



## **We The People**

Program 230 November 21, 2016

We The People 230 **Back to the Future**

Good day to you. Last year I broadcast a narrative on Council's flawed decision to fill in a small lake known as Black Swan Lake at Bundall and turn it into a car park. Hidden within the Bundall equine precinct is a priceless treasure. A secluded parcel of land of just 2.7 hectares, sanctuary to thousands of local and migratory birds. It is an unassuming fresh water buffer zone with its own riparian brace of paper barks offering refuge to birds and aquatic life. I met with members of the highly respected Wildlife Preservation Society to see the lake for myself. Sally Spain, Val Shooter and a flock of supporters and experts were battling to save this little lake from the careless hands of Council. I saw beautiful black swans and their young, magpie geese, moor hens and spoon bills plus wee little birds such as the Superb Blue Wren and even a handsome Spangled Drongo, which may form the mast head for the Council's flag. Crossed chainsaws and a Drongo against a Cruise liner blue background. Now if you think I'm not showing any respect for Council you're right as I believe this Council's environmental record is appalling led by a Mayor, who in my view, seems to have little understanding of the natural world or a healthy society.

In the end the people won when the previous Council voted to save the wildlife and lake. Sometime later it was reported to me that Cr Dawn Crichlow had told a member of the public that the Council **would have control back again within 12 months**, meaning they could again do as they wish. I wrote to Cr Crichlow in February this year and put that to her. In her response Cr Crichlow refuted that claim and said and I quote "..... as far as I am concerned the issue is finished". During a pre election public meeting at Nerang Tom Tate reassured the gathering the lake was safe. Now unbelievably both Dawn and Tom seemed to have forgotten their undertakings and have now again voted to fill in Black Swan Lake.

For all the Council's posturing about the environment and how they claim to manage it, their actual decisions are at odds with what they assert and another prime example is the ongoing destruction of Koala habitat and the likely extinction of the Koala in SE Qld. Don't listen to what they say, rather look at what they do. The Council have approved a plan to get rid of the wildlife and fill in the lake and turn it into a car park just as they wanted to before. This apparently conflicted Council appear predominantly driven by big business and developers and the price of that is over-development and environmental vandalism. The redundant Commonwealth games will come and go and leave a huge debt and the Gold Coast **will ever so quietly have a little less birdlife** even though billions will have been spent on an overhyped and very costly irrelevant Commonwealth Games.

Let's review the facts and then ask what on earth are they doing. The latest independent scientific water quality tests carried out by a government approved testing facility in August this year, found the water quality of Black Swan Lake has improved and meets Australian standards. The Mayor is reported to have said he encourages us to use Rosser Park also known as the Botanic Gardens and forget about Black Swan lake. The irony here is that the Rosser family donated the land and the park would not exist if this wonderful family didn't have the generosity and foresight to do so. In the last Council, 11 Councillors voted to manage the lake and since then the reparation phase has begun and much has been achieved with wildlife thriving. I ask, are any Councillors deriving personal benefit from the Turf Club and if so surely that stands as a conflict of interest. This Lake is Council's direct responsibility and if they claim it's polluted then responsibility rests with their poor stewardship over the last 30 years. They can't have it both ways. A Griffith PHD student identified the Lake environment as a critical haven for flora and fauna and rightly so and it represents a very important wetland.

It was Cr Baildon who moved the motion yet it was he who reportedly stated at a Division 7 pre-election campaign meeting that he would protect the lake. Meanwhile the Five retiring Councillors who were Black Swan supporters are gone so it's on again to the shame of the ill-informed Councillors who voted for the destruction of Black Swan Lake and its migratory following. Within this contorted bloc Council let's not forget Cr's Young, McDonald and LaCasta who opposed this mindless action and the voiceless wildlife thanks you. When will the madness stop and when will this Council actually and completely pave over paradise and put up a parking lot. We the people should apologise in advance to the next generation for the legacy this Council leaves.

**Until next time this is Kent Bayley**