

Royal Park Protection Group Inc.

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News Bulletin

December 2000

PROTEST RALLY AS STADIUM LIGHTS SWITCHED ON

On Sunday night 3 December, acting on a tip-off that the lights on the Royal Park stadiums were to be switched on for testing, the Royal Park Protection Group (RPPG) held a protest rally on the steps of the new State Netball and Hockey Centre (SNHC).

Night turned into day as the high intensity discharge lights on the eight 34 metre light towers in the hockey stadium were turned on. Members of RPPG and parkland groups, plus residents from Parkville and North Melbourne, witnessed the brilliant illumination of the Park and the Zoo by the extraordinary light spill and were blinded by the intense glare. (Residents at home on the perimeter of the Park over a kilometre away reported that the lights shone into bedroom windows.) Onlookers observed the impact of the light on the park birds and the Zoo animals. It is ironic that, in the new City Lighting Strategy, the City of Melbourne has classified Royal Park as a "dark park." It is to be a special place for star viewing during the "Starry Starry Nights" summer program. This will be under threat unless proper controls on the operation of the SNHC are instituted.

The rally called for the light spill and glare from the SNHC outdoor lights to be contained within the State Netball and Hockey Centre Precinct. This means that the lights will have to be fully shielded to comply with Australian Standards and International Agreements on the control of obtrusive outdoor lighting and greenhouse gas emissions. The rally also called for a formal environmental impact assessment of the SNHC stadium lighting, which has been requested from both the Kennett and Bracks Government over the last two years. Dr Barry Clark, eminent scientist and expert on light pollution representing RPPG and the Astronomical Society of Victoria, explained how the lights can be fixed. It was resolved that his document on measures for rectification of the outdoor stadium lighting be presented to the relevant Government Ministers. Save Albert Park Convenor, Dr Ross Ulman, spoke about the alliance of parkland groups formed to promote "green" Commonwealth Games for Melbourne in 2006 and deplored the "non-green" lighting on these stadiums custom-built for the 2006 Commonwealth Games.

The meeting concluded when the gathering, led by well-known comic actor and parks activist Rod Quantock, proceeded up the floodlit southern-mansion-style concrete stairway to the bright red entrance of the SNHC to present our demands. But the doors were well and truly locked. They must have seen us coming. (Further action will be discussed at our 18/12/2000 meeting).

Write to Premier Bracks, Planning Minister Thwaites and Major Events Minister Pandazopoulos with the message ***FIX THOSE STADIUM LIGHTS IN ROYAL PARK!***

RPPG MEMBERS AND FRIENDS ARE URGED TO ATTEND OUR DECEMBER MEETING

Monday 18 December 730 PM at North Melbourne Library, 66 Errol Street, North Melbourne.

We will discuss what to do about the lights and show videos of our "Turn Off The Lights Rally" of 3/12/2000.

OTHER MAJOR EVENTS AND CAMPAIGNS

AGM ON "GREEN" MELBOURNE COMMONWEALTH GAMES 2006

The Annual General Meeting of the Royal Park Protection Group (RPPG) was held on 30 October 2000 and was addressed by Mr Bob Symington, Director of *Green Games Watch 2000*. He spoke on the Sydney Olympics - the first "green" summer games in history - and what lessons could be learnt by Melbourne about sustainable event management.

The AGM passed a number of resolutions. The meeting called on the State Government to stage "Green Games" in 2006 (drawing on the Sydney Olympic experience) and for the formation of an alliance - *Green Games Watch 2006* - as an environmental watchdog. The meeting also called on the State Government to relocate the Games Village from the proposed "Parkville" site; to undertake a formal environmental impact assessment of the Royal Park State Netball and Hockey Centre; and, in staging the Games, to ensure compliance with the Kyoto 1997 greenhouse gas emission limits.

At the large "N11 Conference" held in Melbourne on 11 November, which was attended by trade unions, community, political, environmental/green groups, the key resolutions put by RPPG representatives were unanimously passed. RPPG and Save Albert Park Convenors subsequently met with the CFMEU (Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union) whose spokesperson proved most supportive of the plan for an alliance on Green Games for Melbourne.

CAMPAIGN OVER FAILURE OF WARD COUNCILLOR

Since July last, Councillor Rosemary Daniel, Universities Ward Councillor, has refused to attend Council meetings because she claims that she is being harassed by other Councillors. This is despite the fact that she attends social functions with the very same Councillors and accepts all Council allowances. The RPPG has been effectively disenfranchised and has no Council representation on Royal Park. We rely on the good offices of other Councillors to represent our interests.

On 29 November RPPG representatives plus Carlton and Parkville residents attended Councillor Daniel's Ward meeting and presented demands for her to attend Council meetings or resign forthwith. Despite extensive critical media coverage and growing resident opposition, Cr Daniel refuses to go. *What can you do?* Write to Councillor Daniel plus the Lord Mayor at the Town Hall with the message "*Attend Council meetings or resign.*"

OPPOSITION TO YET MORE CARPARKING IN ROYAL PARK

RPPG has been campaigning over the past year, resisting construction of carparks round Brens Pavilion on Macarthur Road. For those who do not know the story the facts are as follows. The "sportsmen" who use the three sports fields around Brens Pavilion (built for the exclusive use of a number of sports clubs including the University of Melbourne Old Boys' Rugby and Cricket Clubs) have demanded formal asphalt carparks with 110 spaces round "their" Pavilion. They refuse to consider walking 100 metres to the carparks round the Melbourne Zoo, which were built at the cost

of \$7.9 million for all parkusers. The proposed Brens Pavilion carpark would be contrary to the Council's own policy of reduction of carparking in parkland and on use of existing facilities where possible. It represents alienation of parkland for specific purpose use by a small group of sportspeople and will necessitate the axing of four mature elms. Due to our campaign and the assistance of Parkville residents (many of whom signed a petition opposing the project) the Council has deferred consideration of the proposal until February.

A greater threat to the Park is, however, in the offing. The State Government through the new State Sports Centres Trust has put up a proposal for traffic management and carparking for the State Netball and Hockey Centre. Not content with 650 carspaces within the SNHC precinct, they have proposed that virtually the whole of Royal Park is to be turned into a giant carpark. It is assumed that a roadway will be developed to carry traffic from Poplar Road to the north entrance of the Zoo and thence directly into the SNHC carpark. Needless to say, this scenario is being resisted by your RPPG representatives on the State Sports Centres Trust Advisory Committee. RPPG has also put the proposition that visitors to the Centre must rely on public transport, as is the case for other major sporting centres in Melbourne. Appropriate public transport strategies must be urgently developed by SNHC in order to move up to 13,000 people in and out of the Centre. We do not have an opening date yet. All RPPG members, friends and supporters will be invited by us to attend the opening to remind the Government about the operation of the lights.

OTHER ACTION

ROYAL PARK MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

RPPG together with other community groups - the Parkville Association, the South Parkville Precinct Environment Group and the North and West Melbourne Association - are working with the City of Melbourne on the revegetation of the Park. Real progress is being made, despite some setbacks.

CLASSIFICATION OF HISTORIC WALMSLEY HOUSE AND GOLDEN ELM

Thanks to RPPG the Walmsley House, an historic pre-fabricated iron house dating from 1854, has been classified by the National Trust. This building is one of Melbourne's earliest public buildings, originally being used as a police lockup. It was moved to Royal Park in 1862 to accommodate the first Park ranger. The golden elm next to the Walmsley House has been listed by the National Trust on the Significant Trees Register. The Walmsley House under the Golden Elm is located on the corner of Gatehouse Street and Royal Parade, next to the Australian Native Garden. An imaginative use for this building and the nearby 1930's red brick ranger's house as a Park Information Centre is yet to be developed by the City of Melbourne.

RESURRECTION OF ROYAL PARK TUNNEL PROPOSAL

Despite assurances by the Transport Minister Peter Batchelor after the Bracks election win, the "Funnel" (Freeway-Tunnel) is being discussed again along with the Scoresby by-pass. It appears that Jeff's Cemetery Link through the dead centre of Carlton is back on the Bracks agenda. Members are reminded of the objectives of RPPG spelt out on the membership form overleaf under Point 2.

LOCATION OF 2006 COMMONWEALTH GAMES VILLAGE

No news may be good news. While the Bracks Government is still advertising that the Village will be located on the Royal Park Psychiatric Hospital site, Cabinet has not yet officially decided on the site. Of course the Government may do a "Bjelke Petersen" over Christmas, demolish the historic buildings and clear the site.

Membership Renewals

This is the last call for many former subscribers to the Royal Park Protection Group. If you have not done so, could you renew your 200/2001 membership? Members with email please include the address. See over .

SUPPORT RPPG THIS CHRISTMAS

ROYAL PARK CARDS ARE AVAILABLE \$2 PER CARD

ROYAL PARK T-SHIRTS "ROYAL PARK NO PLACE FOR A VILLAGE" ONLY \$8 LARGE SIZES

Ring Julianne for orders 98184114 for orders

ROYAL PARK PROTECTION GROUP INC

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

1 JULY 2000 – 30 JUNE 2001

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code : _____

Phone:(H) (W) _____

Fax . Email . _____

Members @ \$10 each (\$5 conc.) plus donation . total \$.

Cheque enclosed for \$ Please send receipt: Circle Yes No

Note: It was decided to set the renewal date at 1 July instead of individual dates.

Objectives of RPPG:

In accordance with our Constitution, members are asked to sign agreement with RPPG

objectives which are:

(1) To protect, regenerate and conserve the Royal Park as a unique, indigenous, city park for present and future generations, consistent with the principles of the 1987 Royal Park Master Plan;

(2) To oppose alienation of parkland by government, commercial, sporting and other bodies to ensure public access consistent with the terms of the establishment of the Royal Park.

I hereby agree to the objectives of the Royal Park Protection Group Inc

Signed:

Date:

Telephone Tree:

RPPG has an extensive telephone network to keep members informed of activities.

Would you like to be advised of our events, meetings, protest activities etc? Circle: Yes No

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