



# Save Albert Park



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## Monza protest group hasn't given up either

On June 16, SAP received an e-mail message (see below) from the Committee for the Park of Monza (Comitato per il Parco). This group opposes the use of Monza Park for motor racing (including the Italian Formula One Grand Prix). First contact with the 'Comitato People' was established in July 1995, and one of their members attended the second London rally in the following September. On their way home from London several SAP members, including Diana Burleigh, visited Monza to meet the group.

The next contact was the visit of a Comitato member, Aurora Belli de Marco to Melbourne during the race period in March 1996. In September 1996 a delegation of SAP members, led by Diana Burleigh, visited Monza during the Italian Grand Prix, and received warm hospitality from the Comitato People. Since then, a

SAP member from the 1996 delegation, Marcus Lestrangle, has visited Monza, but for several years contact has lapsed. We certainly remember the Comitato people, and were very pleased indeed to receive their message and to hear that they are still active.

The Comitato People have a problem that is more serious than SAP's. The Monza Park has had a permanent race track built within it and car racing occurs throughout the year. Monza Park is much bigger and more historically significant than Albert Park Reserve. However, there are many parallels, such as the alienation of parkland, commercial exploitation, ear-splitting noise, and the constant threat to trees. The two groups can only benefit from cooperation. As a start, the Monza website is well worth visiting.

*Dear Save Albert Park,*

*We do hope that you remember us: we met at the very beginning of this long campaign when you came to visit us and Comitato Antimore di Blasono on your return trip from London. Like you we haven't given up, and perhaps a short re-introduction is fitting.*

*We are a group of citizens of Monza, near Milan, in Italy who founded a committee back in 1994. The committee is a non-profit and politically non-partisan organization created to protect and preserve the vestiges of the original Monza Park complex which includes the Park, the Royal Villa and gardens.*

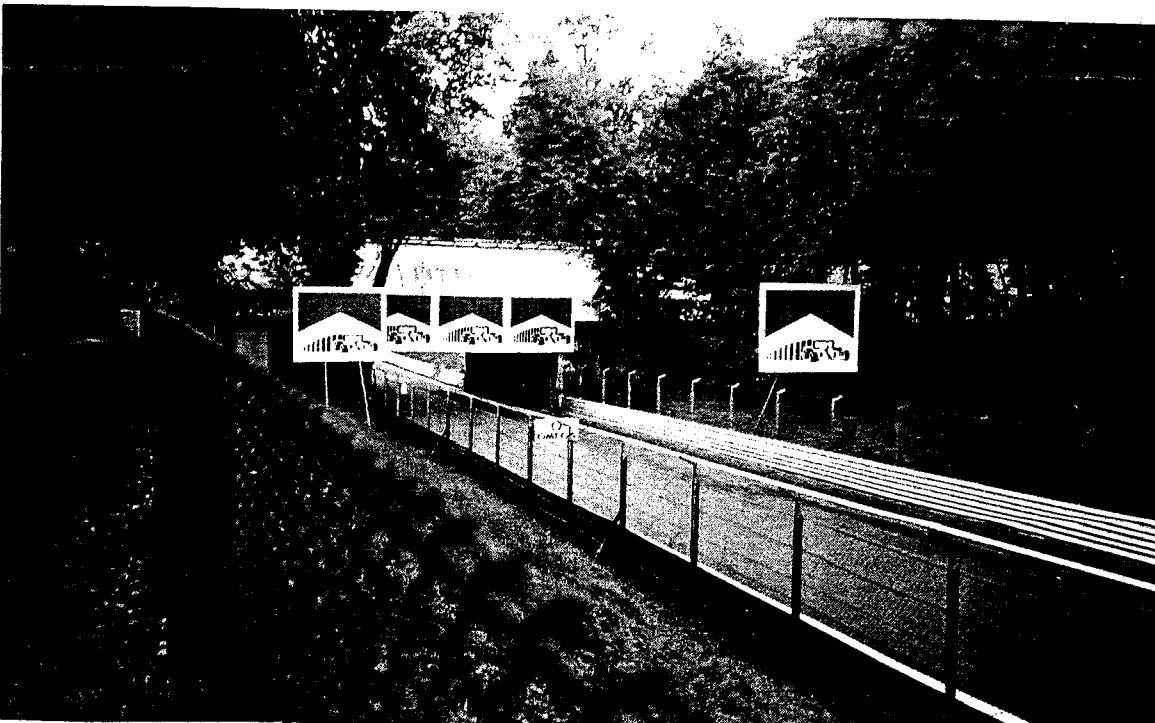
*The Comitato views this complex as an international source of wealth to be held in safekeeping for future generations and the primary goal is to preserve the features of this natural and historic treasure.*

*We would therefore like to keep in contact with your organization in order to share experiences, information and expertise. Please visit our website, [www.parcomonza.org](http://www.parcomonza.org) which has recently been implemented – it has an English version which we are completing and intend to keep updated. Hopefully you will agree to link with us so that in this global way we can help to broaden an understanding of the issues that are plaguing us.*

*We look forward to hearing from you soon as our situations, so similar in terms of the problems to be faced, can benefit from a closer contact.*

*All the best,*

*The Comitato People*



The Grand Prix track cuts through the 300 year-old Monza royal park which contains remnants of the Bosco Bello ('Beautiful Wood') dating back 500 years.

The cigarette logos around the track weren't allowed to carry the 'Marlboro' word, as they are in Albert Park Reserve. (The photo was taken just before the 1996 Italian Grand Prix.)

## **'Personnel do not die at racetracks, they die in hospitals.'**

**Fiction:** Anybody who was familiar with the Melbourne Grand Prix scene and happened to be watching the recent 'Grand Prix' episode of the 'C.S.I. Miami' series on Channel 9, Wednesday June 23, would have felt a distinct sense of déjà vu. It was a motor sport drama in which a racing team member responsible for refuelling cars during an Indycar race came to a grisly end when he was mysteriously contaminated with a deadly chemical. Although he was obviously no longer alive, motor sport protocol had to be followed, and he had to be transported from pit lane to hospital before he could be officially pronounced dead.

**Fact:** The December 2003 SAP newsletter outlined the events leading up to the death of the race marshal during the 2001 Grand Prix in Albert Park, and the subsequent finding by the Medical Practitioners Board of Victoria (MPB) on November 7 2003, that two doctors under direct contract to the Australian Grand Prix Corporation (AGPC), Dr Vissenga and Dr Temme, had engaged in unprofessional conduct. They had directed that race protocol be followed, and that death should not be pronounced at the racetrack, but at the Alfred Hospital. The matter, as it referred to Dr Vissenga, was then taken to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

**'An error of judgement':** Following the VCAT hearing on June 1, the medical board's finding was set aside. The tribunal's president, Justice Stuart Morris, found that Dr Vissenga had not engaged in unprofessional conduct, rather he had made an 'error of judgement'. He also stated that 'in my opinion, neither the public nor the peers of a medical practitioner expect perfection at all times. Human frailty visits every person, including those who are medical practitioners.'

He also noted that the 'protocol', which was at the centre of the case, first emerged at the 1985 Adelaide Grand Prix, and that Dr Vissenga, played a crucial role in its preparation and development. Justice Morris stated, in addition, that while Dr Vissenga had been reported to have said 'Personnel do not die at racetracks, they die in hospitals', the doctor said he had no recollection of using those words.

**AGPC protocol was 'deficient':** Justice Morris stated 'Clearly the protocol was deficient', and added 'that since this incident on March 4 2001, the protocol has been revised, in particular the paragraph concerning fatalities. This indicates responsible professional behaviour, consistent with acknowledging that an error was made in the content of the protocol'.

**Costs sought against medical board:** Following Justice Morris' decision, Dr Vissenga's counsel then sought costs from the MPB. This was refused.

Dr Vissenga's counsel was Mr C Blanden, who represented Parks Victoria at the coroner's enquiry into the death of the motorcyclist in Aughtie Drive in 2001, and it can be reasonably assumed that he was engaged for the tribunal hearing by the AGPC, at public expense.

**Alteration of the medical records:** But what of the fate of the Dr Temme, the AGPC's Deputy Chief Medical Officer who had also been found by the MPB to have engaged in unprofessional conduct? Dr Temme had followed the protocol one step further, and had apparently directed that medical records (possibly including the time of death) be altered. As Dr Temme was not joined with the VCAT case, it appears the MPB's finding will stand.

*(NB: In our report on this matter in our December 2003 newsletter, two lines were lost from the bottom of each column, which tended to mar the story. The last line in column 1 should have read '...Officer, had engaged in unprofessional conduct in ...', and at the end of column 2, an additional line should have read '...track, where cars were approaching at close to 300 kph.' Some might say the story was an unprofessional job. We plead a visitation of human frailty.)*

## **Tobacco advertising at the Grand Prix**

**On June 10, Save Albert Park responded to an invitation from the Australian Senate Community Affairs Legislative Committee and provided a written submission to the Committee's 'Inquiry into tobacco advertising prohibition'.**

SAP's submission focussed on the double standard exhibited by the Victorian and Federal Governments in mounting anti-smoking campaigns while assisting the tobacco industry to promote its products at the Formula One and motorcycle Grand Prix events.

In particular, the Victorian Government gave its imprimatur to the Formula One event by providing a major public park as the venue and, for its part, the Federal Government provided exemptions from the Tobacco Advertising Prohibition Act and provided flyover displays by military aircraft to help promote the event. The submission also pointed out that the Formula One event was heavily promoted to young people as an exciting and glamorous experience and that cigarette smoking appeared to be an accepted, government-approved part of this scene.

**A public hearing will follow the Senate Committee's consideration of submissions. Documents relating to the enquiry are on the**

**Internet at:** [http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/clac/ctte/tobac\\_adv\\_proh/index.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/clac/ctte/tobac_adv_proh/index.htm)