

Olympians praise new pool

BY GEMMA SEYMOUR

20 Apr. 2011 12:00 AM

SOME old friends met to marvel at a new swimming pool in Penrith on Thursday.

Nepean Aquatic Centre in Lambridge Place opened recently and out to have a look were none other than swimming royalty Eva Bory and Forbes and Ursula Carlile.

Bory, a former Olympian who now lives in Phoenix, Arizona, established a swimming complex in Emu Plains in 1973, which she still owns.

It's now managed by Karen and Alan Bentley, who own Nepean Swim and Fitness and opened the new Penrith aquatic centre.

Mr Bentley said that every so often the Carliles, former Olympic coaches, visited them at Emu Plains.

There has been a long association between Bory and the Carliles because she was their first instructor at the indoor swimming school they established at the back of their house in Ryde in the 1960s.

"For its purpose it's the best pool we've seen," Mr Carlile said last Thursday at the aquatic centre. "You could take a very big squad in here."

Mr Carlile, who was also selected as Australia's first modern pentathlete at the Helsinki Olympics, said he was astonished by the design of the centre, created by Mr Bentley.

"A guy that's passionate about swimming — it speaks for itself," Mr Carlile said.

Bory said that in swimming circles it was said the centre was the latest and the best.

Mrs Carlile, who still coaches every day at Ryde, said swimming coaching gave children something at which they could succeed.

Bory, born in Hungary, said coming to Australia felt like she was coming home.

She said she started to come to Penrith in the 1960s and always had a vision this "sleepy" place was going to grow — and it has.

Ironically, Bory taught herself to swim as a child: "I just saw this lake and I swam across. I must have been born for it. I first started teaching in Bondi baths and I just thought everybody went in and swam."

A combination of learn-to-swim and beyond, the centre also offers water aerobics with seniors and a pregnancy class. They are also about to offer boxing in the fitness room.

Mr Bentley, who's competed in Penrith's Bridge 2 Bridge event annually since he was age 12, said Penrith needed the aquatic centre — there were facilities at Springwood, Windsor and St Marys but not between.



Water babies: Lucas Bentley, 7, and Kayla Bentley, 10, whose father Alan has just opened the new swimming centre in Penrith. Picture: Kieren Tilly