

# BARKLY REGIONAL COUNCIL



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**9 September 2015**

## **NEW POOL ON TRACK**

As workmen lay down pool tiles in the new swimming pool, it's amazing to think back to late February when blokes in High-Vis gear rocked into town for the big bulldoze.

There were a few moist eyes as excavators and men with jackhammers waded into the waterless structure and set about knocking down the diving blocks and tearing up the old foundations.

The iconic Tennant Creek Swimming Pool, opened around 45 years ago by another Aussie icon Dawn Fraser, was being demolished to make way for a brand new innovative design.

Former Tennantites flooded the Facebook Page of the Barkly Regional Council President Barb Shaw with reminiscences of the old days with Tony Pope writing about sand blasting and painting the pool.

Jeannie Mountier recalled the "spider drinks we used to get there and the diving board that broke" while Leah Hevans wrote of "midnight fence jumps ... and a couple of skinny dips too".

President Shaw agreed that it was sad to see the old pool go but it was really starting to show the signs of its age and a change was necessary.

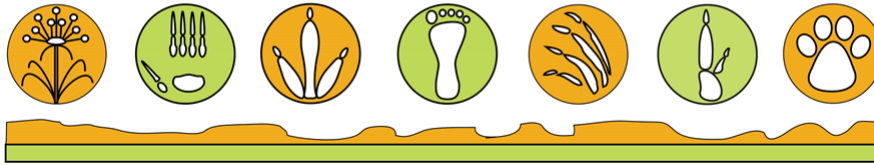
"The pool was nearing the end of its lifespan," she said. "It was time to find a more suitable solution that addressed accessibility issues and provided a healthy focus and positive outcome for the community."

But before a work boot even set foot on the grounds, a great deal of behind-the-scenes preparatory work was conducted between Barkly Regional Council and the Tennant Creek community-led Purkiss Reserve Consultative Committee last year.

Councillors Tony Boulter and Hal Ruger were amongst those who came on board including Steve Edgington, Northern Territory Government (NTG), Department of the Chief Minister, Wayne Green, Northern Territory AFL and Little Athletics, resident Ray Wallis, Marcus Maher, Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation, Emma and Jo Rush, Tennant Creek Swim Club, Darcy Dunbar (Department of Infrastructure, NTG) and BRC's former Director of Infrastructure Henry Szczypiorski.

Council had secured funding of \$3.6 million from the Federal Government's Community Development Grant, which also included upgrading the amenities at the town's main sporting oval, Purkiss Reserve.

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Along with the Australian Government grant, other funding sources included Barkly Regional Council (\$679,350) the NT Government (\$250,000), Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation (\$20,000), plus YDU Demons Football Club, Bella Hairdressing and the late Mr Eddie Taylor (\$650).

Part of the project included the innovative design of the 25m lap pool, a learn-to-swim pool and a toddler's pool into a single structure, addressing accessibility issues with a beach-style entry for all patrons.

Plans also highlighted a water park splash pad for children, upgraded change rooms and a new administration building incorporating office, first aid, coffee shop, kitchen and mechanical water treatment equipment.

President Shaw said Council awarded a contract to design a new pool complex and adjacent football change rooms in 2014 to Hames Sharley of Alice Springs after advertising locally and nationally.

That's when the Tennant Creek Consultative Committee stepped in, joining staff and the design time to pour over the plans and discuss issues such as the length and depth of the new pool.

The standard depth of 1.5m for the deep end was progressed as the scope and budget could not be changed, according to the new funding agreement by the Australian Government.

By October 2014, Hames Sharley had delivered the 95 per cent concept design and documentation to the Purkiss Reserve Consultative Committee and BRC for review and approval, followed by calls for the construction of the swimming pool complex and the Purkiss Reserve change rooms.

Queensland-based Taylor Builders Pty Ltd was awarded the tender for the construction of the swimming pool complex with local firm GK Contractors winning the tender to upgrade amenities at Purkiss Reserve.

President Shaw said the multi-million dollar project is on track. "Unseasonal torrential rains in August caused a slight delay, but the construction crew are working extra hard to complete the complex in time for the launch in November.

"Each time I go past I notice something new. It is an exciting development for Tennant Creek and its inhabitants and for people from outlying communities as well as visitors."

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