

Lake Macquarie Matters

Vale Col Roach (7 October 1940 – 20 June 2023)



I was saddened to hear of the death of tireless community advocate and true gentleman Colin Lester Roach in June this year. Col was a great friend to me as he was to many in Lake Macquarie.

Col served as the President of the Bonnells Bay Progress Association for over 12 years and worked hard to secure facilities for the Bonnells Bay Youth Centre. Col was also committed to the campaign for better health care services for the Lake Macquarie

community serving on the Southlake Integrated Health Care Committee for a number of years. Col's community service was recognised through a Community Service Award in 2011 and he continued to work hard for the Lake Macquarie community in the years that followed.

Col was loved by so many in the community and I will miss his friendship dearly. Lyn and I send our condolences to Col's family and friends. Rest in peace Col.

Welcome

Hello and welcome to my August 2023 update.

What a busy first half of 2023 it has been.

I was honoured to be re-elected as the State Member for Lake Macquarie for a 5th term in March.



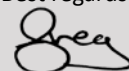
The 2023 State election saw a change of government for the first time in over 12 years. The NSW Labor Party were elected as a minority government with the largest cross bench the state has ever had, including nine independent members of Parliament.

As well as being re-elected as the State Member for Lake Macquarie I was also proud to have been chosen as the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly when Parliament first sat on 9 May. While this is an enormous honour, the electorate of Lake Macquarie will always be my priority and my office is always available for assistance with any State government matter.

Our Lake Macquarie community continues to grow but infrastructure and services are critically needed to match this development. Improving infrastructure and services in Lake Macquarie will be one of my key priorities over the next four years.

Thank you for placing your trust and confidence in me as your State representative. I am excited about what we can achieve for Lake Macquarie over the next four years.

Best regards



Local Legends

■ Melissa Baez



2023 Lake Macquarie Young Sport Star of the year Melissa Baez is a little girl with a big future. 10 year old Melissa is ranked number one in Australia for her division by the International Sport Karate Association. In July Melissa travelled to Japan with her family to compete for Australia. My congratulations to Melissa on this achievement I can't wait to see what she achieves in the coming years.

■ Lisa Greissl



I want to acknowledge the efforts of a true Lake Macquarie legend Lisa Greissl. In June this year Lisa represented Australia in the 17th International Para rowing Regatta in Italy winning two gold medals.

Seven years ago Lisa was diagnosed with a rare cancer and whilst her treatment was successful, it caused a spinal injury.

In addition to her sporting efforts, Lisa has also channeled her energy into serving others, by founding a national charity the Big Box Hug. The Big Box Hug provides people diagnosed with cancer specifically selected products to help them through treatment.

■ Kim Jeffs

For the last 40 years Kim Jeffs has dedicated her life to the children of Lake Macquarie, teaching multiple generations of Lake Macquarie families as an early childhood educator with Macquarie Preschools Cooperative Limited.

Our early childhood teachers often do not receive the praise and recognition they deserve. Even after 40 years Kim has no plans to retire at this stage. I wish Kim all the best for the years to come.

Over recent years the Community Building Partnerships Grants Program has provided some great support for our local community not-for-profit organisations.

In June this year local community organisation CALM Inc (Community Activities Lake Macquarie) secured funding through the program to purchase a new vehicle. CALM staff are making great use of this vehicle to help many local families doing it tough particularly in the search for secure housing. The Toronto Bridge Club Inc also secured funds through the program to purchase a dealing machine and barcoded cards making

Bridge days easier for this dedicated bunch.

We are currently awaiting confirmation of the 2023 Community Building Partnerships program which we hope will be announced after the September State budget. If you are a community group with a project that could benefit from funding from this program, or for more information on other grants available please contact my office. My office regularly runs grant workshops to help community groups navigate the grants process. If you are interested in these workshops send my office an email on:

lakemacquarie@parliament.nsw.gov.au



Parliament Happenings

The 58th NSW Parliament first sat in May this year following the March 2023 election. Before the July winter recess Parliament passed a number of new laws including:

- ☑ A law to protect retail workers against assaults, threats and abuse by increasing the penalties for assaults against a retail worker.
- ☑ A law aiming to assist renters by stopping rent bidding wars. Landlords and agents are now required to advertise rental prices for properties and are banned from inviting offers for rent that are higher than the advertised amount.

- ☑ A law which will increase penalties for anyone caught with a knife either in a public place or school.
- ☑ Parliament also made amendments to the First Home Buyers Scheme in NSW as part of a plan to address housing affordability. The new arrangements lift stamp duty exemptions for first home buyers from \$650,000 to \$800,000 and stamp duty concessions from \$800,000 to \$1 million.

These are positive new laws for our community and I am looking forward to a busy second half of the 2023 sitting year.

NAIDOC Week 2023



NAIDOC week 2023 was held from 2-9 July and this years theme was "For our Elders".

Lake Macquarie celebrated NAIDOC week with some wonderful events this year including a special flag raising ceremony at Lake Macquarie City Council Chambers in Speers Point. The ceremony featured a smoking ceremony, traditional dances and didgeridoo performances. This years theme was particularly relevant to me as I always look forward to hearing from Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander elders who generously share their learnings, stories and wisdom.

I was also proud to hear that Hunter Local and Worimi man, Professor Kelvin Kong was awarded the National NAIDOC Person of the year Award for 2023. Professor Kong works at our very own John Hunter and John Hunter Children's Hospitals and has no doubt treated a number of Lake Macquarie residents over the years. Congratulations Professor Kong and thank you for all of your work.



Voice to Parliament



In late 2023 Australians will be asked to vote in a referendum about whether the Constitution should be changed to recognise Australia's First Nations People by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

Whilst this is a Federal Government initiative, how NSW votes as a community may affect the outcome. In order for a referendum to be successful;

- A national majority of voters in states and territories; and
- A majority of voters in at least four out of six states must vote 'yes' to the proposed changes.

How you vote in the Voice referendum is a personal decision. I will be voting 'yes'. If successful, the Voice will establish an independent advisory body that will provide advice to the Australian Parliament and Government on matters that affect the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In my view this can only be a good thing.

I believe this referendum is important not just for our First Nations people but for our whole Australian community. Before making your decision on the Voice I encourage you to seek out information about the Voice referendum from reputable sources such as the Australian Government website – voice.gov.au

Greg Piper MP

Myuna Bay Sports and Recreation Centre Update



I was recently advised by the Office of Sport that an application to demolish the old sport and recreation centre at Myuna Bay has been lodged with Lake Macquarie City Council.

The Myuna Bay centre has been closed since March 2019 due to safety concerns relating to a potential failure of the Eraring Power station's ash dam wall.

While many Lake Macquarie residents, like myself, will be disappointed to see the old centre demolished, I understand that continued spending on the maintenance and security of the old site is not a good use of taxpayers money. This money could be better spent elsewhere.

I look forward to seeing the old site revegetated and returned to the hands of the Lake Macquarie community.

On a positive note, I have been speaking with the new NSW Minister for Sport Stephen Kamper regarding the new Lake Macquarie Sport and Recreation Centre. Mr Kamper has confirmed that the preferred location for the new centre is in Morisset, in the Lake Macquarie State Conservation Area, just off Morisset Park Road between Morisset Hospital Land and Bonnells Bay Public School. Discussions are continuing with NSW National Parks and Wildlife regarding the transfer of this land.

Whilst I am disappointed that some four and a half years after the original site closed we are still awaiting planning and construction timelines to be developed for the new site, I look forward to announcements being made shortly regarding the next stage of the new Lake Macquarie Sport and Recreation Centre.



Lake Macquarie charities need your help

You don't have to look far in Lake Macquarie to find local charities run by dedicated volunteers providing help and support to those in our community most in need. As cost-of-living expenses rise, our local charities are reporting increasing demands for their services. While everyone is stretched at the moment any support that can be provided to our local charities is greatly appreciated. Below are just a few of our wonderful local charities, supporting the Lake Macquarie community:

- **The Pamper Care Project** – Operating out of the Woodrising Neighbourhood Centre, the Pamper Care Project supports locals doing it tough by providing a little bit of pampering with personal care products. You can donate vouchers or personal care and pantry products through the Woodrising Neighbourhood Centre, 80 Hayden Brook Rd Woodrising. Open Mon-Fri 9am – 3pm.

- **Southlakes Incorporated** – For over 10 years Southlakes Inc. has been helping those in need through foodbank deliveries across our region. Southlakes Inc also operates a local schools welfare program, school breakfast clubs and operates a free meal service from Tuggerah Lakes Community Centre. To find out how you can help go to southlakesinc.org or call 0432 580 059.

- **Wyeecommunityhub** – This great organisation provides a range of services and support to the most vulnerable in our community including children, youth, women, the elderly, the homeless, lonely, disabled and disaster affected. The Hub is a registered charity run by volunteer professionals. To find out how you can assist and donate go to: wyeecommunityhub.com.au

- **Survivors R Us** – SRU supports survivors of domestic violence, homelessness and unemployment. Based in Cardiff SRU offers professional counselling services, operates a discount food warehouse and an op-shop that sells pre-loved and hand made items. To find out more and to support SRU go to: survivorsrusincorporated.com

Contact

If you need help with any State Government matter, contact my office.

Address: 126A Cary St, Toronto, NSW 2283

Hours: Mon-Fri, 8am-4pm

Phone: 4959 3200 Fax: 4950 4076

Email: lakemacquarie@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Greg Piper Independent Member for Lake Macquarie
Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly

Waltzing with the Matildas



I have been eagerly looking forward to cheering on our Matildas in the FIFA Women's World Cup this year.

Having the World Cup hosted in Australia is such a great opportunity to encourage participation in sport and to inspire our young sport stars of the future. Whilst we unfortunately don't have any games being played in the Hunter this time around, it was

wonderful to be able to celebrate our female athletes and women in sport when the FIFA Women's World Cup Trophy Tour stopped in at our Lake Macquarie Regional Football Facility.

I joined Minister for Women Jodie Harrison and Minister for Sport Steve Kamper on the day and a highlight was meeting Matildas alumni Renaye Iserief and Tracie McGovern.



Australia's Biggest Morning Tea

On 21 June I hosted a Cancer Council Biggest Morning Tea (or afternoon tea in our case) at Parliament House raising over \$2500 for the Cancer Council Australia.

The Cancer Council provides practical support for Australians dealing with cancer.

During afternoon tea we heard raw and moving accounts from Cancer Council Board of Directors Carolyn Heise and ambassador Leon Dale about their cancer journeys and the work of the Council.

The Cancer Council does incredible work

supporting families affected by cancer, speaking out on behalf of the community on cancer issues, empowering people to reduce their cancer risk and funding and supporting research to find better ways to detect and treat cancer. It was wonderful to come together as a parliamentary community to share some cake and to support this amazing organisation. For more information on the work of the Cancer Council go to www.cancerCouncil.com.au

