

# SurfLIFE

ISSUE 33 – December 2016



SURF LIFE SAVING  
**NEW SOUTH WALES**





Jenni Darwin and Graeme Carroll  
with SLSA President Graham Ford.

## National Recognition For Central Coast Lifesavers

Two Central Coast surf lifesavers got a taste of Canberra earlier this month when they were presented with the National Rescue of the Month award for September at a special ceremony in the nation's capital.

Jenni Darwin and Graeme Carroll (both members of Umina SLSC) travelled to Parliament House where they were honoured for their achievements by the Parliamentary Friends of Surf Life Saving alongside lifesavers from Queensland and Victoria.

"It was a really inspiring ceremony and it was a great honour to be recognised along with our counterparts from the other states," said Graeme Carroll.

Carroll who has been a lifesaver since 1973 and is a dual member of both Umina and Freshwater surf clubs said the presentation made it clear just how important the skills he's learned over four decades really are to the community.

"I think that as lifesavers it's important that we realise that we never know when our training may be needed. All of the rescues honoured in Canberra occurred outside patrol hours so you need to be ready 24/7," he said.

Graeme and Jenni's journey to Parliament House began on the afternoon of Friday 2 September at 2:30pm, when Jenni Darwin was running along the foreshore at Ettalong when

a couple ran out of a house carrying a baby in their arms panicking and yelling for someone who knew CPR.

Jenni, who is herself a mother of five, ran to assist and started performing CPR. "I grabbed the baby and turned her onto her tummy to clear her airways because it looked

like she was choking on something," Jenni Darwin said at the time.

Local swim coach and fellow surf lifesaver Graeme Carroll, who was walking his dogs nearby, immediately went to assist.

"Graeme came over and gave her a couple of breaths (mouth to mouth) but nothing changed then he gave her a couple more and he said he could feel her breathing."

Jenni then carried the baby into the house and kept her in the recovery position while Graeme called Triple Zero and described the baby's condition to the paramedics.

Graeme helped to keep the parents and their older daughter calm while Jenni continued to monitor the child's condition until paramedics arrived. The baby was transported to Gosford Hospital and has since made a full recovery.

**As lifesavers it's important that we realise that we never know when our training may be needed.**

## SLSNSW CEO Leaves Water Safety Legacy

During the 16-year tenure of recently retired CEO Phil Vanny AM, Surf Life Saving in NSW has undergone huge growth and expansion of safety services to the public.

Mr Vanny has been involved in water safety for 40 years and some of his many achievements include;

- Holding various senior leadership roles in the aquatic safety industry including being a member of the NSW Water Safety Taskforce since its inception.
- Vastly improving the financial position of SLSNSW to support clubs and members and ensure the future of the Surf Life Saving movement in NSW. Since 2007/08, SLSNSW has distributed \$51,551 in fundraising distributions to every club and branch, which is collectively over \$7.2 million.
- Increasing financial distributions to clubs and branches by 2321%.
- Improved engagement with stakeholders, in particular increased government support for the work of our frontline volunteers. More than \$22M in direct grant funding for facilities improvements have been secured for NSW surf clubs since 2004.
- Spearheaded the establishment of the Australian Lifesaving Academy in 2004 which now enjoys full RTO status and to date has delivered first aid training awards to more than 750,000 lifesavers and members of the public in NSW.
- Established and supported the growth of the Surf Emergency Response System which today is relied on by the state's emergency services to activate lifesaving assets to respond to coastal emergencies, saving hundreds of lives every year.
- Phil was influential in formulating or amending a number of government policies and changes to legislation. He secured affordable public liability insurance for clubs and changes to the liquor act and fought tirelessly for the rights of surf clubs residing on crown land to enjoy security of tenure and standardised lease arrangements.



- During his tenure, total membership of the organisation grew by 61.7%.

Surf Life Saving NSW would like to acknowledge the leadership and many milestones that Phil achieved over his time in the movement and wishes him all the best in retirement.

### Adam Weir - Acting CEO

Following the retirement of long-serving CEO Phil Vanny AM in October, Operations Manager Adam Weir has been appointed Acting CEO.

Adam has had a life-long involvement in Surf Life Saving, starting out as a Nipper in the U8s at Cronulla SLSC. During his competitive career Adam won multiple medals at all levels, captained the Australian team and was a recipient of the Australian Sports Medal in 2000.

Since joining SLSNSW in 2013, Adam has overseen the very successful Project Blueprint coastal safety initiative. Prior to this he worked for Surf Life Saving Australia in multiple roles.

Adam holds a Bachelor of Science (Marine Science) and Master of Applied Science (Coastal Management), and chairs the ILS Rescue Operations Committee.

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SLSNSW Acting CEO Adam Weir presents Project Blueprint to Parliamentary Secretary for Emergency Services, Daryl Maguire MP.

## Landmark Coastal Safety Project Presented to Government

**Project Blueprint, the largest study of beach hazards, rock platforms and risks to the beach-going public ever undertaken in NSW has officially concluded with the presentation of the final reports to the NSW Government in November.**

The ambitious four-year long Project Blueprint was made possible with funding from the NSW Government's Black Spots Water Safety Fund and was conducted by Australian CoastSafe, the coastal risk and assessment division of Surf Life Saving NSW.

Since the project began in 2012, the CoastSafe team has assessed every beach, headland and rock platform in the state, travelling to 29 coastal LGAs and covering more than 1700 kilometres of coastline including 811 beaches and 322 rock platforms and headlands.

A comprehensive report for each LGA was compiled from the data which was presented to Councils and local land managers to assist them with the future development of beach safety and drowning prevention strategies.

"From the beginning it was clear that Project Blueprint would be an enormous investment in time and resources

but it was equally something that we believe very strongly in as an organisation," said Surf Life Saving NSW Acting CEO Adam Weir.

"We are very grateful for the support we have had from the NSW Government and are proud to have played our part in producing this enormously important body of work."

In each LGA, residents were encouraged to attend community workshops and provide their feedback regarding what they considered to be risks in their local coastal and beach environment.

"An integral part of Project Blueprint has been developing relationships with key stakeholders. This included forming strong ties with coastal Councils, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and local community groups and I am sure that these relationships will mean we can save more lives in the future," said Mr Weir.

Parliamentary Secretary for Emergency Services Daryl Maguire MP said Project Blueprint is a landmark achievement.

**We are very grateful for the support we have had from the NSW Government and are proud to have played our part in producing this enormously important body of work.**

"The NSW Government is proud to have funded Project Blueprint under the Water Safety Black Spots Fund, and is grateful to Surf Life Saving NSW for their hard work and dedication to improving water safety in NSW. By identifying hazards and risks in coastal areas right across the state, Project Blueprint has laid the foundations for Councils and other land

managers to build a safer NSW."

Following a season where a record-high 53 people drowned in NSW coastal waters, the report's release is a timely reminder of the dangers along our coastline and will play a key role in helping authorities advance water safety and drowning prevention strategies in the future.



## **Smooth Road to the Rocks**

South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club is no stranger to hosting large scale surf events, and with two major competitions to be staged at the picturesque beach in 2017, that trend is set to continue.

In February the club will host the Stramit Country Championships for the second straight season.

These annual Championships are eagerly awaited by all competitors who live outside the Newcastle – Illawarra corridor with the athletes relishing the chance for high quality competition.

Over 2000 athletes, spectators, and officials made the journey last year and by doing so also gave the local economy a boost outside the peak holiday season.

Following on from the successful Country Championships, it was recently confirmed that South West Rocks would also host the 2017 NSW Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB) Championships.

Popularly known as rubber ducks, IRB racing is a fast-paced competition where lifesavers compete in events designed to simulate real life rescue situations involving individual “patients” and mass rescues.

All events are based on honing the skills of both IRB driver and crewperson and is always popular with competitors and spectators alike.

The NSW IRB Championships will be held next July following the four round Premiership series that takes place between April and June. Host venues for the Premiership are at Caves Beach (Hunter), Mollymook (South Coast), Ocean Beach (Central Coast), and Cape Hawke (Lower North Coast).

Surf Life Saving NSW Mid North Coast President and South West Rocks club member Rod McDonagh says that being selected as hosts is a boon for the region.

“This is a wonderful opportunity for not just South West Rocks but the entire Mid North Coast lifesaving community, and I’m delighted that we will be hosting two high profile surf carnivals in the new year.

**We're all looking forward to high quality competiton at both the Country Championships and NSW IRB titles in 2017.**



“It is a chance not only for our competitors all across the branch to enjoy some high quality competition in their own backyard, but for us to highlight to visitors all that our region has to offer,” Mr McDonagh said.

NSW Surf Sports Coordinator Luke Stigter said South West Rock’s impressive track record made for a compelling bid.

“South West Rocks has consistently delivered very impressive sport events. They have a fantastic beach which has the added bonus of offering good geographical protection which means competition can be relocated to nearby

contingency locations in the event of unfavourable conditions.

“I know we’re all looking forward to high quality competiton at both the Country Championships and NSW IRB titles in 2017, and that the club and its volunteers will deliver a fantastic carnival,” Mr Stigter said.

The 2017 Stramit Country Championships will be held at South West Rocks on February 4 and 5, with the NSW IRB Championships taking place at the same venue on July 1 and 2.

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SURF LIFE SAVING  
NEW SOUTH WALES



## Nauru Lifeguards Making Their Mark

It's a long way from Nauru to Bondi Beach; over 4000 kilometres as the crow flies, but early in December a team of lifeguards from the tiny island nation were in NSW perfecting their skills in an historic 10-day visit.

The touring group of three men and one woman are all professional lifeguards from the Nauru Lifeguard Service and are relishing the chance to experience life in a very different environment.

While in the country, the lifeguards participated in first aid courses, worked on their beach management skills, completed jet ski training at Palm Beach under the tutelage of Australian lifeguards, and patrolled at North Steyne SLSC.

The visiting lifeguards also experienced a totally different world when they joined volunteer surf lifesavers at Bondi Beach for a day's patrol.

In 2015 fellow countryman Maska Hubert spent a day on patrol at the iconic beach, which was a surreal experience for the young man with beach attendance on that January day topping 20,000 – almost double his country's population.

Following in his footsteps will be a challenge, but one that the group are very much looking forward to.

"Our patrol at North Steyne was really good. They were all very kind and open even though we found the water very cold much more than we were used to!" said Devlon Capelle a Nauruan lifeguard since the inception of the service in 2012.

It's been a steep learning curve for the visiting lifeguards but with an enthusiasm and desire to meet every challenge thrown at them they have enjoyed their time in Australia.

"It's been a really good trip and a great chance for us to learn new things in a different environment. I enjoyed the jet ski training a lot," said Devlon Capelle.

"I've been a lifeguard for four years and during that time have probably done 50 rescues. It's good to see the differences in patrol and learn new things. I have noticed that patrols are very different. The radios and IRBs are a big change here. There is just so much more equipment and

**It's been a really good trip and a great chance for us to learn new things in a different environment.**

Nauru Lifeguards perfecting their skills at Bondi Beach earlier this month.  
Photo: Charles Cotton

bigger patrols with more team members," he said.

Surf Life Saving NSW Academy Support Officer Steve Allan oversaw the visit and said a key highlight of the program was the rapid development in the skills of the touring lifeguards.

"I think they have gained confidence over the course of the program and they've learned so much that they can take back to the other lifeguards at home," said Steve Allan.

Mr Allan, who was involved in setting up the Nauru Lifeguard Service in 2012, said the organisation has achieved rapid growth since its inception and that it enjoys a stellar reputation at home.

"There's now 23 fulltime lifeguards who are employed by the government and their skills are improving all the time. This visit was an important milestone and is strengthening the relationship between NSW and Nauru.

"Patrolling Bondi Beach is a point of honour for these lifeguards and it's something I know they look forward to because it is world famous. Hopefully these visits can continue into the future because it is important we share our knowledge and experience, and eventually we can look at a reciprocal arrangement," he said.



# LIFESAVERS BEACH TO BUSH

*sign off on*



Andy Cross with some of the kids from Mudgee  
Public School. Photo: Ange Thorpe

## Australia's most popular primary school surf education program has closed the books on another successful season with 6,000 country students taking part in a lesson on surf safety from our volunteer lifesavers.

The 2016 program saw seven teams of lifesavers travel to areas as diverse as Casino, Albury, and Mudgee in late November, visiting 41 schools and delivering 62 presentations along the way.

Educating all children about beach safety is something that Surf Life Saving NSW believes passionately about and the chance to travel to the country and make sure that all youngsters, regardless of where they live, have the opportunity to engage with this important topic is vital.

"The Beach to Bush program was outstanding, and I can't tell you how exciting it was to be able to pop on my red and yellow uniform every day and represent all our lifesavers," said Nixy Krite (South Maroubra SLSC) who toured the Albury region.

"What really struck me was that a majority of the children hadn't been to the ocean or seen a bluebottle, and that reaffirmed to me just how important these school visits are," she said.

### It's so important for kids to learn these messages about sun, surf, and beach safety.

During the week-long visit, volunteer presenters spoke about a range of topics including the role of lifesavers and lifeguards, what the signs at the beach mean, what type of marine life live at the beach, and what to do if caught in a rip current.

Rosie Taliano (North Bondi SLSC) who was the 2015 Surf Lifesaver of the Year, and a first time presenter of Beach to Bush felt the school students really engaged with the visits.

"The main reason I got involved with Beach to Bush was because it combined two of my passions in primary school teaching and Surf Life Saving and I really wanted the opportunity to give back to the community while sharing my lifesaving experiences and delivering vital safety messages.

"At all the schools we visited the kids were very engaged and certainly not afraid to jump in and ask questions. Popular topics this year were sharks and drones," Rosie said. "I think it's so important for kids to learn these messages about sun, surf, and beach safety and it was a really fun week to be able to go out and share it with children who haven't grown up near a coastal environment."

The Beach To Bush Program, supported by ClubsNSW and the Cancer Institute NSW, is the largest and most innovative surf safety education program in Australia, having reached more than 270,000 primary school students since it began in 1994.



## 2016 Beach To Bush Tour Locations & Presenters

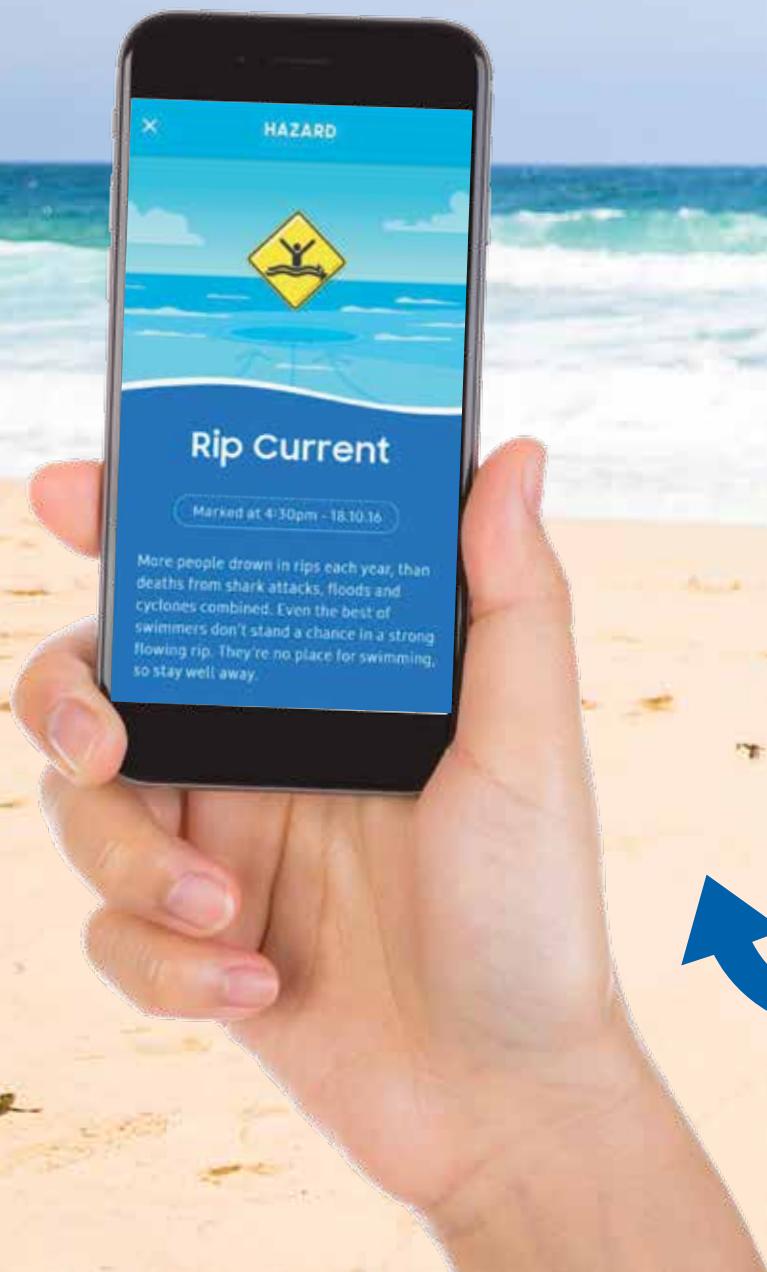
Albury Region	Moree Region	Mudgee Region	
<b>Adrienne Lowe</b> Dee Why SLSC <b>Rosie Taliano</b> North Bondi SLSC <b>Nixy Krite</b> South Maroubra SLSC	<b>Trevor Acason</b> Woolgoolga SLSC <b>Brianna Coyte</b> Toowoon Bay SLSC <b>Grace Foster</b> Sawtell SLSC	<b>Andy Cross</b> North Narrabeen SLSC <b>Angie Thorpe</b> North Narrabeen SLSC <b>Danielle Edwards</b> North Steyne SLSC	
Canberra Region	Casino Region	Gloucester Region	Forbes Region
<b>Trina Jensen</b> Kiama Downs SLSC <b>Shannon Fox</b> Wollongong SLSC <b>Paul Hotton</b> North Bondi SLSC	<b>Sue Neill</b> North Coast Director of Education <b>Susan McCaughrain</b> Brunswick SLSC	<b>Kim Rayner</b> Mid North Coast Director of Education <b>Michael Bonnici</b> Wanda SLSC	<b>Greg Punch</b> Dee Why SLSC <b>Cara Van Wyk</b> Coalcliff SLSC <b>Christopher Doran</b> Helensburgh-Stanwell Park SLSC

# APPS

at forefront of

## Beach Safety Revolution

Planning a day at the beach has never been easier and an explosion of apps in recent months means that beachgoers are able to access up-to-the minute weather forecasts, information about surf conditions or find their nearest patrolled beach. With summer here, we look at the season's newest technology which could help prevent people getting into difficulty at the beach and make our lifesavers' job that little bit easier.



### Samsung Pocket Patrol App

Samsung and Surf Life Saving have been trialling an app called "Pocket Patrol," which allows users to see beach hazards overlaid on the camera view of their smartphone. The app uses the GPS locator within a smartphone to plot hazards identified by experienced lifesavers and lifeguards.

The app has been trialled at two beaches on the Sunshine Coast (Coolum and Alexandra Headland). Swimmers download the Pocket Patrol app and scan the beach and an "augmented reality" view overlays dangers in the water, onto their phone screen.



## BOM Weather App

You can check the weather from Australia's official weather source, the Bureau of Meteorology. BOM Weather gives you access to:

### Current conditions

- Temperature
- What it actually feels like outside
- Wind, humidity and rainfall

### Forecasts

- For the next 24hrs (in 3-hourly blocks)
- Temperature, humidity, wind, chance of rain
- Details for the week ahead

### Radar

- The very popular rain radar
- Pause the radar loop at any time
- Zoom in and out easily

### Warnings

- Summaries listed by State
- Detailed warnings
- Live updates



## Marine Rescue NSW App

Surf Life Saving NSW and Marine Rescue NSW enjoy a strong relationship which has proved vital when coastal search and rescue incidents unfold.

As many lifesavers have a natural affinity with the ocean that stretches beyond their time spent on the beach, this mobile app available on smart phones is well worth downloading for all recreational boat users.

### The Marine Rescue App gives you access to;

- Local tide, weather and sea conditions
- Your latitude/longitude position coordinates
- Boat ramp locations and popular fishing spots
- A safety checklist for before you head out
- Emergency call procedures

Additionally recreational boat users can log on with Marine Rescue NSW with their expected departure and arrival times in a process that only takes a few minutes.



## Patrol Ops App

The Patrol Ops app is an innovative tool exclusive to Surf Life Saving. It enables active patrol members to sign on and off with their local Surfcom Management Centre, to identify hazards on the beach, to log the location of all patrol equipment and to use their smartphone's camera to visually record conditions.

Lifeguards and volunteers can use the built-in GPS tracker to record their precise location while they are on patrol on jetski, board, IRB, on foot or in a vehicle. This information is relayed instantly to Surfcom where it is used by operators and Duty Officers to manage beach services.

The information is fed directly into Beachsafe so that members of the public can view precisely where the safe patrolled area of a beach is, what the conditions are like and if the beach is open or closed for the day. This app is being used more frequently by patrol teams and lifesavers and will soon be available via the App store.



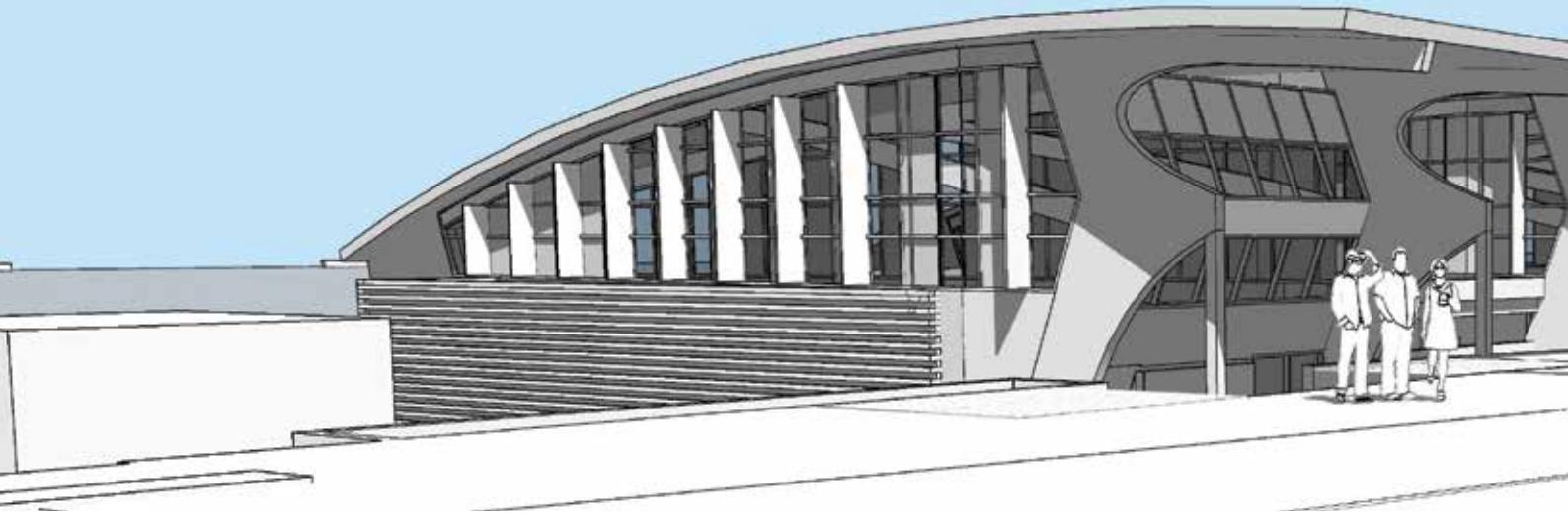
## Beachsafe App

In 2016 the Surf Life Saving BeachSafe Website was updated with a refreshed, streamlined look that has allowed users to access information much more quickly and efficiently.

The Surf Life Saving initiative includes the location, facilities, weather, conditions and lifesaving services for all Australian beaches to help you find the right beach.

BeachSafe also provides expert advice about flags and signs, waves, rip currents, marine creatures, surf skills and more.

All this information can also be found on the BeachSafe App which can be downloaded on your smartphone via [beachsafe.org.au](http://beachsafe.org.au)



# CLUB BUILDS

## *a community vision*

It's not a mirage but instead a reflection of something much more substantial with one Hunter Surf Life Saving Club hoping that the building slowly emerging out of the sand of Bar Beach will put them on the path to an even brighter future.

When the time comes for the next chapter of the history of Cooks Hill Surf Club to be committed to print, 2016 could very well come to be regarded as a seminal year in the annals of the proud club.

Not only did the club record its best finish at the NSW Age Championships in some time, finishing in third place in the overall pointscore, but construction started on a project that will bring the club's facilities into the 21st century.

With the existing clubhouse dating back almost eight decades and designed for a capacity of just 200 male members (the club now boasts more than 1500 members) the need for a new modern facility has been desperately apparent.

The project has been a long-term vision for Cooks Hill with the work divided into

two stages. Stage One is a new three-storey facility located between the old clubhouse and the beach inspector's tower and will have female change rooms, storage and training rooms on the beach level, further storage and training facilities on the mid-level and a multi-purpose club room on the upper level.

**The new Cooks Hill clubhouse will be a community hub which will have an impact that goes far beyond the beach**

Stage Two of the project includes demolition of the old clubhouse and incorporates a new building with change rooms, patrol and first aid rooms and craft storage on the beach level, a gym and storage on the mid-level and a function room on the upper level.

So far the members have worked hard to generate \$1 million to fund Stage One of the project with the club actively looking for support through grants and other avenues to finance the rest of the ambitious revamp.

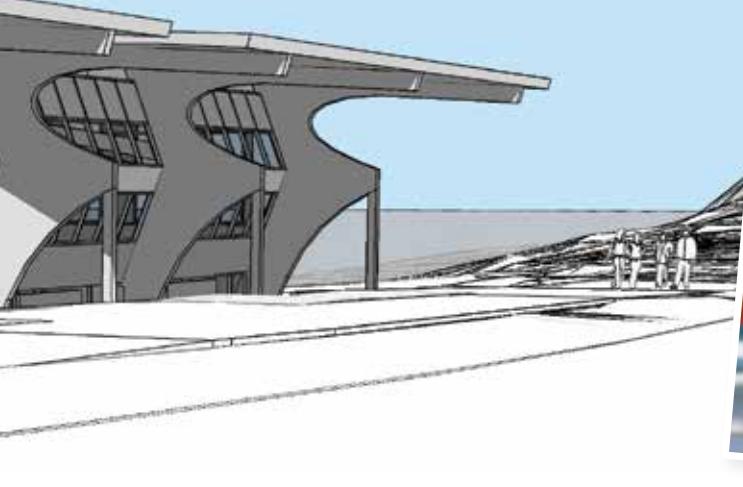
When it is completed the new Cooks Hill clubhouse will be a community hub which will have an impact that goes far

beyond the beach – at least that is the aim of the club's president Richard Hermens and his executive team.

Hermens, who is in his third year as president said one of

his key aims when taking on the role was to unite everyone behind a common vision so that the club could reinvent itself as it moves into its second century of existence.

"Cooks Hill had over 100 years of history when I took on the role and former president Andrew Howard and his



executive team had put in place many of the processes that we are now reaping the benefits from," Mr Hermens said.

"A key part of that was putting people in place as a team who could buy into the vision of what we trying to achieve. When we sat down and had an honest look we felt that the sporting side of our lifesaving activities was one area where we could improve."

That goal was certainly achieved earlier this year with one of the club's best ever performances at the 2016 NSW Age Surf Life Saving Championships when the team finished third behind the powerhouse clubs of Manly and Wanda.

Cooks Hill Director of Surf Sports and Team Manager for the State Championships Monique Williams said that that this result far exceeded their expectations and was a just reward for everyone involved in the club.

"Back in 2012 a club decision was made to develop a strategy to help us become a leading club within the Hunter Branch of Surf Life Saving," Monique Williams said.

"A large part of this was focusing on our juniors and building up our numbers to ensure that we would continue to have a solid pathway right through to seniors and masters.

"This focus has also helped us in other ways too – such as producing more lifesavers and cultivating a great club spirit. We used to have a team of around 30 Nippers

competing at State Champs, now we've grown to 40-60 and at local events it's closer to 100."

The president believes that the whole executive of the club and in turn the members are buying into the vision of improvement and it is this shift in attitude that has fostered an environment where things get done.

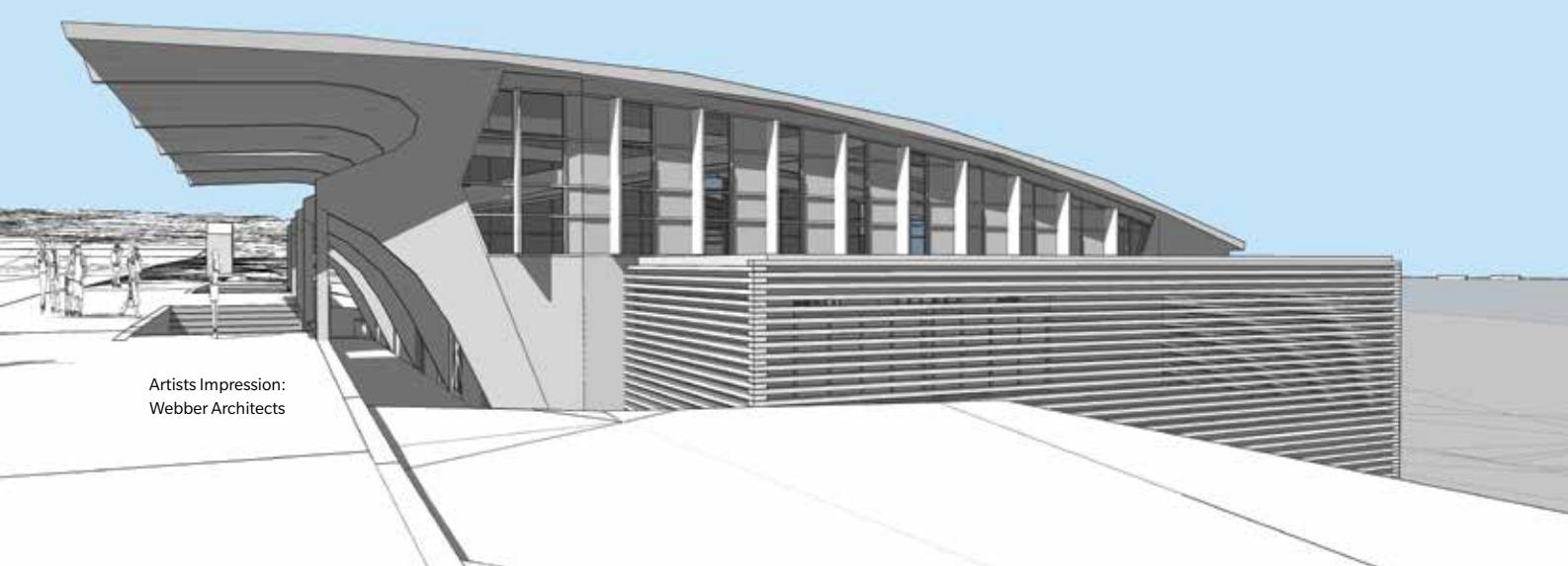
Like many surf lifesavers, Richard Hermens' path to lifesaving was through his children and his involvement unlocked a passion for surf and community.

"I was in Moruya previously where I served as President. My children went through the Nippers program and when my daughter did her Bronze (she was the only girl in her squad) she asked me if I wanted to do it too so I ended up getting qualified at the same time, which was special. I was also involved at a Branch level on the Far South Coast and when I moved to Newcastle I knew that I wanted to stay involved with the movement.

"I think as surf lifesavers we need to look beyond the beach to reach out and become a part of our community. This is a responsibility I take very seriously."

Although the full revamp of the clubhouse is not expected to be complete for a few more years yet, the club won't let it impact their operations.

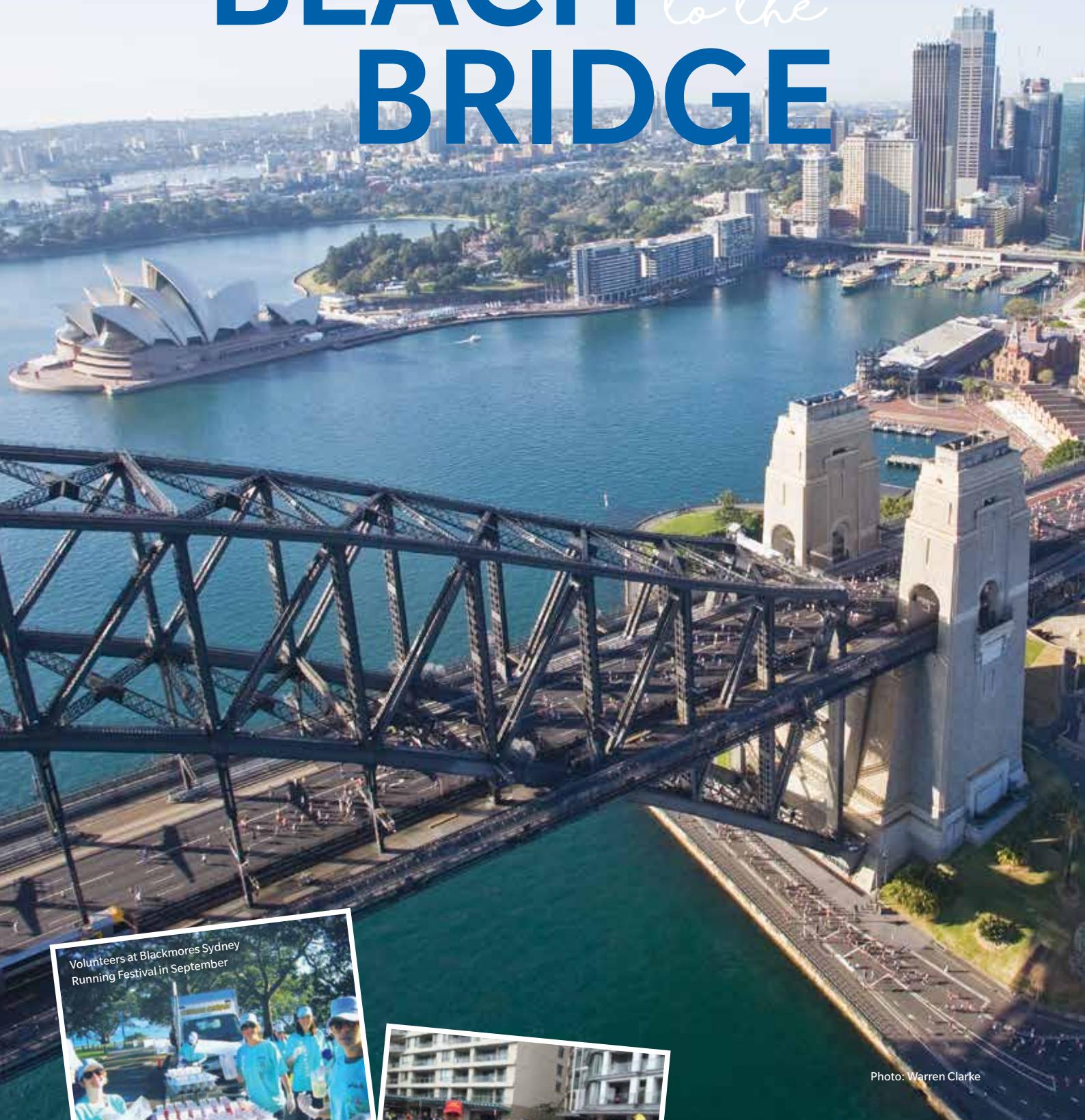
What is clear is that Cooks Hill SLSC is in the midst of creating a new vision to ensure the club's survival into the future.



Artists Impression:  
Webber Architects

from the

# BEACH to the BRIDGE



Volunteers at Blackmores Sydney  
Running Festival in September



Photo: Warren Clarke

**While the efforts of our volunteers on the beach are well documented, there is a growing need for volunteers away from the beach and we want people from all walks of life.**

Volunteers form the backbone of our movement – SLSNSW remains one of Australia's largest volunteer organisations and, as we know, without the wonderful efforts of all of our patrolling lifesavers, beaches across Australia would be a lot less safe each summer.

In recent years, in recognition of the professionalism of our members and the respect that surf lifesavers have within the wider community, we have been approached by a number of organisations to help out at a range of community events. This includes being the charity of the month at Woolworths HQ, featuring at the Sydney Royal Easter Show, putting on demonstrations for visiting members of the British Royal Family, collecting donations at the inaugural Bondi Beach Fest in 2015, and being involved in the celebration of the 40th birthday of the Sydney Opera House.

Additionally there have been a number of Surf Life Saving opportunities such as Race Day at Royal Randwick, meeting the Parliamentary Friends of Surf Life Saving and Start of Summer fund raising opportunities that our growing pool of volunteers have participated in.

All of these events have raised the profile of Surf Life Saving and promoted the iconic red and yellow in the best possible way, while also helping secure some much needed funds. Recruiting additional volunteers frees up our members to do what they do best – save lives.

One recent event that SLSNSW recruited volunteers for was the Blackmores Sydney Running Festival in September, where a group made up of university students, local volunteer crews and members of the public represented Surf Life Saving NSW.

The group of 20 from around Sydney were assigned the responsibility of being course marshals where they were treated to a prime position on the Harbour Bridge as they encouraged runners and participants as well as acted as event safety for the day.

## We're always looking for as many people who would like to be involved in assisting SLSNSW with our fundraising efforts



Surf Life Saving NSW Partnerships Coordinator Chris O'Rorke believes that the invitations to these events are a reflection of the esteem that the public has for Surf Life Saving.

"The volunteers who assisted at Blackmores Running Festival were mostly local university students and did an absolutely fantastic job and we thank them very much for their time. It's a great way for those who may not be able to commit to becoming a local surf club member to still be involved with such an iconic Australian movement."

"These days most people have limited time and we understand that it is a sacrifice for members of the public to contribute. The reason why our volunteers, both on and off the beach are so highly valued is not only because of their dedication, professionalism and training but also because of their friendliness and willingness to have a go. It's an important quality and one that comes from the very core of our movement," Mr O'Rorke said.

He also noted that there are a number of events planned throughout the 2016/17 season and that volunteers are always welcome.

"Principally the events are located in the Sydney metropolitan area and we're always looking for people who would like to be involved in assisting SLSNSW with our fundraising efforts. The events are diverse in nature and some of the benefits include free entry to some great events and experiences that can help with job skills for employment."

## Get Involved!

To register your interest for future events please get in touch with our friendly partnerships team



## Contact us today!

Email: [fundraising@surflifesaving.com.au](mailto:fundraising@surflifesaving.com.au)  
Phone: (02) 9471 8000



## Mental Health Awareness on Lifeguard Agenda

It's no secret that being on the front line of emergency care can be a traumatic experience for lifeguards and that being able to identify some of the signs and symptoms of someone experiencing mental distress is vital in administering initial treatment.

In October a group of Lifeguards from Northern NSW participated in a unique workshop designed to give them a better understanding of mental health first aid training. Over 15 Lifeguards from Tweed, Ballina, Byron Bay, the Clarence, and Port Macquarie signed up for the 2-day course, conducted through Northern NSW Health.



The workshop was led by registered nurse Steve Carrigg who has almost three decades of experience working in the mental health sector.

Importantly, a key focus of the workshop will not just be on the mental health of those they might come into contact with in an emergency situation but how to identify the signs that a colleague might be struggling.

"I really believe that the importance of mental health is a growing concern for not only Lifeguards but also the wider community," said Ballina Lifeguard Supervisor Ruben Roxburgh.

I really believe that the importance of mental health is a growing concern for not only Lifeguards but also the wider community

Lifeguards are at the forefront of dealing with people and to have these skills and the ability to recognise these signs is an important part of creating a stronger lifeguard service. It is crucial that we are able to understand the differences within the community and be adaptable which is what this course aims to teach us," Mr Roxburgh said.

# Digital Radio Roll Out Continues

Surf Life Saving's commitment to improving the reliability of our coastal radio network continues to gain momentum with the Mid North Coast branch the latest to enjoy the benefits of this new technology.

Port Macquarie's Ryan Rosenbaum was a Mid North Coast Duty Officer in the 2015/16 season and said the digital radio technology proved remarkably successful for the area.

"It really represented collaboration between the eight clubs throughout our branch as well as lifeguards. We found that we had increased radio coverage across the region with no black spots compared to what we experienced previously," said Mr Rosenbaum.

The successful implementation of the technology came after a review was commissioned into the entire coastal radio network in the 2012/13 season with a key aim to improve the reliability and functionality of the service for clubs and support operations.

The report recommended a list of 24 items that could be actioned to improve the system with chief among them upgrading to digital mobile radio (DMR).

**Our efforts have been recognised with the Surfcom radio network being used by not only our assets but by others such as council lifeguards**

Five reports were commissioned to identify potential problems and sites to implement the digital receivers.

Surf Life Saving NSW Operations Manager Andy Kent said that implementing the recommendations has been a gradual, but successful process.

"Upgrading the radio network has been a challenging and expensive process. One action that we have had to do was upgrade all the club radios to ensure that they can transmit a digital signal," said Andy Kent.

"Fortunately we have had support from grants that have really helped us out. Other challenges include where the current receivers are located and whether that is the best possible position to maximise their radio coverage.

"Our efforts have been recognised with the Surfcom radio network being used by not only our assets but by others such as council lifeguards."

The next stage of the process is to commission reports into the Central Coast and Far North Coast Branches.

"We have to be realistic and we're aware that this is a long-term process that is not going to be achieved overnight. We're talking about several years down the track but in the long-term what we will establish will be a coastal radio network that is reliable, functional, and sustainable," said Mr Kent.

# Achievements Honoured as New Life Members Inducted

Surf Life Saving NSW congratulates the nine members who have been elevated to NSW Life Membership.

The announcement was made at November's Annual General Meeting and is a richly deserved honour for these long serving lifesavers.

Between them these members have amassed over 300 years of experience patrolling on NSW beaches and have contributed across all aspects of the movement including lifesaving, surf sports, education, and officiating. They have been honoured at a club and branch level, and in some cases have achieved awards in their local community in recognition of their dedication and commitment to Surf Life Saving.

**Peter Agnew**  
North Bondi SLSC

**Terry Aldridge**  
Black Head SLSC

**Gary Andrew**  
Copacabana SLSC

**John DeCean**  
Bondi Surf Bathers LSC/Wanda SLSC

**Peter Kirkwood**  
Maroubra SLSC

**Rhonda Lycett**  
Mona Vale SLSC

**Rod McDonagh**  
South West Rocks SLSC

**Alistair Peebles**  
Avoca Beach SLSC/Woolgoolga SLSC

**Craig Susans**  
Queenscliff SLSC



# MERRY CHRISTMAS

SWIM BETWEEN THE  
RED AND YELLOW FLAGS



**Surf Life Saving NSW wishes to thank the following sponsors and supporters for helping our volunteers save lives on the beaches each year.**

**Your local club**  
**ClubsNSW**



## Our Mission

To save lives, create great Australians and build better communities.

## Summary

Surf Life Saving NSW is the state's major water safety and rescue organisation, and with over 74,000 members, is one of the largest volunteer movements in Australia. The primary role of Surf Life Saving NSW is to save lives on our beaches, while other activities include developing our members through education, leadership and surf sports programs.

There are 129 surf clubs and 11 branches in the state which are affiliated with Surf Life Saving NSW, stretching from Fingal Rovers SLSC near Tweed Heads, to Pambula SLSC on the Far South Coast.

For contributions or suggestions for *SurfLIFE* please contact SLSNSW Media on 02 9471 8000 or [webmaster@surflifesaving.com.au](mailto:webmaster@surflifesaving.com.au)



**NEW SOUTH  
WALES**

SLSNSW endeavours to ensure all information contained in *SurfLIFE* is correct and true, however accepts no responsibility for any inaccuracies or mistakes contained in the publication.

**Surf Life Saving New South Wales**

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