



RECREATION PLANNING  
AND THE  
PROVISION OF SWIMMING POOLS.

by

Sally Methven

Dip.PE., Cert.Ed., B.Ed.St., M.Soc.Sci.

*awarded 19.7.89*

A thesis submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Geography University of Adelaide

February 1989.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	Page
TITLE PAGE .....	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	ii
LIST OF TABLES .....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	viii
LIST OF PLATES .....	viii
ABSTRACT .....	ix
DECLARATION .....	xi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	xii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1. SOCIAL PARAMETERS OF RECREATION PLANNING .....	8
Income and Occupation.....	9
Education .....	18
Age .....	22
Geographical Location.....	37
Socio-cultural Factors .....	44
Conclusion .....	53
2. PLANNING METHODOLOGIES AND IDEAS .....	60
Planning Theories and Ideas .....	61
The Standards Approach to Planning .....	83
The Spatial and Hierarchical Approaches .....	89
Conclusion .....	96
3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC RECREATION PROVISION IN	
AUSTRALIA .....	103
Pre - 1972 .....	104
Post - 1972 .....	107
How Was Recreation Identified .....	109
The Education of Recreation Workers .....	111
Recreation and the Public Service .....	113
The Role of the Local Government Recreation Officer.....	117
The Management of Recreation Facilities .....	120
Professional Associations .....	123
Conclusion .....	124

4.	PUBLIC RECREATION AND SOCIAL POLICY .....	130
	Recreation and Social Policy .....	130
	Recreation Policies in Australia .....	135
	Conclusion .....	156
5.	THE POLITICS OF PLANNING FOR RECREATION .....	165
	Recreation Provision: Luxury or Public Good .....	166
	Equity .....	179
	Accountability .....	197
	Conclusion .....	201
6.	REVIEW OF PLANNING AND DESIGN OF SWIMMING POOL .....	207
	Technical Aspects .....	212
	Design Aspects .....	218
	Planning Aspects .....	227
	Usage .....	235
	Management Aspects .....	236
	Health and Safety .....	240
	Provision for the Disabled .....	242
	Backyard Pools .....	246
	Conclusion .....	247
7.	ACTIVITY PROFILE .....	254
	An Activity Profile .....	256
	Competitive Swimming .....	266
	Fitness Swimming .....	268
	Recreational Swimming .....	270
	Learn to Swim .....	273
	Planning Implications .....	277
	Design Factors .....	278
	Management Factors .....	280
	Conclusion .....	284

8.	SWIMMING POOLS IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DOMAIN .....	288
	School Pools .....	289
	Commercial Pools .....	291
	Other Agencies .....	294
	Public Pools .....	295
	Design .....	297
	Location and Distribution .....	300
	Usage Profiles .....	304
	Summary of Public Pools .....	312
	Introduction to Backyard Pools .....	314
	Consumer Problems Involving Backyard Pools .....	316
	Numbers of Backyard Pools.....	322
	Research into Backyard Pools .....	327
	Distribution and Numbers of Local Backyard Pools...	332
	Backyard Pool Ownership and Public Pool Usage .....	334
	Reasons why Respondents Visited Public Pools .....	338
	Backyard Pools and Recreation Lifestyles .....	342
	Family Structure and Ownership of Pools .....	344
	Reasons for Purchase/Removal of Backyard Pools ....	345
	Children and Safety .....	349
	Type of Pool and Accessories .....	351
	Costs .....	352
	Satisfaction Gained from Pools .....	354
	Past Owners of Backyard Pools .....	355
	Conclusion .....	357
9.	RATIONAL RECREATION REVISITED .....	364
	Recreation Planning .....	366
	Swimming and Swimming Pools .....	374
	Private and Publicly Provided Recreation .....	376
	Where Do We Go From Here ? .....	379
	Conclusion .....	405
	Recommendations for Further Research .....	407

	Page
	----
10. APPENDICES.....	412
A...Review of the Literature on Swimming Pools .....	412
Methodology.....	412
Thesaurus .....	413
Computer Searches .....	414
General Methodology & Sources of Information..	415
Abstracting and Bibliographic Agencies .....	416
Trade and Industrial Sources .....	417
Professional Sources .....	417
Sport and Recreation Information Group .....	421
Academic Holdings, Theses and Papers .....	422
Government Agencies .....	424
Government & Quasi Government Agencies Outside	
the Recreation System .....	426
Irregular Holdings .....	428
Journals and Magazines .....	430
Conclusion .....	431
List of English Language Serials Relevant to	
Recreation Planning .....	433
B...Swimming Pool Bibliography.....	437
C...Letter and Questionnaire to Salisbury Council	
Householders .....	467
11. BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	480

## ABSTRACT.

The development of recreation planning in Australia has been slow and uncertain, and there are still no clearly articulated policies showing why publicly provided recreation services should exist, what they might contain, or the part they might play in helping Australian society into the next century. Although public spending for recreation is a large budget item at most levels of government there has been no study into the political economy of leisure and recreation in this country. This thesis is an attempt to take the first steps towards redressing this situation.

The first part of the thesis outlines some of the important social parameters which help to govern recreation behaviour. It then traces the development of recreation planning in Australia and the unsophisticated planning methods in current use, which contrast with the recommended practices of leading writers in the field. These are set against the policies and structures of recreation planning in this country, and the general lack of vision from politicians, bureaucrats, and academics

alike. There are no clear cut objectives which stem from a well articulated social and economic rationale for recreation planning. Funding and planning actions do not necessarily reflect the rhetoric of the few vague policy statements which do exist, and may indeed run counter to them.

In the second half of this thesis, the provision of swimming pools is examined in some detail as an example of the problems noted above. The fact that there are few policies or objectives governing recreation planning means that the planning, location and distribution of pools has received little thought and has often occurred on the flimsiest planning evidence. A profile of the generic term of swimming is developed to clarify the activities which take place in swimming pools, and the implications these have for planning, design and management. A case study of pool provision in Adelaide and Melbourne is used as an example, and research into backyard pools in the South Australian local council area of Salisbury illustrates the relationship between private and public use of pools.

The thesis concludes with a model for developing recreation planning and planning strategies, and a list of recommended further research.