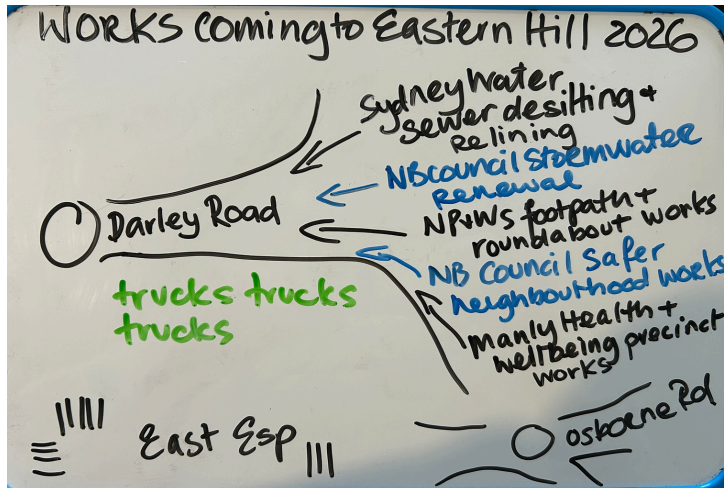


MANLY COMMUNITY FORUM

A community led monthly newsletter for Manly residents

September 2025



AGENDA

- Darley Road and North Head update
- Special Entertainment Precinct (SEP) report
- Manly Life Saving Club DA update
- 2025 priorities Council updates

editor: Cathy Griffin

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Darley Rd & North Head update

2026 is shaping up to be a very big year for 'public works' on the Eastern Hill.

- Northern Beaches Council is planning a 2-to-3-month stormwater renewal project that will extend from Cliff Street to Ashburner St,
- Northern Beaches Council will commence works on the Safe Neighbourhood project which includes the installation of several pedestrian crossings, bike lanes, and other traffic calming devices on Eastern Hill.
- Sydney Water is currently scoping the final section of the sewer desilting and relining project. This will result in accessing the sewer from Darley Rd for several months.
- National Parks & Wildlife Service are considering plans to install a footpath from the Parkhill Archway to a new roundabout at the Q Station entrance. This will include renewal of several bus stops along the route.
- Aveo is currently working through all the reports required for the creation of the Manly Health and Wellbeing Precinct. The Project hopes to have these completed and approved by the end of the 2026 when the heavy works of removing some of the old buildings and rebuilding will commence.
- The Australian Institute of Police Management is currently renovating it's buildings.
- The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust continues to restore the buildings in its North Head Sanctuary location.

All the time the buses, garbage collections trucks, Sydney Water sludge trucks and work trucks to the various locations on North Head will continue.



New boys on the harbour

Manly Boat Hire, operators of the BBQ boats that frequent Little Manly and neighbouring coves has changed hands. The young owners represent a new generation of harbour users. The BBQ boats are now moored on permanent moorings, no longer randomly dropping anchor in the harbour and staying until they are moved on by the Maritime Police. The owners are also offering a greater range of activities than the previous owners. Beach Cleanups in association with the Surfrider Foundation #adoptabeach, fishing gear hire and snorkel hire and icecream sales. Give them a go. They will be seeking community support for a pontoon on the harbour or a small storage trailer/box on land to store their equipment.

<https://www.surfrider.org.au/impact/adoptabeach/>

You can help the environment by bringing your own cup for a takeaway or if that is too difficult then ask 'no lid'. Do you really need your name or order written on it? #adoptabeachaus

OUR NEXT MEETING IS ON MONDAY 20 OCT 25 AT 7PM AT THE MANLY YACHT CLUB

Sand at South Steyne comes and goes

A potted history

Sand loss and serious beach erosion at South Steyne has been a feature since Europeans first settled in Manly.

In 1882, with the ocean beach dune removed, the Manly Council asked the Minister for Works, John Lackey, for £2000 to build a sea wall at South Steyne that was to extend from the Steyne Hotel for 2000 feet towards Fairy Bower. To justify the expenditure Public Works was asked to consider if this wall would be an improvement to their beautiful beach, which in its present condition he thought was a great attraction to people who visited the place'. Over the ensuing years at many meetings, Manly Council finally received notice from the Public Works Department in 1889 that they would get a sum of £500 for the Manly seawall. The wall was soon under construction and later extended further along South Steyne towards Fairy Bower and then years later in the other direction to Queenscliff.

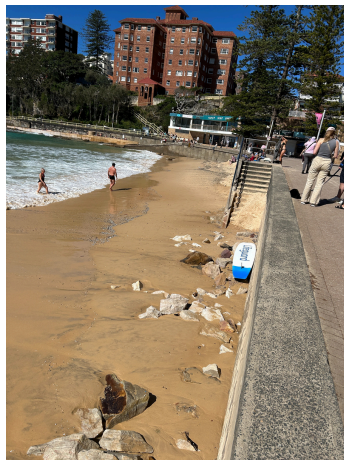
But disaster struck with big storms and in 1899 the Minister for Works Edward O'Sullivan visited Manly and promised to allocate a grant of £2000 for repair of the retaining wall, to improve the reserve and to prevent waves from threatening the roots of the trees where the sand had subsided on the oceanfront, the asphalted walk along the Steyne Reserve and the seawall were carried away. These were repaired with government funds. The work was regarded as urgent and, the Council argued, needed to be done before 'any further encroachment by the water which already threatened the integrity of Steyne Reserve and the safety of the avenue of Norfolk Island pines'.

In 1907 Public Baths and Bathing were becoming an issue. Manly Council was being pressed to 'make preparations', with local businesses seeking Government support to build sunbathing and changing room structures at South Steyne. Which it finally did, building a ladies and men's dressing shed at South Steyne, but not without problems. *Unfortunately, it was brought under the notice of the council the fact that the men's dressing-shed was open to the view of anyone passing up and down the steps at the Fairy Bower. Something should be done to remedy this evil. It was a source of constant trouble and should be seen to. The correspondence was referred to the Works Committee, which has the whole question of surfbathing in hand.* At the time efforts were made to persuade the Government to complete the whole length of the wall from the Corso to Pine Street, and put down asphalt walks similar to those on South Steyne.



Photo courtesy of Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies.

By 1911, the sea wall was rapidly disappearing owing to the frequent sand drifts banking up against it. At places the wall was invisible, although when first put in position it stood several feet above the sand surface. The Council considered the advisability of repairing the wall and putting additional copings on the portion extending from the Corso to Fairy Bower. Then much of the seawall was destroyed by heavy seas in 1913. The asphalt paths were undermined and carried away in several places.



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South Steyne sands of time

On Friday 16 May 1913 The newspapers reported EXCITING INCIDENTS AT MANLY. 'WRECKAGE ON THE BEACH.'

The newspaper reported in 1913 that *the expenditure form the storm damage involved in erecting the new ladies' dressing sheds at South Steyne has all gone for nought. The storm played havoc at the South Steyne end of the beach, and around at Fairy Bower and Shelly Beach. The retaining wall was badly buffeted and knocked about, while the refreshment rooms in the vicinity were extensively damaged through in rushes of water and sand drifts.*

For close on a quarter of a mile along the main promenade on Manly Bench the sea had dashed under the wall with such violence during the storm that the great stretch of sand which had laid dormant for nearly 30 years was gutted out to a depth of over 10 foot. The water now, at high tide, reaches the wall right along the frontage,' and pedestrians must risk a splashing if, they wish to stroll on the sands. The local council's efforts recently to remove some of the sand from the beach were laughed at.

The sea has accomplished In a few hours what it would have taken the council years to collect.

The council is in a quandary as to the future action to be taken in providing pressing accommodation for bathers. It is plainly manifest that whatever structure is erected it will have to be solidly built to resist such storms in future. In all probability new plans and specifications will be drawn up to meet the new proposals- for providing accommodation, to be subsidised and financed by the Government, in accordance with the report of the Surfbathing Commission. In order to have the accommodation ready, by next season, no delay will be occasioned in getting to work and having the buildings expedited.

By 1938 a sea wall had been constructed along the entire length of Manly Beach, South Steyne to Queenscliff. Since then this seawall has been modified, reinforced or repaired many times and through the years there are well documented storms stripping the sand from South Steyne.

In January 1950 a series on storms damaged the North Steyne sea wall and the South Steyne surf pavilion, with huge waves breaking over the retaining wall and dragging surfboards and other debris to sea.

The sand will return

The sand returned over time but a sequence of storms events between May and June 1974 including the renowned Sydney Storm of May 1974 occurred. Whilst this storm is infamous for the damage and eventual removal of the boardwalk at Manly Cove it damaged the ocean beach front as well, removing huge amounts of sand, stripping the beach back to the sea wall exposing its footings.

Astonishingly, it took five and half years for the beach to recover to its previous condition after these events, but the recovery was hampered by more severe storms in 1976 and 1978, which interrupted the gradual build-up of beach sand.

Manly Beach experienced significant erosion from storms in 1986, again the significant damage occurred on the beach front. This prompted the Manly Council to repair and install the wide access steps and place rocks at the foot of the seawall that we now see exposed today.

In 2009 Spring tides and an easterly swell swept away thousands of tonnes of sand at the southern end of Manly Beach, exposing large rocks placed there the decade before in a controversial scheme to protect the sea wall from the forces of nature. Controversial because the rocks were considered too small and a danger to swimmers and surfers if they were swept into the surf zone and remained hidden from view but exposed in the near shore sand banks.

Again, in June 2016 a significant East Coast Low (ECL) storm, combined with a king tide, caused severe beach erosion at South Steyne as well as damaging Marine Parade, blowing up the stormwater pipes and the toilet block.

Now in 2025 we see Manly beach striped of sand and the rocks exposed. Northern Beaches Council has no plans to do any proactive beach nourishment as it is expected the sand will return as it has done previously. The sand is currently sitting in a big sandbank in the southern corner waiting for right conditions to push it back to the shore and up to the seawall. In the meantime, be safe on the beach and be careful of submerged rocks on the shoreline at high tide.



3/75 Stuart Street, Manly Auction



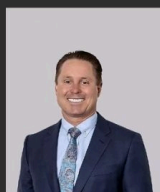
4/20 Reddall Street, Manly SOLD

THE AGENCY

Considering Selling?

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Jake Rowe

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Experience sells



Brickbats and Bouquets

- **Brickbat** to the source of the plastic snack packaging and plastic bottles litter now floating in Spring Cove and laying across the path at the entry to Collins Beach. The stormwater carrying the litter down the slope into Spring Cove needs to be addressed. We are expecting more rain in the coming months.
- **Bouquet** to Kim Smee for her amazing effort as Editor of Manly Observer. Many Observer is available in many online formats but now the first free newspaper has been published. Pick up a copy in Humphreys or at Manly Wharf. Next edition is due in a few months. Congrats to Kim and her team.
- **Brickbat** to Council for continuing to fail to recognise the importance of maintaining the Manly to Shelly walk along Marine Parade. Temporary fencing, potholes everywhere, sub par landscaping, no wayfinding signs.



Messy entry to Collins Beach



- **Bouquet** to those still using the Hop Skip Jump bus making the new timetable work for them. Use it or lose it.
- **Bouquet** to the tic tokers filming and explaining in their own language every single sandwich board sign in the CBD. This is how Manly is promoted.



Winner of the Best Café Dining & Best Casual Dining of the Year in Australia for 2024 at the National Restaurant and Catering Awards!

LITTLE MANLY, LITTLE STRESS.

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