



Melbourne's year-round open water swimming group

Lead Article – Icebergers at the finish line Pier to Perignon 18th February 2024



LtoR: Lindsay Crouch, Ken Broadhurst, David Hallam, Richard Owen, Simon Williams, Romney Jones, Antony Lynch, Tony Ryan. *photo: Janie Zacharin*

Ralphie's* on Committee

by Ria Bleathman



Ralphie's on Committee
The Chosen One it seems
Deals with nitty gritty
He's living out his dreams.

He's not like other Ozzies
When going for a swim
Wears his Ralphie cozzies
Speedos aren't for him.

Thanks for volunteering
Other members too
Bergers will be cheering
Ralphie and his crew.



Ralphie's Cozzie

Ralphie left - so named after Ralphie Vallederes - best roller derby champion of the 1970's.

photos by Ria

*Michael O'Shaughnessy - known as Ralphie - convenor of the Iceberger Committee in 2024



Brigid Cottrill launches at RBYC 27th January 2024

photo by Ria



River Swimming in the City Becomes a Thing

by Ria Bleathman

It is planned that the River Seine in Paris will hold swimming competitions for the Paris 2024 Olympics (as occurred at the 1900 Olympics). Efforts are also under way to make swimming possible in Berlin's Spree River and Amsterdam's canals. There is also a movement to make the Yarra River a swimming destination under the Swimmable Birrarung 2030 Alliance.

One of the measures of a healthy river system is the abundance of water-based animal life. In Australia one such aquatic animal used as a measure of river health is the *duck-billed* platypus, one of only two members of the monotremata family (the other being the similarly schnozzle-defined, *short-beaked* echidna) and both unique to Australia. Melbourne Water Corporation measures river health through their Platypus Program Waterwatch. In the meantime, how could I let such unique, quirky and eccentric creatures go un-poetised for our similarly-predisposed Iceberger community:

Monotremata* by Ria Bleathman

What is the plural of platypus?

Said the platypus - "It's by the by, whether *platypodes* or *platypi*, but when there are two of us-es we much prefer *platypuses*".



Schnozzle Schemozzle

Being rare counts for nowt
When we're known just for our snout.

Short-beaked for the spiky one
Duck-billed for the amphibian.

That's the reason we're so piqued
There's more to us than just our beak.

Hidden amongst our cuddly fur
Are razor quills and a toxic spur.

So tease us not, let it be said,
Cuddle us – you're dead.

The Echidna Enigma

You really should have known by crikey
That you never ever hug a spiky.

Despite your affection so allured
You'll surely end-up very skewered.



Our Yarra

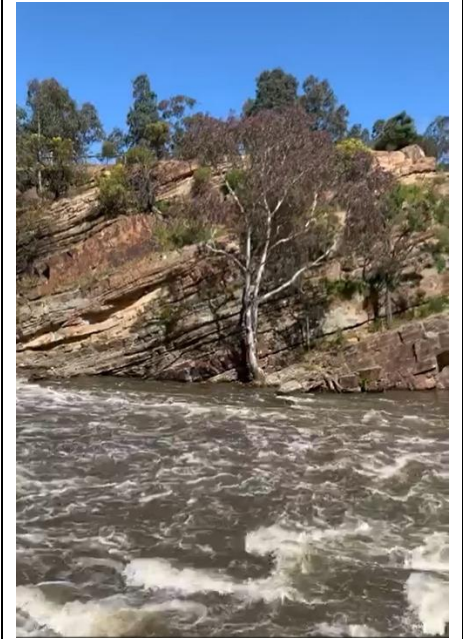
photos by Lou Lockwood



Fairview Park



Fairview Park



Dights Falls

Of wombat holes and fishing poles



The photo left shows Alistair Purvey swimming at RBYC on 4th February 2024. Such a smooth image contrasts with his more recent efforts on dry land when he was fly fishing on the Mitta Mitta River and twisted his ankle on the edge of a wombat hole and then fell onto a large rock edge. Alistair is now in 'dry dock' on crutches.



We look forward to seeing Alistair (pictured right) back in the water soon, safe from the risks of wombat holes. RB



14th March 2024

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