

# PETER YOUNG

Cr Young was re-eleced at the 2008 election

He was not success ful and since then has roducts to China. He admits the fallout

rom the 2004 election

ware of probity issue

Mr Young estimates

\$100,000 defend

ered under the

quiry. He was not cov

no allegation of wrong

free legal represen-tation provided by the

DAWN CRICHLOW

ouncil's insurance," he

Despite the develop-funded campaign by

oxanne Scott, Dawn

port's Division 6 at the

2004 election. She wo

again in 2008 and 2012 but has said this will be

her last term as a coun

cillor, marking 25 years

s now in a good place.

"I think the council is more cohesive, they're thinking whole-of-city most of time.

work with and that

ed money to a "concept".

They were told the funds for in razzle dazzle.

interest of the city.

anniversary of the March 2004 campaign developer, the late city council election. It was the Brian Ray revealed who was election targeted by a group of involved. What followed were

"like-minded" business people denials, backflips and accusawho contributed to a fund to tions of a biased media. The bankroll the campaigns of a events led to an inquiry by the

bloc of so-called common Crime and Misconduct Com-

sense candidates. The Bulletin's mission. then council reporter, Alice Today Alice Gorman and Gorman, faced denial after de- Andrew Potts look back at nial as she attempted to seek what happened, who was inclarity on just who was funding volved and what impact the the aspiring politicians and CMC inquiry had on the Gold what they wanted in return. Fi- Coast City Council.

### **ALICE GORMAN**

FOR a supposedly sophistito a decision being made." cated strategy, involving nearly \$200,000 and some of the So why not tell voters sooner? Gold Coast's top developers, business people and lawyers, was surprisingly ill-prepared.

better. Then came the sarcasm. tain candidates that someone "If somebody has a big pot was bankrolling them.

of money I wish they'd tell me about it," said one would-be was hard to decipher fact from

fore the 2004 Gold Coast City best to obfuscate. Council election, common

Ray, laid it all out nice and sim- Gold Coast Council event. ple, begging the question: why

business people had contribut- Olympian Ron Clarke, who ing properly."

were Brian Ray, Soheil Abedi- hands on the mayoral chains. ered in fact Power was a key an, John Fish, Bill Roche, Gra- Then there was Dean Vegas, instigator in the Campaign for from the Common Sense Fund ham Ingles, Col Dutton, Con the Elvis impersonator. What Common Sense. Nikiforides, David Devine and he lacked in knowledge about

would support the campaign's Then, of course, there was funds. From the developers' the time said he declined the "sensible" council candidates the usual city council circus: point of view when the city offer of campaign funding. so as to help overcome the the two warring factions. On council planning boss apsions being made by council". mob, led by the city's then bution it's a tough position.

any of the campaign," Ray told Suave, polished but ever so sar- campaign was council's out- Brian Rowe was the former During our phone converme. "We simply believe if a castic, he denied having any spoken outcasts; the so-called Saint Stephens College princi-sation, two days out from the more coherent outcome can be involvement in a "ticket".

style of council so there could be some discussions about issues on a collegiate basis, prior Nothing illegal about that.

As the Bulletin's council reporter at the time I spent long the response to questioning hours on the phone, trying to get some clarity on what was First there were the outright happening. It was clear from denials from seasoned politi- the quality of the election macians who should have known terials being circulated by cer-

Rumours were rife, but it fiction. The city's elected rep-Then finally, three days be- resentatives were doing their

election had all the hallmarks there is their own business," he ing the council line. Developer, the late Brian of a classic quirky and crazy said. "I can't remember the last

solid, sensible man, was under council was functioning. My Among those approached fund in an attempt to get his ing the CMC Inquiry discov-

"We're not responsible for planning boss David Power. The primary target of the

achieved for the membership Yes, he and fellow planning Crs Dawn Crichlow, Peter campaign against Power's ar- onel Bardon as the man behind of that council, it will be in the boss, the late Sue Robbins, had Young and Eddy Sarroff. Cr Peter Young. the idea to fund a "bloc of canbeen asked to provide advice to Their "sensible" colleagues Rowe's campaign featured at didates". Yet when I rang the "The issue was really about candidates and, yes, they gave accused them of saying any-least four mailouts, including a then director of the now de-

Lobbyists, slush funds and secret candidate meetings

from a decade ago have changed local politics forever

local government he made up Power had approached most of

troublemakers.

The lead-up to the 2004 "What they have done from media attention and of not toe-

From where I was sitting, in time I spoke to Brian. He asked the media gallery, they were Mayor Gary Baildon, a me my opinion about how quite often the amusing voice some came from a trust fund A group of developers and attack from cashed-up former opinion was it's not function-voice of dissension, always ready to question the motives was spending his retirement Documents uncovered dur- of fellow councillors and the

council administration. The candidates who profited were Grant Pforr, Roxanne The CMC report found Scott, Greg Betts and Brian Rowe. Candidate Rob Molhoek the developers to contribute was invited to be involved but at

"dysfunctional, illogical deci- one side the self-righteous proaches you for a contri- despite this and in 2012 went laws. I have enough trouble

questioned by the Bulletin prior most of his funds came from

contributed to it. That a community leader would open himself to influence from unknown financial backers beggared belief.

"I have money from a trust fund but I'm unsure who's made contributions to any of

"(My manager) can't release names because he has to go back to them and ask if they He won his place in council mind, because of the privacy on to win the state seat of being a candidate, let alone worrying about funding."

pal and ran a \$40,000-plus election, Brian Ray named Litrying to establish a caucus- it, he begrudgingly told me. thing that got them some high-quality video. When funct Innovation Showcase he

# moneyball



Key players of the time included (from left) Brian Ray, councillor David Power and Coast City Council councillors (left to right) Sue Robbins, Daphine McDonald, (Unkown Man), Ted Shepherd, Bob La Castra, Ray Hackwood and David Power in July 2004.

"I cross my heart, ... I'm tell- group of professionals"

ing you the truth," Bardon said. ple who have put money up." and management specialist what they expected in return. with placards on day one."

told you that," he said.

sticking to his strategy of deny, lor and deputy mayor of Aus- Party's candidate for Mon-

Power were friends. In fact the ing them at the same time. pair continue to work together in Bardon's new company Eco with fire ... Energy Group Ltd.

aging director of the company to the polls with only half the "It's funny, my first meeting wasn't until then that I decided law, nor can their actions be on the Gold Coast."

told me he hadn't spoken to which, according to its website, story. They knew vaguely that as a councillor was, in fact, the

understood it, the face of the davidpower.brandyour- OK". But it wasn't OK. campaign. I'm surprised he's self.com, and there's no mention of the many years he spent mixed results. Grant Pforr, council had the makings of a terial personal interests. Bardon, like Cr Power, was as a Gold Coast City Council- who is now the Palmer United

In the aftermath of the election end of his political career. His admits he was naive in 2004. seat, agreed to come clean. sion's view, what happened in I knew that Bardon and labelled him a love rat for see- the perception that it was.

features "an extremely strong some money had been contrib- first meeting we had in the curuted to fund hand-picked can-rent chambers at Evandale Power is the development didates. But no one was clear which was exciting, especially "I have heard there are peo- director, a "business strategist on who paid the money and given there were protesters

Confused, I called Ray with more than 25 years' sen- The attitude of those inior management experience". volved seemed to be: "This is successful in their election bid. "Lionel Barden was, as I Yet go to Power's website, for your benefit, it will all be Ron Clarke, who ran his gifts.

crieff, and Greg Betts were suc-It made me even more sus- Then again things didn't go cessful. Betts remains as Power, who had been re-elec- in Local Government, Needpicious. And with good reason. so well for Power toward the councillor for Division 12 and ted to his northern Gold Coast ham wrote: "In the commis-

it was revealed that candidates reputation was tarnished by the "Looking back with a decfirm Hickey Lawyers, drawn when he was making a pitch for would have done things differ- ating the power bloc, to stop dinary political process unless from an account entitled the the city's mayoralty, two of his ently," he said. "Nothing we the city from being overtaken the Gold Coast is to be treated

> ergy we could have spent control the council. So on March 27, 2004, Gold working for the city was "I was warned back in Octo-

own separate race, beat incum-

journalist's dream and a resi-

ments of candidates. · Electoral bribery. Rowe and Scott were un-

· Returns about election

And finally on April 15, Cr dence, Influence and Integrity

Queensland do not apply.

# WHO GAVE MONEY

Con Nikiforides of Blue Sky Capital: \$10,000
 David Devine, Devine Ltd: \$10,000

John Fish, Fish Group: \$10,000 to the Lionel Barden Trust

Fund, \$10,000 to Grant Pforr and \$24,000 to Brian Rowe Tony Hickey as power of attorney to Great Southern GMBH: \$10,000

Graeme Ingles, Ingles Group: \$10,000

Gregory Phillips, Phillips Group: \$30,000

James Raptis, Rapcivic: \$10,000

The Ray Group: \$10,000

William Roche, Roche Group: \$10,000

Col Dutton, Stockland: \$10,000 Philip Sullivan, City Pacific: \$10,000

Sunland Group: \$10,000 to the Lionel Barden Trust Fund and another \$7700 directly to Quadrant Advertising

others were actively forming a forgiven for thinking they had

network to try and get as many fallen through a hole, not just

Villa World Ltd: \$10,000

to make myself freely available measured by a yardstick cut to give advice. I knew that a sit- down to take account of the ting councillor was trying to fact they live on 'the Coast'. "There were occasions dur was also aware that organis- ing this inquiry when an ordiations such as Gecko and a few nary observer could have been

ed to them in the media and in

candidates up as possible. "The council shouldn't be Wonderland where all the about pro-green or pro-devel- usual notions of reasonableness opment, it should be about and honesty were reversed.

get someone to run against me.

When I asked why he didn't instances of false or misleading go public before the election he statements made by candi said: "It would have seemed dates during the election pro like I was running or managing cess, and also highlights the their campaigns and clearly less than frank evidence from none of us were," he said. They were running their own to explain away words attribut campaigns on local issues."

Because some people I emails and other documents. have spoken to did not end up taking any support or access- by some councillors at the ing the services that were inquiry, and their conduct out available. You would be side the inquiry, has created an

In 2006, CMC Chairman bility for either their actions Robert Needham led an in- or their words. quiry into the activities sur-"They have shown a worryrounding the 2004 Gold Coast ing lack of insight into how

City Council election. their actions might be per He was asked to investigate ceived by the general public any alleged official misconduct

and an even more worrying mindset that the only remedial False or misleading state- action necessary in this matter

is punitive action against those

who have made complaints." He concluded by saying the Gold Coast is not a foreign land, nor is it a Wonderland. It with conflicts of interest or ma- is part of Queensland and its citizens are entitled to hold

In his final report, Indepen- same standards of conduct that apply to other parts of the state This report makes recommendations for changes that

might assist the process.

their elected officials to the

received cheques from law CMC inquiry and then in 2012, ade's hindsight I probably he had been involved in cre- mately be categorised as an or- cials and public officers are tude towards compliance ob-Lionel Barden Trust Fund. former flames went public and did was wrong, but there was by "extremist green groups". as another country, where the ligations, rather than looking He said that he decided in ordinary responsibilities of for loopholes to avoid them, "It set us back several years October 2003 to help a busi- public life and obligations to legislation will do little to What's the saying? You play because all the time and en- ness sector-backed push to the law that bind the rest of change the present public "Those who hold public of- ests are being placed above Bardon is listed as the man- Coast voters were forced to go instead wasted on the CMC. ber what was happening. It fice there are not above the public duty on a regular basis

# LIONEL BURDEN

"No, I don't think the events of 2004 will happen again. I think cenuine business peoto the website is led by a high ple are now having a say about what hap-pens on the Gold Coast, ly skilled management and technical team, to deliver inte-grated retrofit solutions to renot fly-by-nighters."

## DAVID POWER

Eco Energy Group devel-opment director. According to the Eco Energy website, David is a business strategist and management specialist with more than 25 years of senior management experience, including as managing partner of a

the many years he spent representing the public at the Gold Coast City Council.

strategic planning firm.

His own website lists his time as CEO at Nyst Lawyers and director at Power Strategic, but fails to mention

**GRANT PFORR** 

coming chair of the Coomera Watersports Club. He stood for the Palmer United Part in the seat of Moncrieff at last year's Fed-

BRIAN ROWE Brian Rowe has returned to his career in education.

TOM TATE The incumbent Mayor

VZ-COMUSTIZISTINA

at Saint Stephen's College between 1995 and 2003.

shows he has been a teacher at The Southport School since January 2006. He was the foundation headmaster at Saint Stephen's College. Surfers Paradise Chamber of Commerce president. However, Cr Tate is only

Brian's Linked In profile was listed in the Indepen-

briefly mentioned in the re port as having attended a

sort on November 13, 2003, alongside fellow chamber president Ian Solomon and Brian Rowe's Campaign manager, John Lang. He was not involved in the resulting investigation.

meeting at his Islander Re-

TED SHEPHERD

9 councillor (above) is listed in Independence, Influence and Integrity in Local

played a part in the selec-tion of candidates who were eventually chosen to receive financial support

Government as having

around," he said. "The dos-

sier given the government misinformation being put out there." was inaccurate, leading to He became city planning

during the election.

"That was a difficult election because there was a lot of innuendo floating around," he said. "The dos-

CERCOLZOIMA) VOV