



9.2 NAMING OF SOUTH MELBOURNE LIFE SAVING CLUB

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek approval for the naming of the new South Melbourne Life Saving Club building after Aileen 'Mac' Kennedy BEM (British Empire Medal).

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following the construction of the new South Melbourne Life Saving Club building in 2019, President Dinah Bowell submitted a nomination form on behalf of the Club to name the new building after Aileen 'Mac' Kennedy BEM.
- 2.2 This nomination was assessed by the Memorials and Monuments Working Group (comprising officers across the organisation) against criteria outlined in the Memorials and Monuments guidelines. As all criteria were met, the nomination was referred to Council's Cultural Heritage Reference Committee for endorsement. The application was supported unanimously.
- 2.3 The nomination is now presented to Council for approval of the naming of the new building in memory of Aileen Kennedy.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 3.1 Approves the naming of the new South Melbourne Life Saving Club in memory of Aileen (Mac) Kennedy
- 3.2 Notes that the for emergency services purposes the building is referenced as South Melbourne Lifesaving Club and in memory of Aileen (Mac) Kennedy it will be referred to as the Aileen Kennedy Pavilion.
- 3.3 Notes that Aileen (Mac) Kennedy BEM was secretary in 1944 and held this position until her death in 1980. Mac was awarded the British Empire Medal for her services to life saving and had strong connections to the local community.
- 3.4 Notes that the application was assessed by both Council officers and Council's Cultural Heritage Reference Committee against Council's Memorials and Monuments Guidelines and met requirements.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

- 4.1 An application from the South Melbourne Life Saving Club was received which nominated Aileen (Mac) Kennedy BEM as the person after whom the new building should be named in recognition of her service to the community and especially the Life Saving Club.



- 4.2 Already well known in the community, Albert Park resident Aileen Kennedy (affectionately known as 'Mac') was approached by the South Melbourne Council to reform the South Melbourne Life Saving Club following the tragic drowning of two children on the foreshore in 1944.
- 4.3 She, together with her husband Abe and several other local community members, met and agreed to reactivate the club that had declined over time since the Depression and the impact of World War Two. Mac was elected to the position of secretary in 1944, a position which she held until her death in 1980. She was made a life member of the SMLSC in 1957.
- 4.4 Mac was recognised on multiple occasions by the Royal Life Saving Society through its Commonwealth and UK headquarters, receiving the Recognition Badge in 1956, Service Cross in 1968 and bar in 1978, Certificate of Merit in 1973 and was made a Life Member of RLSS (Victoria Branch) in 1961/62.
- 4.5 Mac was awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) for her services to life saving.
- 4.6 She was also on the inaugural committee of the South Melbourne Community Chest, formed the South Port Women's Amateur Athletic Association and she reformed the Melbourne Suburban Beaches Association which provided support to smaller lifesaving clubs. It was due to Mac's campaigning that a second story to the club was erected in 1962.
- 4.7 The City of South Melbourne noted at a council meeting that she would be honoured with a memorial. Anecdotally this discussion was around a pool to be built in the area, but which never eventuated.
- 4.8 Mac was not only prominent in lifesaving but also in athletic associations, and was the first female to hold the position of starter in the Commonwealth Games. Such positions were only previously held by men who dominated these activities.
- 4.9 The recommendation is that naming the new building after Aileen Kennedy would be a fitting tribute to a long-time member of SMLSC and prominent, hard-working citizen in our community.
- 4.10 The location of the club was originally further along Beaconsfield Parade near Foote Street and comprised a tin shed. It moved to its present site in the mid-1950s after the erection of the former building, which was named after William Crawford, a member of the South Melbourne Foreshore Committee (serving as Chair in 1951), and Under Secretary for Lands.
- 4.11 The selection criteria for naming of Memorials and Monuments is as follows:
 - Contribution to History
 - Level of Achievement
 - Tangible Legacy
 - Relevance to Site
 - Impact on Landscape Character
 - Safety and Maintenance
 - Cost
 - Funding Sources
 - Community Support
- 4.12 The Life Saving Club needs to be easily identifiable for essential services in case of an incident. Therefore, the building will be logged with the Office of Geographic Names



Victoria as both South Melbourne Life Saving Club and Aileen Kennedy Pavilion. This naming protocol meets the requirements of Life Saving Victoria.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1 This nomination was made by the South Melbourne Life Saving Club and is supported by members as demonstrated through letters received in support.
- 5.2 Officers on the Memorials and Monuments Working Group commented that the criteria for naming was clearly met as Aileen Kennedy made a significant contribution on a local, state and national level.
- 5.3 Council's Cultural Heritage Reference Committee endorsed the application and noted that it was a worthy and appropriate nomination.
- 5.4 It is suggested that a plaque acknowledging William Crawford be installed within the new building to retain a connection with Crawford and the history of the site.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS¹

- 6.1 Officers have liaised with Life Saving Victoria to ensure that the naming of the building meets their requirements from an emergency services perspective.
- 6.2 The building will be identified as both the South Melbourne Life Saving Club and Aileen Kennedy Pavilion, and both these names will be logged with Office of Geographic Names, Victoria.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 7.1 The financial impact will be a one-off capital cost of designing, manufacturing and installing external signage for Aileen Kennedy Pavilion and an internal plaque for William Crawford which will be funded through a contribution from the South Melbourne Life Saving Club project.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 8.1 There is no identified environmental impact for this project.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 9.1 This nomination has come from the lifesaving club, articulating a strong desire to acknowledge Aileen Kennedy for her contribution to their community and her years of volunteering. Dinah Boswell, President, says:

"We have many very elderly members, and I know it would be very important to them to know Mac's legacy is continued with a tribute to her incorporated as we move forward. To me personally, I would prefer that it is recorded with the opening as that will be the mark in history of the club and community that will be documented. She was a great mentor to me although I was only 18 when she died.

Sadly, Mac and Abe (he died many years before Mac) Kennedy had no children and no surviving siblings, maybe that is why they contributed so much to the community as they gave so much to what they considered their wider "family". Jim Morgan, a SMLSC member, was executor of her will and searched for family members (she left everything divided between athletics, lifesaving and the lost dogs home). He found none close, I think one distant cousin was found but had no real knowledge of her".



- 9.2 This recommendation aligns with Council’s Memorials and Monuments Guidelines and Naming Roadways, Features and Localities Policy especially in relation to naming criteria which states in section 5.1.2: “To improve diversity in naming in the City of Port Phillip, preference will be given to names that address the following criteria” ... “the role or contribution of women in the City of Port Phillip”.
- 9.3 Aileen Kennedy was a great role model to women in both lifesaving and athletics, breaking through male dominated barriers and mentoring women in these fields.
- 9.4 Aileen Kennedy can be seen to have left a tangible legacy for the community through reforming the South Melbourne Life Saving Club, and serving as secretary for 36 years. Without her contribution, the club may well not exist to provide the valuable service to the City of Port Phillip and the wider beach going community.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

- 10.1 This report aligns with Council Plan 1 *We embrace difference and people belong* through promoting and enhancing a safe and active community with strong social connections.
- 10.2 It also aligns with 4 *We are growing and keeping our character* through acknowledging changes to our built environment, and celebrating the people whose contributions underpin our community.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

- 11.1.1 The South Melbourne Life Saving Club formally opens on 2 November and, if approved, the name of the building will be announced at this event.
- 11.1.2 Officers will determine the design, manufacture and installation requirements and implement the signage once the naming has been confirmed.
- 11.1.3 Officers will register the names with Office of Geographic Names Victoria.
- 11.1.4 An internal plaque acknowledging the former name of the William Crawford Pavilion will be manufactured and installed, and descendants of Crawford will be sought to advise of these changes.

11.2 COMMUNICATION

- 11.2.1 The naming of the building will be communicated to the South Melbourne Life Saving Club to be disseminated to its members.
- 11.2.2 The communication plan for the launch of the South Melbourne Life Saving Club will include reference to the naming.

12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

- 12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any direct or indirect interest in the matter.

TRIM FILE NO: 06/03/154

ATTACHMENTS

1. Letters of support for naming of South Melbourne Life Saving Club
2. Queen's Honours list nomination for Aileen Kennedy 1971