



Hay Shire Council

Official Opening

of the

John Houston Memorial Swimming Pool Refurbishment



Friday 19th December 10:00am

Programme

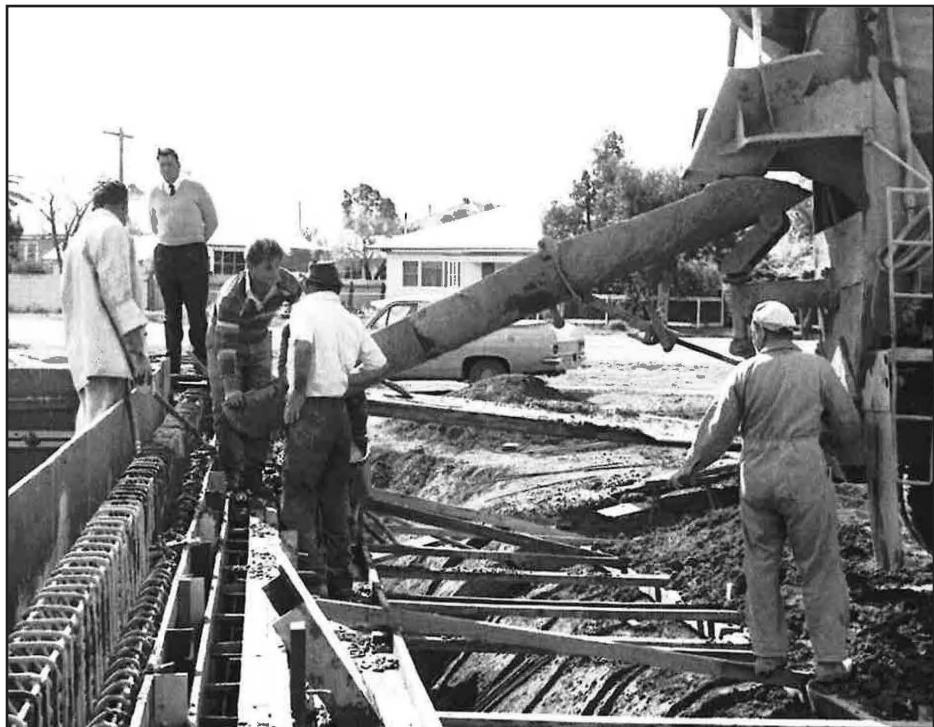


OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE John Houston Memorial Swimming Pool

Commencing at 11.00am:

- Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country - David Webb
- Mayoral address - Mayor Carol Oataway
- Guest Speakers - Senator O'Neill, Mrs Helen Dalton & Mr David Houston.
- Mayor Carol Oataway, Senator O'Neill, Helen Dalton & Mr David Houston to unveil plaque.
- Closing Comments - Mayor Carol Oataway
- Hay Amateur Swimming Club members to take first plunge into the pool.
- Completion of formalities
- Pool open to the public and BBQ/Refreshments





James Hunt SNR

John Houston Hay Swimming Pool

Today is a very special day for Hay - we gather to celebrate the grand opening of the fully refurbished

John Houston

Memorial Swimming Pool

This pool has a story. Its namesake, John Houston, was a visionary and saw the need for a community pool after a series of tragic river drownings. A dive in the archives reveals the seed was planted as far back as 1951 and shows a community divided over the need for a pool. However thanks to John's dedication, and the support of a very determined Hay Swimming Pool Committee, he set out to build a place where every child could learn to swim safely, no matter their background. The original pool became a pillar of our community - an icon of Hay's heritage and culture. Built in 1967, it was a place not only for recreation but to gather with family and friends. It quickly became part of the social fabric of Hay and has served the community well.

The final overall cost of the pool, a staggering \$165,000 (which



John Houston Hay Swimming Pool

included \$29,000 raised by the community, and a Government grant of \$20,000.00) was a huge sum of money, and a massive blowout of the original forecast budget of £10,000.00.

Hay Centennial Swimming Pool was officially opened on Friday 3rd November 1967, although a low key pre-opening ceremony was held prior in October, which focussed on the children of the local schools. The first children to 'officially' swim in the pool were the captains from the three schools - Michael Primrose and Rhonda Dillon - HWMHS. Stephen Senini & Patricia Tomkins - St Mary's and Paul Cohen & Diana Hunt - Hay Public School.

The pool was renamed in Mr Houston's honour in 1988 to commemorate his pivotal role in advocating and fundraising for the pool.



John Houston Hay Swimming Pool

However, the community's changing needs and an ageing pool precinct saw Council undertake a community co-design process to reimagine the pool precinct, and the John Houston Memorial Swimming Pool Masterplan was adopted by Council in 2021.

The new facility represents a total investment of \$8.1 million, complementing the amenities block (2023), Teenage Adventure Zone (2023) and Hay Splash Park (2022). The total cost of the precinct is \$11 million, with Council contributing just \$200,000 - the rest generously provided through government grants and community fundraising.

A special appreciation goes to the federal government Growing Regions Program - \$4.2M and state government Multi Sport Community Facility Fund - \$3M for the funding of the pools refurbishment.









Hay Shire Councillors - 2025

Cr Carol Oataway, Mayor

Cr Martyn Quinn, Deputy Mayor

Cr Geoff Chapman

Cr Lionel Garner

Cr Will Miller

Cr John Perry

Cr Paul Porter

General Manager David Webb

Acknowledgements

Hay Shire Council would like to acknowledge the following for their contribution to the refurbished John Houston Swimming Pool

Mr David Webb

Mr Jack Terblanche

Mr Greg Stewart

Ms Ali McLean

ELM Aquatics - Mark & Alycia

All tradespeople and professionals involved in bringing the project to its completion.



