank, and with planks at the edge for instructor access. (Department of Education, 1914).



Wimmera River Horsham, Education Gazette and Teachers Aid 22 January 1914 p33

Educations Gazettes in 1915 promoted the advantages of swimming and the number of rescues performed by school children. During WWI the 18 March 1915, *Education Gazette and Teachers Aid* described the advantages of swimming in quite nationalistic terms as being; “1. For saving life (own and others) .. 2. To health – cleanliness, muscular development, correction of obesity. 3. Effect upon character (very important) – conquest of fear; development of self reliance and self respect; manly love of “clean sport”. 4. Effect upon school work – discipline without force, school happiness, pride of school work. The 9 December 1915 edition stated that during the 840 classes had been held, 23,000 students taught to swim and 49 rescues performed by students.

Beaurepaire and Herald 'Learn to Swim' Campaign

Beaurepaire's influence in swimming and learning to swim extended beyond his period with the Department of Education. In 1928 Beaurepaire had returned to Melbourne and had been elected to the Melbourne City Council. In 1929 he joined forces with the Herald to commence a 'Learn to Swim' campaign that was in place until 1970, with Beaurepaire as its president until his death in 1954. (Poynter, RJ).

The Herald Learn to Swim campaign reinvigorated the demand for, and popularity of swimming pools. As reported in the Camperdown Chronicle, 14 February 1931 *'There is no doubt the swimming pool is a great boon. Since last November the school children have had weekly swimming lessons given them by capable instructors. When these lessons first commenced only two children in the school were able swimmers, but now there are 32 pupils who all have a good chance of winning a diploma.'*

The Education Department remained a key player in this period with the School system remaining active in provision of swimming spots and swimming education through the Herald 'Learn to Swim' era, as is outlined in the 17 July 1936 edition of *Education Gazette and Teachers Aid*.

'A Swimming Pool at Invergordon South

Early this year, Miss Margaret J. Robertson was appointed temporary head teacher at School No. 4477, Invergordon South. She expressed a desire to teach her pupils to swim, but there was no pool available. The school committee solved the difficulty by arranging a working bee, which completed the erection of a basin 4 ft 6 in deep, 22 yds long, and 10 yds wide in the course of a single day. Of the seventeen pupils enrolled at

the school, five were infants. Nevertheless, twelve children had learned to swim by the end of the season.’

Hygiene and the demise of preolympic swimming pools

As facilities for Learn to Swim were constructed, care and attention was not always given to the ability to keep the water fresh. The Argus, 8 July 1932 reported that *‘Dr Harris, Gippsland health officer, has filed an adverse report on the swimming pool in Traralgon Creek. ... The swimming pool committee has asked the shire council to erect concrete baths. .. it was stated ... that the town water supply would not stand the extra strain imposed by baths, but that immediately the supply was increased the council would give the baths project consideration.*

In 1924, the Argus had assessed the provision of ‘Baths in the suburbs’. This was before the treatment systems we understand today. Surprisingly the water in the Melbourne City Baths was changed only three times per week, and the then twenty year old Richmond Baths were *‘used chiefly by school children who are taken regularly ...instruct them in swimming and life saving methods. The majority of adults in Richmond prefer to swim in the river.’* (Argus 1924) Baths or swimming clubs were provided at Carlton, North Melbourne, beside the Yarra, Richmond, Collingwood (Yarra), Essendon, Fitzroy, Footscray (Maribyrnong), Hawthorn, Northcote, Coburg (lake) and Brunswick, which had a *‘constant flow of water into the bath, which is drained and thoroughly cleaned each week’.* (Argus 1924) Of Coburg Lake, it was stated that Royal Life Saving Victoria described the swimming course of approximately 300 yards x 50 yards as *‘one of the finest long distance courses in Vic for not in Australia.’* (Argus 1924)

Despite this praise the new 'olympic' era of pools was beginning to be foreshadowed with the Argus reporting that Kew were building a baths (closed in basin) which would be sufficiently long for racing, Malvern and Prahran having gained approval for construction and preparations underway at Camberwell and Caulfield. The article foreshadowed the change ahead by detailing the pool inspection tour of the United States by the City Engineer at Camberwell. It was noted that some pools charged an entry fee, some baths were open to public viewing and, most importantly for the fate of the preolympic pool, the California State Board of Health, in order to keep water pure, required the continuous addition of water for each bather. *'Water should recirculated, ozonated and treated by the UV ray. Intermittent applications of disinfecting solutions were made direct to the pool and copper sulfate added at regular intervals.'* (Argus 1924).

As funding became available for 'concrete' pools, my research demonstrates that they are generally located near the natural waterbodies they replaced. This may be to attract the swimmers, or for a constant source of water for cleaning.

Thematic Assessment of remaining Pre Olympic Swimming Pools by Category

Over 300 swimming pools have been documented as background for this paper. The table below clearly indicates that the concrete pool, often under 50m, is the best represented pool type from the pre 1956 period. These pools are often one of the few recreational / community facilities in Victorian Country towns. Being basin structures, they were easily adapted to a water treatment regime once introduced, and therefore could meet changing guidelines from health and life saving organisations.

Table of pre Olympic swimming pools in Victoria

	Number located	Number in use	% in use	Number intact or semi intact	% intact or semi intact
Olympic*	13	9	70%	14	85%
Memorial & small concrete	160	147	92%	151	94%
Sea baths	32	4	12%	5	16%
Bathing boxes	22	19	86%	19	86%
Lake; quarry	35	3	9%	11	32%
River; creek	51	0	0%	6	12%
Guesthouse	7	0	0%	0	0%
Total (including concrete)	320	182	57%	206	64%
Total (excluding concrete)	147	26	18%	41	28%

* Some early and metropolitan Olympic pools examined as a comparison.

Many Council's with operating pools on natural watercourses needed to move to the 'olympic' pool. This has led to decline in evidence of the previous structures, or actual dismantling of facilities for risk management purposes. Many lake pools, such as Lake Daylesford and the Surrey Dive have been partially filled to discourage swimming. The children's enclosure at Fairfield is now a lawn area.

Despite its earlier praise of Coburg Lake, since the advent of chlorinated pool systems Life Saving Victoria has been instrumental in the closure of any inland pool which is not chlorinated. Despite the definition of a swimming pool not including a dam, or tank used on properties, nor watercourses such as streams or rivers nor ornamental ponds or fountains, Life Saving Victoria applies the swimming pool definition and standards in their report and recommendations. Subsequently it is difficult to allow swimming. The Bracks Government did some early work to 'set out a way forward to resolve safety and water problems, with a view to eventually reopening the pool for swimming' (State of Victoria: Minister for Planning 2006) however this is yet to be enacted.

Bathing boxes are still prevalent, especially along Port Phillip Bay. Mornington Peninsula Shire has undertaken an assessment of these assets in the context of their heritage value. The Brighton Beach boxes are commonly used to promote Melbourne. Only the Illuka Bathing Box at Portsea is included on the Victorian Heritage Register. Consideration could be given to bathing boxes at Brighton, Mornington or Frankston to represent this period of swimming infrastructure, necessitated by the need for women to change into 'costumes' be included on the Victorian Heritage Register.

Rarity & significance levels

Any swimming pool or enclosure in Victoria on a river, lake or in the ocean demonstrates rarity. This has been recognised to a certain extent through inclusion of Hepburn Pool (H1865); Calambeen Park (H0398); Buchan Caves Reserve (H1978) and Eastern Beach Bathing Reserve (H0929) on the Victorian Heritage Register. (State of Victoria: Heritage Victoria). Remnant structures such as Euroa, Yarrawonga, St Arnaud and Byaduk and demonstrate similar qualities to those listed above including:

‘Historical significance as an intact and operational example of the group of pools which were developed as natural water features around the State. From the early to the mid-twentieth century swimming facilities on natural waters or remnant mining features were ubiquitous throughout Victoria. The pools varied from a majority of simple sites featuring a few basic facilities for diving and easy access to the water, to a small number which could cater for highly organised competitions with crowds of thousands.

Historical significance in the development of swimming as a sport in Victoria

Historical significance as an inland swimming hole and park which has been adapted from a landscape which was heavily altered by gold mining’ (ie St Arnaud) (State of Victoria: Heritage Victoria).



Pre Olympic Swimming Pools on the Victorian Heriage Register at Hepburn (creek), Creswick (lake), Buchan (stream fed concrete) and Eastern Beach (ocean)



Semi intact structures at Euroa (river), Yarrawonga (lake), Byaduk (stream fed concrete) and St Arnaud (mine dam); and for consideration for inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register

These comparative structures are not included on the Victorian Heritage Register, and only Byaduk is included in the local Heritage Overlay. St Arnaud was recommended for listing in 2004 but to date no planning scheme amendment has been prepared by Northern Grampians Shire.

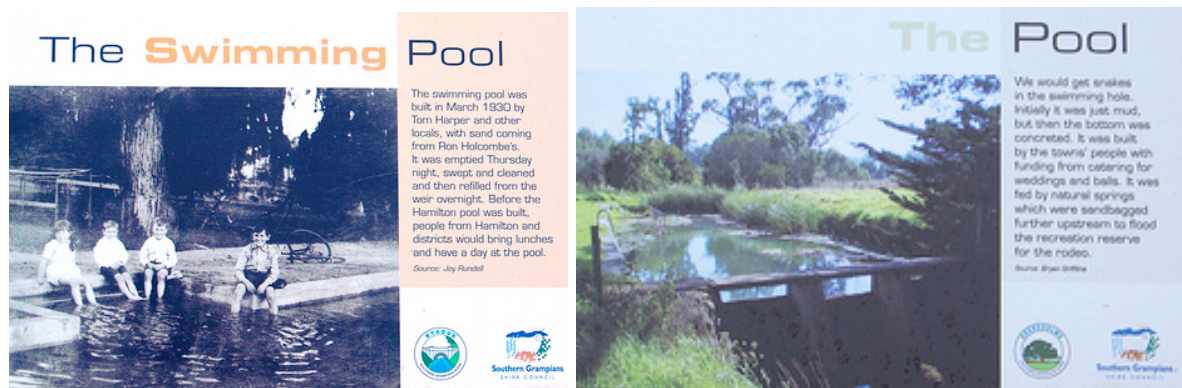
Of the ‘baths’ structures of the turn of the century City Baths, Fitzroy, Brunswick, Hawthorn and Richmond remain operating at the same location, with Footscray being recently closed. Of these the City Baths and the ‘Aqua Profunda’ sign at Fitzroy Baths are included on the Victorian Heritage Register. (State of Victoria: Heritage Victoria) As a class these pools are rare and all demonstrate the significance stated for the City Baths being of “historical significance as a reminder of the important role played by bathing establishments in the early twentieth century. They are also illustrative of the patterns of social organisation in the early twentieth century.” (State of Victoria: Heritage Victoria)

Sites demonstrating a degree of intactness meet tests of significance at a state level. Those where the remnants are more ephemeral should be included within the Heritage Overlay to the local planning scheme. The Brunswick and Richmond Pools are separately listed in the heritage overlay to the Moreland and Yarra Planning Schemes and the Hawthorn Pool is covered by a precinct overlay. The Fitzroy 'Baths' are not included in the heritage listing.

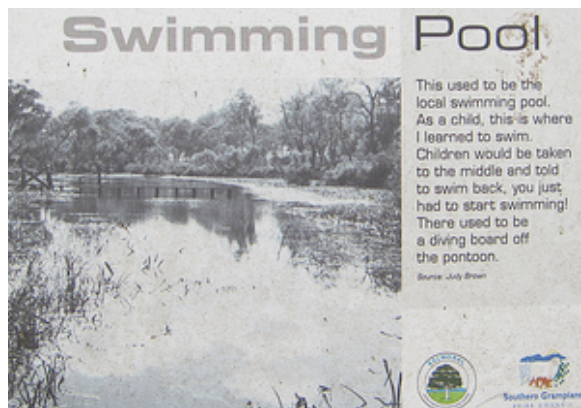
The Maryborough Swimming Complex, a 1940 Olympic Pool, with links to Beaurepaire, is also included on the Victorian Heritage Register. Sanitary, Olympic pools, championed by Beaurepaire during his presidency of the Herald Learn to Swim Campaign, are increasingly under threat by the indoor heated complex, which is a topic separately covered in these proceedings. The plight of this 'era' of swimming pools, including the smaller concrete and memorial pools is commencing the process of replacement and loss.

Interpretation

State listings relating to heritage sites demonstrate some key themes relating to swimming facilities on natural waters or remnant mining features, the development of swimming as a sport, and adaptation of natural water bodies for swimming. From my inspection of over 300 pools around Victoria, less than a handful provided any form of interpretation on site. The best examples being in Southern Grampians Shire and Bayside, which include pools in its heritage overlay. The signage at Byaduk, Balmoral and Branxholme begin to explain the nature of earlier swimming holes.



Examples in interpretative signage implemented by Southern Grampians Shire.
 Top left – Byaduck
 Top right – Branxholme
 Right – Balmoral.



Many pool sites are included as an archaeological site. The Warrnambool Baths are an example of an archaeological place with the ability to be used to educate about pre Olympic swimming and bathing sites in Victoria. This site is currently included within a heritage overlay, but no interpretation is provided. Council is working on an interpretation strategy to better explain our heritage to the Warrnambool public and visitors. The pool is relatively intact and could be 'unearthed' at a later date.



Left: Heritage Victoria committee members inspecting remnants of the swimming baths at Warrnambool. Right: bathers at the turn of the 20th Century (historic image courtesy of Warrnambool and District Historical Society).

Recommendations

Thematic History

Consideration of a thematic history of swimming in Victoria would allow for the fuller consideration of the influences on the development of swimming in Victoria, and would allow for the interpretation of sites in context of why they were developed. This would support a more systematic identification, listing, management and interpretation of swimming pools in Victoria.

Heritage Victoria could work with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to develop materials, in the context of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS), to educate primary students on the development of swimming as a sport in Victoria and the role of the education system in promoting swimming venues and education.

Assessment and listing

Victoria has arguably the best and most diverse range of swimming infrastructure in Australia. The last decade has seen the assessment and listing on the Victorian Heritage Register of pools at Hepburn Springs, Creswick and Buchan. The fabric of many pools is degrading or being significantly altered due to fear regarding risk.

Investigation of sites for state and local listing, in response to a thematic history, will allow for the continued use of some venues and the documentation, management and interpretation of other venues. The following recommendations for state and local listing are made by category.

Ocean enclosures

Middle Brighton Baths (HO161)	State
Sorrento Back Beach	State
Geelong – St Helens	Local
All heritage inventory sites	Local

Eastern Beach is the only sea baths on the Victorian Heritage Register. Middle Brighton Baths has ongoing social significance. It was reconstructed in the 1930's, following the destruction of the previous baths. It is currently in use year round. Sorrento back beach is a rare example of the use of retaining walls at a surf beach to provide a calmer spot for bathing.

River / creek enclosures

Branxholme	State
Euroa	State
Balmoral	Local
Murtoa	Local
Warburton	Local
Winchelsea	Local
All archaeological sites	Local

Hepburn Pool is the only example of a river / creek pool listed on the Victorian Heritage Register. Euroa is another example of a river enclosure of a slightly different nature and Branxholme is a rare example of a small, educational pool rather than a site which could hold swimming championships.

Quarries & Lakes

Rowville (Heany Park) HO2	State
Yarrawonga (Lake Mulwala)	State
Box Hill (Surrey Dive)	Local
Coburg	Local
Daylesford	Local

Lake Boga	Local
Marysville	Local
Moe	Local
Nagambie	Local
Shepparton	Local

Heany Park is a Scout Camp. Whilst much of the infrastructure is degrading there are still noticeable elements remaining. The enclosure at Yarrawonga has been altered over time but is still available for public use. Consideration could be given by Council's to listing any site with archaeological remnants.

Small concrete structures (with or without inflow and outflow to a creek) & memorial pools and early 20th century baths

Brunswick (HO61)	State
Byaduk (HO77)	State
Fitzroy	State
Hawthorn (HO152 precinct)	State
Lorne (HO59)	State
Marysville	State
Warrnambool (Gillies St)	State

Brunswick, Fitzroy and Hawthorn are all early municipal baths. Warrnambool is a regional example of a bath. Although the swimming area has been filled, it is relatively intact in regards to its original size and shape. Lorne is the closest representation of a guest house pool, and is located near to the site of the Erskine House pool (no longer in existence). Williamstown is the only other example built in such close proximity to the ocean. Marysville is a representation of the rural / memorial pool with social significance being one of the only community facilities surviving Black Saturday.

All other memorial and small concrete pools should be considered for local significance.

Bathing Boxes

Consideration of selection of most intact stretch of bathing boxes along Port Phillip Bay for inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register.

Olympic

Post 1940 Olympic Pools Local significance

The Broadmeadows Pool has been identified as being of local significance. The pool was closed for 'drought' reasons in 2009 and has not reopened. Vandalism is occurring at the site. Hume City Council should consider its position in regard to management of heritage places within its management. The Coburg Pool was identified in the North of Bell Street Heritage Study Study as being of local significance. Moreland City Council determined to exclude the pool from the amendment to implement the study recommendations into the Heritage Overlay (Moreland Leader, 2011). Again failure to recognise or appreciate heritage under Council and state agency management is a key threat to the management and interpretation of all classes of swimming pools.

Conclusion

Victoria has a long affinity to swimming and to the evolution of swimming pools. Surprisingly, for the first 30 years of last century, it was the Department of Education, not municipalities, that were instrumental in popularising swimming and providing swimming infrastructure.

Given changes in society, and the support of more 'engineered' structures by local authorities, some classes of pools, such as 'guesthouse' have been completely lost or are extremely rare. To be able to assess the social and historical importance of swimming pools, it is important to understand the forces that led to the provision of swimming infrastructure and how this changed over time. Remnant examples of different periods remain as a connection to place and provide an ability to educate and inform.

So next time you see the remains of a swimming pool on a creek, don't think about leeches and sanitation but think about the stories that might be contained within.

Fury over a naked night escapade

Tom Gervasoni risked his captaincy of Hepburn Swimming Club for a late night nude swim in Hepburn Swimming Pool.

That was 67 years ago.

He survived the incident, red faced and apologetic, and managed to hold on to his captaincy.

"Zelman was furious . . . he came striding down the hill, swinging his torch and trying to spot us in the water," said Tom.

"A group of boys beat us out of the water, took our clothes and raced off up the hill.

"They thought it was funny that we had to scramble after them naked.

"Zelman called an immediate meeting of the club and demanded my resignation.

"He didn't think I was leading a very good life.

"I was pretty matey with the club president, Jack McKinnon, and when it came down to the final vote, Jack saved me."

Tom Gervasoni, aged 84 years, of Castlemaine, was captain of Hepburn Swimming Club in 1934 and 1935.

He worked as a kitchen hand washing dishes at Franklin House and taught holi-

daying children to swim.

"The Hepburn Pool was very popular in those days," he said.

"It was a beautiful place to bring a picnic lunch.

"I would come down here after work, past Dudley House and through the bush to the pool.

"It has changed a lot . . . there used to be dressing rooms on the flat, seating on the hill and a diving board.

"I have many good memories from my summers spent here."

Hepburn Pool was built in the 1920s at the request of Victor Zelman, who owned and operated Bellinzona Guest House.

The pool was shaped from rock in Spring Creek and dammed with man-made stone walls.

It was built for guests of Bellinzona, although Zelman apparently handed the pool over to the community in the early 1930s.

The Daylesford Advocate reported the opening of the first season of Hepburn Swimming Club on December 2, 1933.

"When I was working at Cox's (Franklin House) I'd clean the kitchen and then go off for a couple of hours and



ABOVE: Hepburn Pool holds many good memories for Tom Gervasoni, of Castlemaine.

teach the kids to swim," said Tom.

"The guest houses along the main road were full of children . . . we would have about a dozen kids a day hang around the pool, wanting us to teach them how to swim.

"One of the blokes at the club designed a swimming aid which consisted of a couple of belts and a long stick.

"We used to walk up and down the length of the pool holding one end of the stick with a child on the other end kicking themselves along."

Tom was a top swimmer himself and remembers collecting the winner's cup in the 100-metre freestyle event.

He was swimming in lane one.

"The boss' daughter,

Gracie, had a boyfriend in Daylesford and she used to tell him that I was a champion swimmer and much better than him," said Tom.

"He thought nothing of the challenge and told her he'd beat the pants off me.

"Gracie said to me before the race: 'Listen Tom, if he beats you, don't come back.'

"Luckily, it was I who beat the pants off him.

"I well remember swimming laps at the pool . . . the numbers along the wall and turning at the other end.

"The creek was running all the time, so the water quality was quite good.

"I got to know the pool well . . . if the creek was flowing right, you could

feel the ground in some lanes.

"In a race, if somebody got too close to me, I'd sometimes put my feet on the ground and kick off the bottom."

Tom later moved from Hepburn to work in the Yandoit Mine.

"You had to be 19 years old before you were allowed to work in the mines," he said.

"I told the boss I was 19 and he said: 'I know you are, I've got a boy the same age as you and he's 18'.

"A week's pay in those days was two pound, but the boss must have liked me, because he gave me a five bob raise."

He met his future wife, Amelia Sartori, while working in Yandoit.

"Father Moynihan was

a bit of a spec horse-man," he said.

"We were waiting to be married and my brother Mick told me to find the father, people were getting impatient.

"I ducked out of the church and saw him coming from the presbytery.

"He slipped me 10 pounds and told me to put it on a horse for him.

"I took his money and raced to the pub to find the bookie.

"Father Moynihan was a real character . . . he always got hunches about horses and it usually paid to listen to him.

"We made him 3000 pounds one day at a race meet at Burrumbett.

"People in the pub were asking whose wedding I had been at, be-

cause I was wearing a flower in my lapel.

"I told them I was supposed to be at mine."

Tom also played four premierships for Hepburn Football Club, although claims he was never a "great" footballer.

"It was more through circumstance than great skill that I played football for Hepburn," he said.

"The pool was a great place to spend time and swimming, for me, was a bit of a passion.

"Hundreds of people visited the pool each season to swim.

"I imagine a lot of the old locals around here probably learnt how to swim at the Hepburn Pool."

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