

Swimming in Botany and the Bay

What worked, what didn't

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What are the strange things around the skirting boards?

DO use props to bring the space alive.

DO avoid using text if you can

DO

TREADING WATER pre 1917

Early view of Botany Bay from the Sydney Harbour Bridge



A 7-year-old boy, Ephraim Jones, drowns while bathing near the mouth of the Cooks River. This renews the campaign for a bathing facility.



Pre 1900
Gadigal people used Kamay (Botany Bay) for swimming and fishing.

1840-1920
Sydneysiders are encouraged to come to the Sir Joseph Banks Hotel at the very door of the house (and) the scenery all round is [...] beyond description".
In the 1920s the old hotel and surrounding land was sub-divided and sold as residential lots.

17 April 1889
The need for swimming baths for locals is first mentioned in Botany Municipal Council meetings.

8 January 1903
A 7-year-old boy, Ephraim Jones, drowns while bathing near the mouth of the Cooks River. This renews the campaign for a bathing facility.

9 February 1905
A deputation from Botany Municipal Council asks the Minister for Public Works to build baths for the local residents in Botany Bay. The Minister says it's Council's responsibility to build the baths. Council says they can't afford to.

31 October 1917
The Botany Municipal Council asks the Minister for Public Works to build baths for the local residents in Botany Bay. The Minister says it's Council's responsibility to build the baths. Council says they can't afford to.

25 February 1921
A headmistress of a local girls school tells the Council that she cannot use the baths to teach the students swimming due to the bad smell and unclean state of the baths.

DO
Construct
a narrative

The
story's the
thing!

DOG PADDLE 1917-1928



31 October 1917
The Botany report opens the way for the old Dog Paddle baths to be replaced by the new Dog Paddle baths.

25 February 1921
A headmistress of a local girls school tells the Council that she cannot use the baths to teach the students swimming due to the bad smell and unsafe state of the baths.

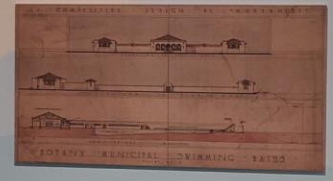
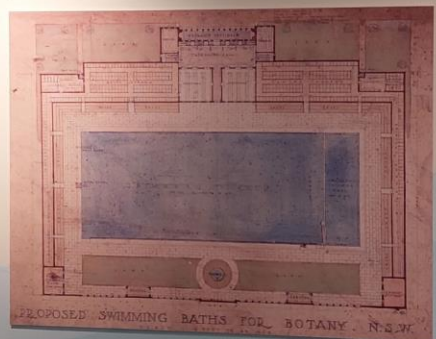
3 March 1925
The Botany Municipal Council reports that the former used by pump works at one end of the baths has been demolished again and that the other having the pump works has "seriously deteriorated" to prevent "boathire using same".

16 February 1926
Suffern's Sun newspaper reports that "Boys and girls swim in a shallow state of the Botany Baths". The Council reports in November that he is only present on weekends.

15 September 1926
New "wharf pool" baths built by Botany Municipal Council open at Brighton-Le-Sands.

8 May 1929
Alderman Skinner from Rockdale Municipal Council attends the Botany Municipal Council meeting and outlines how they could build baths, like those at Brighton-Le-Sands, near to Joseph Banks Park.
Council plans to apply for a loan to pay for the baths and decide what to do with £3,500 per year, which they expected to receive through entrance fees.

BUTTERFLY 1929



16 October 1929
Botany Municipal Council agrees to call for competitive designs for the construction of new baths, a gymnasium, sea wall, band room and dressing sheds near Rockhampton Park. A prize of 50 guineas (£525) offered for the winning design.
Council promises that the new baths will be "the best used" in baths with water "as clear as crystal and as hot or cold as you prefer".

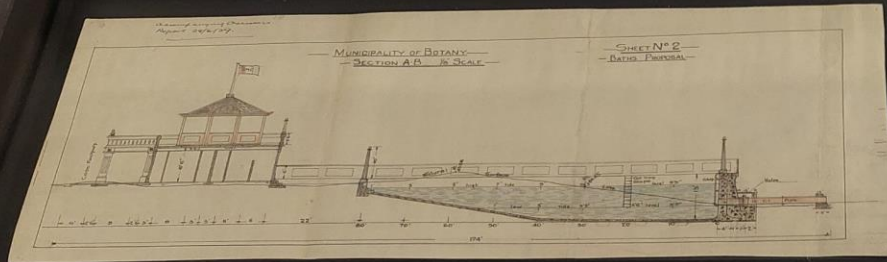
1929
The old baths at the end of Bay Street are condemned by a health inspector and abandoned.

10 February 1930
Rees & Rees Engineers and Architects judge the entries for the design of the baths and choose a design by "Swastika" (Unfortunately, this design is not in the Council archives). Council agrees to award the prize to "Swastika" and reveals that Sydney architects Ruddle & Groul had submitted the winning design.
Ruddle & Groul designed the North Sydney Olympic Pool in 1938. Their design for the Botany Municipal Baths was never built.

DO
Create
sections/
chunks/
chapters.

Why?: it
reduces
fatigue and
helps
people
absorb the
content

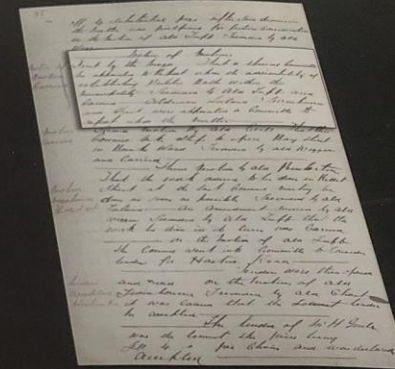
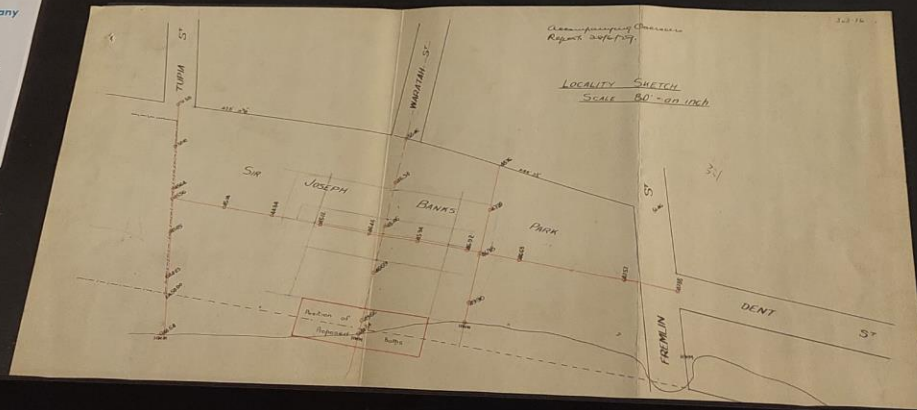
Do
Use
original
materials
where
possible



Original design by 'Baths Proposal' for proposed Botany Municipal Baths, 1929
Boyside Council Local History Collection

The 'Baths Proposal' controlled the amount of sea water coming into the baths through a valve and a hose into the long free bath (no. 2). This design was not short-listed by the judges.

Original sketch showing the location of the proposed sea baths in front of Sir Joseph Banks Park at Botany, 1929
Boyside Council Local History Collection



Copy of the Botany Municipal Council Minutes, 17 April 1889
Boyside Council Local History Collection

A bathing facility in Botany was first discussed by the Botany Municipal Council in 1889, just one year after it was formed. This was the start of a long running saga.

Transcript: "First by the Mayor, That a special Committee be appointed to Report upon the advisability of establishing Public Baths within this Municipality. Seconded by Ald. Luff and carried. Aldermen Luard, Swinbourne and Chant were appointed a Committee to report on the matter."

BACKSTROKE

1930-1962



Botany Council decides to hold a special meeting to again consider building modern bathing facilities. Alderman Johnson says: "There are 8000 school children in Botany and Mascot and they all have to go to the Domain Baths (for swimming lessons and convalescence). The Old Domain Baths opened in 1858 and were in Woolloomooloo Bay.

Council decides to purchase the old Sir Joseph Banks Hotel site (off Anniversary Street) for £2,750 for "bathing purposes" and to use unemployed relief labourers to demolish the old hotel immediately. It also submits the plans for the baths submitted by architects Rudder & Groul in 1929, which they estimate will cost £18,000 to build.

It resolves that "the Mayor be empowered to attend to all urgent matters concerning the swimming pool proposal in order that the work will not be delayed".

At the next Council meeting, there is much concern and discussion that the cost of the planned baths will escalate to £23,000, and the aldermen reverse their decision to build the baths as planned.

Botany Council decides to apply for a loan to construct baths in Sir Joseph Banks Park, at a cost of no more than £15,000. They are to be filled with salt water pumped from Battery Bay. Council votes against asking ratepayers to vote on this at a referendum.

The Baths Committee continues to meet and report to Council, but no funds are committed to building the baths.

When Botany Municipal Council decides not to proceed with building the baths, the architects, Rudder and Groul, sue for compensation. They want the Council to pay 2% of the cost of building the baths (£240) as payment for the architectural plans they were asked to complete. The case goes to court, but is settled for an undisclosed sum. Internal Council documents show the amount was £400.

23 January 1935

15 May 1935

29 May 1935

24 July 1935

1935-36

September 1936

DO
use a
professional
3D
designer.

elinthomas
@me.com

Sharon with her Aunt Dorothy in Botany Bay near Rinkamawaka, 1957
Puck & Wharf, c.1930

Swimming in Botany Bay, 1950s

Girls from Lauriston Park in bathing costumes, c.1930

Wading pool, Eastlake, c.1952

Botany residents continue to swim in Botany Bay.

1936-1966

14 February 1962
Botany Council discusses building a swimming pool at Mutch Park, Pagewood.

27 February 1963
Botany Council debates a motion to build semi-Olympic size swimming pools in each Ward.

Council decides swimming pool in Mutch Park. Location of sewerage in sandy soil. Instead, engineer to recommend Booralee Park, Botany, for swimming pool and

DO – involve locals with a knowledge of the past (obviously) and use social media to track people down!

SPLASHING

1983-2016



The 1984 Returned Services League South Coast Swimming Championships at the Botany Aquatic Centre, 1984.



Swimmers of the Botany Big Splash, 1984.

Swimmers of the Botany Big Splash, 1984.



Mayor Ron Hoenig reports that the pool is free of cryptosporidium and giardia, which has forced other Sydney pools, such as Hurstville Aquatic Centre, to close. These infectious parasites cause diarrhoea and live in water.

A massive hailstorm hits the eastern suburbs damaging the waterslides. They are closed for repairs.



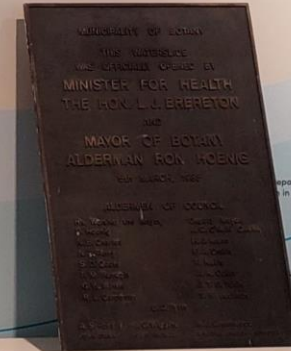
The only pool swimming pool that the Botany Municipal Council has ever had.



Repaired waterslides in time for summer.

The City of Botany Bay Council holds a family fun day to celebrate the re-opening of the waterslides, the shaded grandstand, and other new facilities.

Botany realises more than 1,000 sq metres of Olympic-sized over the winter.



2001

27 January 2002

Majority of family and City Council had a giant 10m metres any Pool.

Laurie Brereton, Minister for Health and Member for Heffron, officially opens the waterslides at Botany Swimming Pool. The school captains of Botany Public School, Kalrina Bidmead and Craig Jones, are the first to use the slides. Rides are free all weekend.

Dean Lukin, Olympic gold medal weightlifter, launches the swimming season and the pool's new name: Botany Big Splash. He dive bombs into the pool creating a big splash and christening the pool with its new name.

Dawn Fraser is invited to train at the pool after announcing her return to competitive swimming. She demonstrates her favourite event - the 100 metres freestyle.

All rate-paying senior citizens were issued with free yearly passes to the pool.

Summer of 1984-85

March 1998

14 April 1999

26 March 1983

October 1984

November 1984

82

There's nothing wrong with a bit of nostalgia for the adults and creating a picture of the past for the kids.

BREASTSTROKE

1962-1982

13 March 1963
Council decides not to build a swimming pool in Mutch Park due to the location of sewerage pipes and the sandy soil. Instead, it asks its chief engineer to recommend a location near Boarlose Park, Bahary, for an Olympic swimming pool and toddler's pool.

28 August 1963
Council approves the "re-establishment of a swimming centre in Boarlose Park, Bahary" and abandons the idea of smaller pools in each Ward.

2 October 1963
Council plans to include an ice-skating rink in the swimming centre to attract people over the winter.

10 December 1964
Tenders close for the construction of the swimming pool, which was designed by architect Whitehead and Payne.

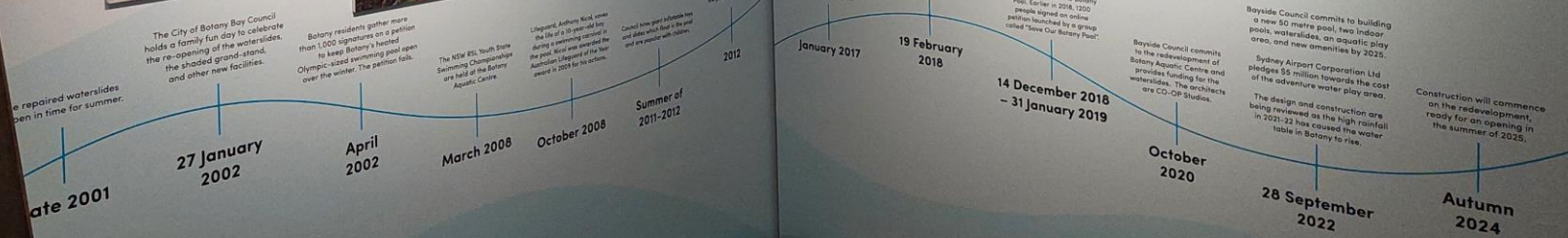
8 May 1965
The foundation stone for the Olympic swimming pool is laid on a site to the east of Boarlose Park, Bahary.

24 September 1966
Bahary Mayor, George Harris, officially opens the swimming pools on a cold and windy day. There are three outdoor pools — an Olympic size, a 22-metre pool and a toddler's pool — which cost \$500,000 to build.

1966-1969
Olympic gold medalist Dawn Fraser in the swimming splash for the first three years of the pool.



FREESTYLE 2013-2025



DO
Break up
the text

Provide a
text
hierarchy

DON'T
Sweat the
small stuff



1963-1985
 BBEW2T2TBOKE

Botany Aquatic Centre
 PULL OUT AND KEEP

SAFE CUSTODY
 Fee 10 cents
 Available on any
 of our pools
 TRANSFERABLE
 BURS



LOCKER HIRE
 Fee 8 cents
 Available on any
 of our pools
 BURS

CITY OF BOTANY BAY
 The Botany
 BIG SPLASH
 ADULT CONCESSION
 TICKET BOOK
 No. 2018

CITY OF BOTANY BAY
 The Botany
 BIG SPLASH
 CONCESSION TICKET
 SINGLE RIDE
 92691

CITY OF BOTANY BAY
 The Botany
 BIG SPLASH
 CONCESSION TICKET
 HALF HOUR SESSION
 00001

WATER SLIDE
 WATERS SLIDE
 WATERS SLIDE
 WATERS SLIDE

WATER SLIDE
 WATERS SLIDE
 WATERS SLIDE



Botany Pool ephemera
 Bayview Council Local History Collection

- Proposed design for the water slides, 1963
- Plan for subcontracting the company that designed and built the water slides, 1963
- Locker hire and safe custody (lockroom) tickets, c.1960
- Entry tickets and tokens for the water slide, c.1960
- An old street sign standing the way to the Botany Big Splash, c.1965

Giant Slides
 3 Pools
 Picnic



Barbecue
 Facilities



DO
Have fun

Be playful

Get props

SWIMMING IN THE PAST

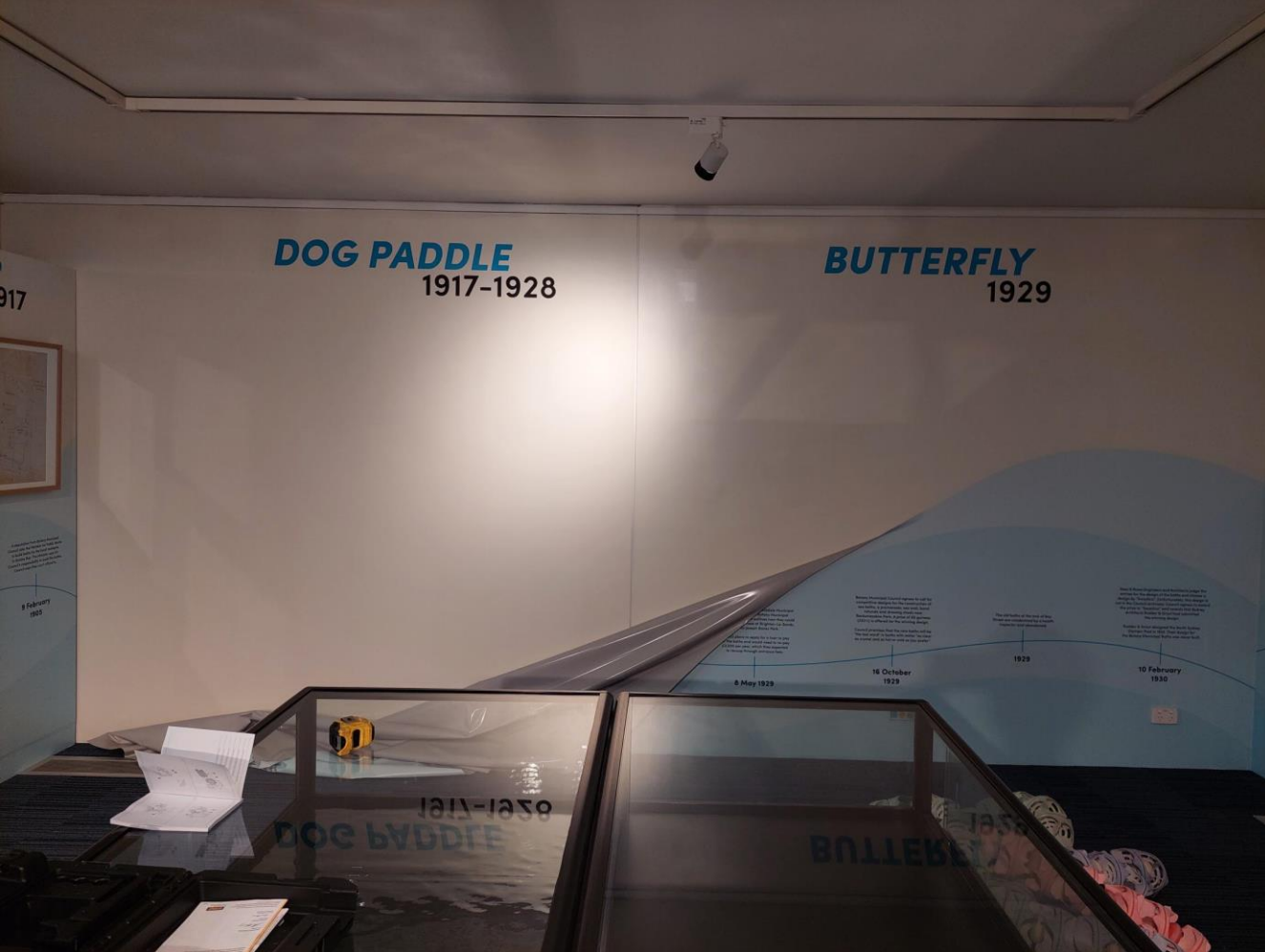


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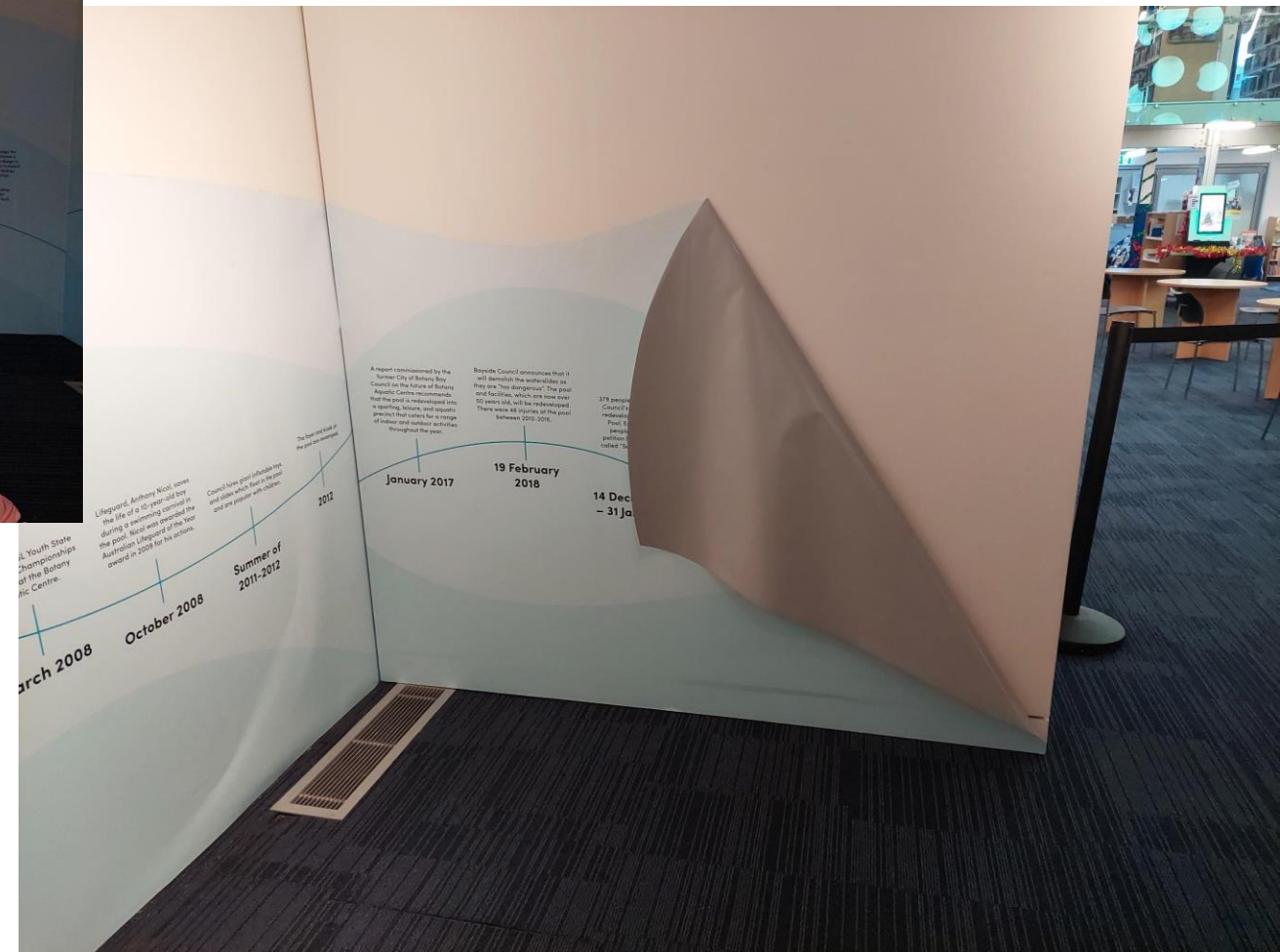


DO
double-check printing
quotes and confirm
that the printer
understands the
request.

DO
Include a visitor's book
(for comments)
Another late addition.



DON'T use an oil-based undercoat – it must be a water-based undercoat for SAV (self-adhesive vinyl)





DO
think
about the
younger
audience



Swimming

IN BOTANY AND THE

Swimming is a central part of Australian culture. Whether it's river, pool, or beach; Australians love being in the water. On a continent, learning to swim is almost as fundamental as learning to walk.

The local swimming spot is a very public, social space. It's the equivalent of the Italian piazza or English pub. It's where people meet. It's also a place where social class recedes – when everyone is in their trunks and a towel, you can't tell how rich or well educated they are.

The quest for a bathing facility for Botany residents was a long saga that dragged out over 75 years. There was a series of proposals and promises; but too little money and too much indifference meant that the swimming baths designed by architects for the Botany Bay foreshore were never built. Instead, residents swam in the Bay (which was not always safe) or went to Brighton-Le-Sands Baths or further afield.

The opening of the Botany Municipal Olympic Swimming Pool in 1953 (now known as the Botany Aquatic Centre) was a momentous occasion, as was the opening of the 'giant' waterslides in 1983. Perhaps you can remember this? After 60 years of use, and a massive hailstorm in 2017, the Botany Aquatic Centre is being re-vamped for the next generation of swimmers.

Today, the infrastructure at Port Botany and the protrusion of two runways into the Bay makes swimming in Botany Bay (north of the mouth of the Cooks River) less appealing. The days of sea-bathing in Botany are a thing of the past.

Bayside Council and the Botany Historical Trust hope you enjoy this exhibition. Please relax on the sunlounges, match the bathing cap to the decade they were worn in, and add your memories of swimming in Botany and the Bay to the photograph at the end of the exhibition.



DO
Seek permission to
use photos



Swimming

IN BOTANY AND THE BAY

Swimming is a central part of Australian culture. Whether it's in a bay, river, pool, or beach, Australians love being in the water. On our island continent, learning to swim is almost as fundamental as learning to walk.

DDLE
1917-19



DO

Monitor
how
people use
the space
and make
adjust-
ments



DO
Come and
see
*Swimming in
Botany and
the Bay*

at Mascot
Library

before
31 July

10am-6pm
Mon-Fri