

"my unfinished memoirs"

Spinifex Footy

< The Purple Patch >

*"When the moon is in the seventh house, and Jupiter aligns with Mars,
Then Peace will guide the planets, and love will steer the stars;
This is *****" [The 5th Dimension 1969]*

1976 – The Zenith of 70's Football in Newman

The "inaugural" Fortescue Festival:

Newman was overdue for some cultural balance to our *Footy Culture & BBQ lifestyle*.



***Ziggy Slepeki & BK – the "Cream Machine" in serious mode**
but what was I thinking wearing a Collingwood T-shirt?*

The "Inaugural" Fortescue Festival was on the Sunday after the '76 grand final. Waking up from a night of celebrations we joined the kids in watching the floats parade around the back streets of town – this was "mardi gras" for Newman. All previous promises to be team members as part of the "fair-go" teams were forgotten in the blur of the footy grand final. For some reason a few of the Centrals boys were still celebrating in the glow around at our house in Pond Street on the Sunday morning. Until - **Ziggy Slepeki** came around in a cranky mood accusing **Ian Cullen** & BK of letting down the "Cream Machine" – we hadn't shown up at the Capricorn Oval for the start of the "Fair Go" Competition - *"all you care about is bloody footy & stuff my cream machine!"* We quickly "repaired" to the Capricorn to help Ziggy (a Rugby League fan).

Cultural Balance to “Footy” Culture:

Wendy Evans was the mastermind of the Fortescue Festival extravangasa. It was based on the well established “*FeNaCal*” Festival of our mining town cousins – Tom Price. Newman couldn’t be left behind! It was **Wendy** and the determination of her organising committee (**Frank Coppinger, Sandy Edgar, & Ray Williams**) that brought a cultural festival to Newman for the first time. The centre piece of the festival was the “*Fair Go*” competition based on a contemporary TV show. It was a a lot of fun and a relief from the seriousness of footy.

“*Fair Go*” teams included;

- **Transport Terriers** – Transport & Township
- **Kellys Gang** – Private Business
- **Black Knights** –LIA and Contractors
- **Warewolves** - Warehouse
- **Cream Machine** - Admin
- **Flying Fleas** - Crusher
- **Hills Angels** - production
- **Injun Erring** - Engineering
- **Orange Pips** – teachers

While the footy competition was a major part of the social fabric of Newman it was just part of the sporting matrix which dominated our “*BBQ lifestyle*”. With such a young healthy enthusiastic demographic combined with relative wealth and a very mixed community we had every sport you could imagine: This included (for kids, men & women): a variety of team sports to golf, speedway, BMX, gun clubs, gliding, horse racing etc etc.

Footy however dominated this social fabric but with increasing seriousness and polarisation into “clans”. Even the other team sports had representations and names from each of the footy clubs.

Newman certainly need some cultural balance to this “*footy*” culture & “*BBQ lifestyle*”.

Wendy Evans & Colin came from Wales as Geologists for MNM. With the economic downturn in about '72, all departments except production were rationalised. **Col** moved to ore grading and **Wendy** to ? – she had a theatrical background and too much enthusiasm to just sit at home! “if I remember correctly”, **Wendy** started a *coffee shop* in the old shop courtyard (this was very “avant garde” in the 70’s). She also developed a theatrical group at the *Newman Club* which had regular cabaret / vaudeville type performances. These and in particular the big productions became the heart of Newmans social scene. I think **Col & Wendy** were also involved in starting the Gliding Club based out at the old homestead airstrip (the airstrip was one of the fairways in the original Golf Course).

More Culture:

Others to make a significant contribution to the cultural flavour were the the 70’s *Dancing Schools* of **Pam Noonan** and later **Donna Mathews**. You always knew it was nearing Christmas and the holidays when the Dance School performance was on. This was presented to a captive audience of families together with Nana & Pop “up from Perth”. Somewhere in the old photo albums are the young kids performing “happy toothbrushes” and “I’m a hitta-potamus”.

On reflection, I don't think we appreciated or rewarded them enough; **Wendy, "miss Pam" or "miss Donna"** and others, for their cultural contribution to a wonderful life in a small dusty town in the isolated Pilbara of the 70's.

The Chronicles;

Somewhere in the photos: **Roy Litherland (S)** (hand shading eyes), Is that **Greg Williams (T)** watching the stumble in the water run?



FESTIVAL FAIR GO A WINNER

It looks as if Newman's Fortescue Festival Fair Go is here to stay following its introduction at this year's Festival on August 22. Despite a degree of apparent chaos, some disputes with the umpires, cuts, a broken collar bone, grease, soaked players, occasional bone-jarring tumbles and a chilly wind, the crowd of up to 3,500 ended the day calling for more.

With more than \$800 worth of prizes at stake, needle crept into the proceedings at an early stage and it was quickly clear the players and their supporters viewed Fair Go as something more than a friendly afternoon's romp on the Capricorn Oval.

All of which, naturally, was just what the doctor ordered as far as the spectators were concerned.

They had the opportunity to enjoy it again when highlights were shown over the Newman TV network, thanks to the efforts of Visual Aids Officer Mike Gredziuk and his camera team.

Nine teams competed in the eight events, run in three heats

— Transport Terriers (Transport and Town), Kelly's Gang (business houses), Black Knights (Light Industrial and Contractors), Warewolves (Warehouse), Cream Machine (Administration, Geology etc), Flying Fleas (Crusher), Hills Angels (Production), Injun Erring (Engineering) and Orange Pips (Schools).

Finalists were the Black Knights, Hills Angels and the Cream Machine.

Cream Machine, captained by Sigi Slepecki, surged home to a narrow victory with everything depending on the final chariot race. Their 10 players and reserve, manager and officials earned the Fair Go Ringer Trophy, a Gala Night Out for 25 people, plus two return MMA tickets to Perth. The prizes were given by Newman Sports and Recreation Council which co-ordinated the whole Festival, MMA and Walkabout Holdings.

Every team received beer and champagne to reward a quite fantastic performance which breathed new life into the six-year-old annual Festival.

Sigi received the trophy from Mr Irwin Newman, MM General Manager who attended the day with Mrs Newman.

Besides the Fair Go heats and final, the crowd was entertained with foot and sack races, and giant opening parade, more than 30 stalls and sideshows, the Co-venturers' Marquee which 'called in' at Newman after an appearance at the Pilbara Show, dancing display by the Pam Noonan Dancing School, Festival Princess and Queen contests and Country and Western singing by Perth entertainer Norm Jones.

Prizes worth nearly \$1,500 were awarded during the day.

Judges for the five-category fancy dress parade and later for the Princess and Queen contests were: Mrs Sherry Squires, Mrs Mary Metcalf, Mrs Barbara Rawling, Mr Bill Chapman (MMA) and Mr Ian Hancorne (ANZ Bank).

The best vehicle was 'Sesame Street' entered by Mt Newman Laboratory staff, while the Black Knights' castle on wheels and the Four-Wheel-Drive Club's entry earned commendations. Louise Chaney, dressed as an Arab girl was the best horse rider in the parade. Prizes also went to the best individual (a boy robot), best group (fisherman and mermaid) and the best decorated bicycle.

A large crowd stayed on for the evening entertainment, hinging on the Princess and Queen competitions.

Angie Svensson, nominated by the Horse and Pony Club, was judged Festival Princess, 1976 from 15 contestants and received \$50 and a sash presented by Mrs Judy Newman.

Runner-up for \$20 was Kelly Coles (Transport Terriers).

Jane Baston, nominated by the Newman Club, was crowned Festival Queen by Mr Irwin Newman who also handed over the \$200 first prize. Second placed was Vicki Pashoska (Kelly's Gang) who earned \$50.

Comper was Trevor Douglass who congratulated the organisers and helpers for making the new-look Festival such a marked success, in particular the organising committee of Frank Coppinger, Sandy Edgar, Ray Williams and Wendy Evans. Wendy received a bouquet from the Sports and Recreation Council in recognition of her contribution.

Many thousands of dollars were raised by the groups which ran stalls and sideshows throughout the day.

THE GAMES



ABOVE: The umpires watch closely as two contestants come to grief during the balloon race.



ABOVE: Competitors met with varying degrees of success in the water game. One thing they all got in common — very wet!

Somewhere in the photos:

Kevin Bralich (P) watching the box stacking. **Peter Gates (C)** leading the Chariott race (thought he had a busted foot?). **Robert Wales (T)** ready to stack the “ring o rises” – (foam inserts from the haulpak tyres). **Terry Gibbs & Merv Welsh (T)** on “walk the plank”. **Bill Burnell (T)** with refreshment watching **Terry Gibbs (T)** “walking the plank” leading **Ziggy Slepecki’s** team well behind.

☐ TOP LEFT: Mr Irwin Newman prepares to hand over the trophy to Sigg Slepecki.
☐ LEFT: Apparently he decided it should be a crowning ceremony!
☐ TOP RIGHT: Can stacking caused hilarity as well as some cuts and bruises.
☐ BELOW: The Chariot Race — The Orange Pips streak for home.
☐ RIGHT and BELOW RIGHT: Ring Arises involved building 10ft towers — then putting a team member on top.

Walking the plank!

☐ LEFT: Boardy-walkers, Hill's Angels, show relief as they complete the course.
☐ BELOW: Half-way round the course, however they looked more concerned as Cream Machine challenged on the inside lane.
☐ BELOW LEFT: Players had to crawl through those tyres without touching the ground — and wearing a safety helmet with no harness.

MORE FESTIVAL PICTURES: NEXT PAGE

MT. NEWMAN CHRONICLE, September, 1976 Page 7

FAIR GO FESTIVAL



ABOVE: Angie Svensson (No. 7) nominated by Newman Horse and Pony Club, is flanked by other entrants after being crowned Fortescue Festival Princess 1976.



ABOVE: Kelly's Gang.

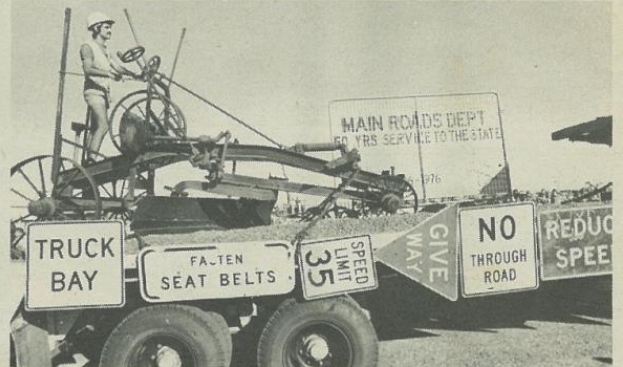
RIGHT: Boy Robot pictured with judge Mrs Sherry Squires.

BELOW: The winning float in the Festival Parade — entered by MNM Laboratory.



Port

One of the highlights of the Pilbara Show was the parade of floats held on the Saturday afternoon at South Hedland. There was a fine selection of entries in the parade. Here are just a few ...



ABOVE: Winner of the parade — the Main Roads Department entry.

BELOW: The Construction Social Club float — complete with pop group, 'Black Rock' and glamorous girls in hot pants, and glitter!



ABOVE: The scene on the Capricorn Oval as the Fancy Dress Parade circles the arena.

BELOW: Decorated horses and riders march in.

BELOW LEFT: The Lions Club merry-go-round kept the youngsters amused.

