



**The  
History  
of South  
Curl Curl  
SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB  
1918-1968**



# ***Preface . . .***

The founding of the Surf Life Saving movement satisfied some of the aspirations of mankind in that it provided the means by which life's greatest treasures, dedication, honour and team spirit, could be achieved. The opportunity to do good unto others is the goal many men seek and to be part of the group of young men who vigilantly guard the lives of surf bathers reflects the ideal of true satisfaction.

With these words in mind we present the history of South Curl Curl Surf Life Saving Club in this its 50th year. In the past half century, the Curl Curl area has risen to great heights from humble beginnings and in that time many men have devoted a huge amount of time and energy for the benefit of the Club and the people who use our surf beach.

By comparison with many other clubs, South Curl Curl is still young and much of its development is still to come. But for its size and age, it is a club of which all members can be justly proud. Many rescues have been performed at this once-feared beach and it would be safe to assume that 50 per cent of these rescues prevented a death in the surf.

The Surf Life Saving movement is a distinct symbol of Australia, depicting the healthy, sun-drenched way of life and the humanitarian spirit of this country. South Curl Curl is proud to be a part of this body and in the following pages, we will endeavour to illustrate our part in furthering its success.

The aim of this history is modest. It seeks to give the reader the plain unvarnished facts of one small segment of the greatest voluntary movement in the world. South Curl Curl Surf Life Saving Club, whose members pay for the privilege of risking their lives to save others. This movement is the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia.

It is regretful that the history of South Curl Curl Surf Life Saving Club will be read by a very small section of the public, when in fact it should be read by a great number, not only in appreciation of the work being done, but mainly to rid all sections of the community of the apathy shown to this great movement.

The research that has gone into the compilation of this history has been of great mag-

nitude and in the main it has been the dedication of David Isaacs that has made it possible. To him, one time Secretary and Publicity Officer, the South Curl Curl Surf Life Saving Club expressed its thanks and appreciation.

To those who gave information and thus assisted in the research go our appreciation. The success in the writing of this story is attributable to those people. Particular thanks go to Jim Routh, former Club Secretary, Secretary of the Juvenile Division of the Club, Secretary of the Branch Juvenile Association, Secretary of the State Juvenile Association and the Club's "honorary printer" for his invaluable assistance in the compiling and presentation of this history.



# *Birth of a Surf Club . . .*

Early visitors to South Curl Curl found a beautiful but isolated place. Steep rocky slopes running to the southern end of the beach were clothed in a tangle of dense scrub, wild flowers bloomed in profusion, unspoiled by the few houses that stood there.

At the northern end stood sandhills, a distinctive landmark in those days and beyond the lagoon lay like a sheet of glass, trickling into the ocean. Defying the wilderness, the blue Pacific sent its crescendo of waves crashing upon the shore.

The beach at South Curl Curl is seldom calm. Little protection is offered by the widely spaced headlands and the beach facing south-east is open to almost all winds. The long stretch of golden sand stretching in a semi-arc gave out the deceptive assurance that bathing a-plenty could be had by those daring enough to take the plunge.

But as Sydney beaches became popular Sunday meeting places and surf-bathing became established soon after the turn of the century, South Curl Curl remained undisturbed. It was cut off from all means of transport and stood remote, like an island, away from the neighbouring beaches.

There was no road, a dirt track which wound its way through the thick scrub faded out where Gardere Avenue is now. An arduous walk over the hills from Manly was the only way to reach the beach — the more daring and agile came around the rocks, which meant clambering over two headlands.

Development was slow and houses in the area were very sparse for many years. As some began to appear, the atmosphere of an early-style village developed. Most dwellings were week-enders where people came to relax and take in the majestic beauty of the wilderness. A general store was added, then a second shop appeared.

Among the owners of the corner store, a familiar landmark in the area were Hobbs, Hunter, Rogers, Baker, Deer and Kilborn (who are there at present). Mr Reg Bartlett ran the store at the southern end of the beach.

The surf life saving club was founded on a very nebulous basis although the members were

enthusiastic enough. Although the Club didn't really begin until 1918, initial formation began much earlier. South Curl Curl actually had three beginnings before becoming fully inaugurated.

In 1907, a small group of young men came at week-ends, calling themselves the Curl Curl Surf Brigade. These men were campers in the area, who after spending almost two years exploring their haunt, decided to do something more practical.

Each weekend they pitched their "head-quarters" tent in the scrub-filled hills and made their plans to found a surf club.

Later they built a small galvanised iron shed on the grass, near where the baths are now situated and here they kept a "reel" and line. At that time there was barely a house to be seen, boronias and other native flora dotted the rugged surroundings and only the shrill cry of the seagulls broke the hushed rhythmic sound of the surf.

The first committee was formed in 1908 when a number of women became interested in the district's progress. The men, dressed in suits and bowler hats and the women in high-neck frocks that flowed to the ground, held their meeting in the open air on the beachfront.

Soon, a canvas canopy was slung over some posts and this was their "clubhouse", and from this humble beginning, our surf club was born.

First president was Mr. J. A. Flynn, with whom few could argue when it came to surf club matters. Harry Collis was secretary and K. Donald captain. Once the club became an established part of the community, more people began to bathe at South Curl Curl. The few residents became more interested in the club's activities, among them, Mr. King, one of the earliest residents in the district. He built a rough shed on the hillside, which in 1909, he allowed the Surf Club to use and this was the first real clubhouse.

A host of tales are told concerning its abandonment of the club, but it appears gambling by one official forced it to disband. Mr King repossessed the "clubhouse", members drifted away and the club ceased to function.



The beach remained unguarded for nearly two years, but a meeting in 1911 resulted in a new club being formed. During the ensuing season, a new clubhouse was built. It was small but neat, timber with an iron roof. Around the outside were wooden struts, giving the building an Alpine appearance. There was every indication that the club was on a firm footing and it would affiliate with the now fully inaugurated Surf Life Saving Association.

An influx of new members came as more houses went up, and further strength was gained from the resulting interest of residents.

Interest in surf life saving generally increased and a film was made on the introduction of surfing, in which club members took part. Most of the filming was done at South Curl Curl near where the baths are now situated at a time when silent films were making their full impact in Australia. The name of the movie? — "One Hundred Years Ago."

In 1914, Mr. C. N. Backhouse was elected President, M. Collins, Secretary, and W. D. Scott, Captain. These men held their positions until 1915. Came World War I and the Club took another shattering blow; membership fell to three, and the Club again disbanded.

All hopes of ever having a fully-patrolled beach at Curl Curl faded with the marching of troops to other lands. After two attempts to establish a surf club and most of the men off at the war, there seemed little likelihood that a club would evolve.

After the war, there appeared a glimmer of hope. Early in the 1918-19 season conditions revived and with a small influx of new members the Club was able to proceed again. A new club house was built — slightly bigger than the previous one, about where the present one now stands. This was also weatherboard with iron roof and a verandah on which hung a bell, presumably for shark alarms. The members built this club house themselves, from materials supplied by the Council.

At this time, Ernie Raymond, later to become Captain, joined as a young man.

At about the same time the Club gained the services of Mr. S. Newman, who was elected President the following season; a position he held for nine years. A. Primrose and Alec Vimpany, also pioneers of the district and great men behind the foundation of the Club, joined that season. The first Boat Captain was Dick Matheson, who taught members of North Steyne and Manly to handle their boats. He blazed the trail which South Curl Curl was to follow in the ensuing years.

This was the beginning of South Curl Curl Surf Club as we know it today. The great work that had begun some years previously was to continue. A constitution was drawn up and the Club affiliated with the S.L.S.A.

The dangers of South Curl Curl Beach were fully realised by this time and the necessary steps were taken to make it a safer beach for all. Undertows, channels, and the general nature of the surf which so distinguished it from other beaches, were observed, and members made a close study of them in relation to normal S.L.S.A. practice. The "southern corner" was pinpointed as being the most dangerous in the area, with a strong undertow most of the time, sweeping rapidly out to sea by the cunny-rocks.

The drowning of a young Canadian in 1918 was clear proof of the dangers that existed here. The tragedy occurred well to the north and members were unable to get to the drowning man in time. They searched for his body but it was never found.

Following the drowning, the Council discouraged bathing on the beach, claiming it was too treacherous, and refused to support the Club. Members fought for support to provide protection on the beach and after a tough battle, the Council gave in. Later in the season, Council appointed R. Donald as permanent beach inspector for the 1918-19 season.

As funds became available and more members joined, extra reels and lines were purchased. In 1919, the Club's first boat was purchased from Freshwater Surf Club. It was originally a lifeboat on one of the old steamers on Sydney Harbour — a double-ender. The need for a second boat was soon obvious and another craft was purchased for the "high sum" of \$9.

By 1920-21 season, the total membership had reached fifty, some were active, others engaged in administration and running club events and socials. During the season, the Club held its first surf carnival — which is a test for any club striving for recognition. On March 26th the crowd gathered, some in suits, others in open-necked shirts and officials felt rightly proud of this achievement.

Proceedings were somewhat marred by the exceptionally heavy seas and for the first time the public was shown the danger and spectacle of a South Curl Curl carnival. Mountainous seas and a nasty current heralded the start of the carnival.

The wind was blowing from the sou' east so the carnival was staged at the extreme

southern end of the beach where a little more shelter could be obtained. The rollers were breaking 300 yards from shore, crashing heavily on craft which reached that far. The strong drift around the shallow southern point carried the bouys seaward, and the senior surf and boat races had to be abandoned.

The Curl Curl boat went out to alter the position of the bouys and was turned end over end by a huge dumper about 100 yards from shore. Miraculously, no one was hurt, but the crew, E. Raymond (Captain), R. Burns, E. Hutchison, R. Andrews and A. Jones had a tough job bringing the boat back into shallow water. They were assisted by a lifeline crew with J. Abernethy in the belt.

Shortly afterwards, the Freshwater crew rounded the point, the captain looking for a clear run to the beach. But the seas were too fast and the boat slipped back from the crest of a breaker and was left in the trough to be broached and swamped by a dumper.

While the crew was struggling in waist-deep water to right the boat, she was struck and turned over again. The gunwhale struck the sweep, Mick Ryan, on the jaw, knocking him unconscious. Two lifelines went out and he was brought ashore where he remained unconscious for half an hour. His crew was F. Thiering, D. Matheson, G. Morrow and C. Wilson.

In the belt races, the beltmen were required (as there were no bouys) to swim for five minutes or until recalled by the judges. In this way a section of the carnival was able to continue, thus saving the day from complete ruin, although boat and some swimming races had to be abandoned, when the seas became too hazardous.

A net profit of \$20.90 was made on the day which was considered a financial success. What there was of the carnival was spectacular and competitors were given a chance to show their skills.

The Club could not, at this time, lay claim to any to individual swimming champion in its ranks but there was terrific keenness in competition. Each weekend, events were held and members kept fit battling for club honours. In patrol work, they were indicative of a fully-fledged surf club — living fully to the motto "vigilance and service".

They had their fun, just like any group of effervescent young men, but it was never allowed to go beyond the limits. They were a

happy, carefree crowd, sharing in the work of running a surf club and establishing firm friendships.

The club became a meeting place for local residents — companionship being the main attraction.

An example of the type of man in the club at the time was an instance involving Mr. Nin Morgan, who became boat captain, shortly after joining the Club. Nin constantly smoked a pipe, even while sweeping the boat. One day, while rowing to sea, the boat was swamped by a huge wave and Nin came to the surface, with just the stem of his pipe, which he'd bitten through, clenched in his teeth.

The activities were not always filled with joyful moments however. In the latter part of the 1920-21 season, tragedy struck when a youth was drowned at North Curl Curl. He was washed to sea from the lagoon by a strong current. South Curl Curl members were called upon to assist and two swam out, one with a belt, while the boat was manned.

It was a long and arduous swim, as the youth was sucked out very rapidly, and it was all in vain. By the time rescuers reached the youth he had drowned. The Club was highly commended for its promptness and the members for their bravery in the rescue. The lagoon was causing great alarm at this time as it was easily reached by children using a track from the homesteads. There was a constant danger of the lagoon breaking to the sea, but children could not be deterred from swimming there.

To encourage and improve the efficiency of the Club, former President, Mr. C. N. Backhouse and Mr. Goyder, donated a trophy, a very handsome piece valued at \$31.50 and standing 18" high. Competition was held on a point score basis each year and the cup had to be won three times successively before it became the permanent property of the competitor. Events included a surf race, a surf relay, a rescue and reususcitation contest and a beach relay.

The first events in this series were held on February 3, 1924, and Alec Jones, who had joined the club three years previously and was in his first year as secretary won the surf race. L. Partridge, the Captain, was second and P. King, third. The beach sprint went to Alec Vimpany, with L. Leabeter second and Merv Jones, third.

After a closely contested series, the trophy went to Alec Jones, from L. Partridge and P. King.

Towards the end of the 1924 season, the first known fatality occurred at South Curl Curl beach. The Club was in no way responsible, however, as the cause of death was found to be heart failure. Members had vainly rendered resuscitation to the victim. This death was a shock to all members, an occurrence they did not want repeated under any circumstances. After the tragedy, patrols were placed on a stronger footing and members had an even keener sense of enthusiasm.

The extension of the tram service from Queenscliff to the middle of Harbord meant Curl Curl people had only to walk over the Freshwater headland, a vast improvement on the former walk from Manly. The beach became more popular, particularly with the ever-increasing motorists and the additional amenity of swimming baths became a necessity.

Towards the end of 1925, the Curl Curl Progress Association, and the Surf Club, convened a special public meeting at which they formed the Rock Baths Committee. Through deputations to the Council and continuous hard work by members, the baths were completed the following season (the outside wall of the original baths is the centre wall of the present pool). Thus Curl Curl saw an added attraction which brought much pleasure to many a family. To the children in particular it brought great joy, with added safety. To Club members it meant an extra area to protect. Though fairly well sheltered, hard against the southern headland, the baths could be pounded during heavy seas. Children, prevented from entering the surf during a huge sea would swim in the baths at the risk of being swept out.

Enthusiasm built upon enthusiasm after the baths were built and total membership, most of whom were active, reached 64.

During the 1925-26 season a Beauty Queen Competition was held in the district. Promoted by the South Curl Curl Rock Baths Committee. Miss Elsie Newman, representing the Surf Club, topped the poll by selling the most number of tickets and was duly crowned Queen at a special ceremony. Also, in aid of the South Curl Curl Rock Baths, a special beach sports function was held, from which proceeds went to the Committee.

The "old" Clubhouse was extended in the same year — about ten feet at one end. This

was accomplished with the support of the Council, but a good deal of the work was done by Club members. Inter club competition improved, a contingent of twenty-five competing in the Newcastle Carnival. Besides this, they took part in most of the Metropolitan carnivals, making their presence felt on most occasions.

Over the year, they received a total of \$131.39, which although less than the previous year (\$192.49) was a considerable amount in those days. It was still the typical country club, with cottages bobbing up on the skyline from one year to the other, but it was surging on-wards to greater expectations. There was little sign of strain on anyone, but the group of men behind the scenes were putting everything they had into the furthering of the development. With adventure in their hearts, and the surf in their blood — they pressed on with the work of the growing movement.

S. H. Newman and J. A. Jones were among these men. President and Secretary respectively they held their positions through the difficult times to make their valuable contributions towards the history of Curl Curl, and surf life saving. Another member of the foundation years was L. "Paddy" O'Keefe, who was Treasurer for a number of years, performed great work in the financial matters of the Club. Merv Jones, brother of the then Secretary, was another keen worker.

Though he didn't join till 1923 — he was interested in Club activities beforehand, having lived in the area for some time. Full of happiness and care-free spirit — he was one of the most popular men to enter the organisation. He filled the positions of Assistant Secretary, Secretary and Social Secretary.

Lists of Officers over the years, together with their personal records are detailed later in this book.

By 1927, the Club appeared to be entering a new era. A new surf boat heralded this season — a life-boat style of craft named "Koompartoo", in honour of the famous harbor steamer. The Warringah Shire Council paid half the cost, the Surf Club — the remainder.

The Beach Fete, being held for the third year, always proved a success, and was further highlighted by the launching of the new boat.

Two successful dances were held at Drum-moyne. These were the days when dancing — in the grip of the wild twenties — was fashionable, and people liked to mingle at



any provocation. It was not too difficult to organise a successful dance, although full credit was due to those responsible. Financially, it was a record year, receipts reached \$313.60. The Club had never looked in better condition, though it was still a long way behind neighbouring clubs. The Second Annual Dinner held at the Club House, was a clear indication of things to come.

The membership showed a steady increase. Among new members that season was Arthur Olson, a man who was destined to become a great personality in surf life saving. The Club received a fresh impetus with his arrival, as he was full of enthusiasm which never waned. With him was his brother, Clive, who was also a very keen lad. Both obtained their Bronze Medallions that season.

Although the Club could then boast of having over sixty members, only about twenty-five were active in the true sense of the word. A lot of work still had to be done in and around the Club House. Focus was on the sporting and vital aspect of surf life saving.

The future of the Club was dependant on someone with necessary initiative and drive. That man was Arthur Olson — who set out to find the required improvements.

The following year the Club found itself without a Secretary, Merv Jones having declined. A new secretary had to be found. Someone suggested Arthur Olson, who, with only a few months surfing experience behind him, had shown all the makings of an excellent member. He was duly elected Secretary.

Rescues were becoming frequent, the Club's activity was rising. Under the auspices of Arthur Olson, further instruction was encouraged, and awards gained. The importance of this Club's existence was even more significant.

This was the year Richie Roberts gained his Bronze Medallion, the first step towards the legendary figure he was to become.

A junior then, he showed a passionate interest in surf boats. He was also a good swimmer, featuring prominently in the R. & R. competition.

With Arthur Olson, he was the driving force to greater efforts. These two young men were to inspire and lead their Club to greater achievements.

The most outstanding event that season was the Club's first annual surf carnival. The carnival was Arthur Olson's most fervent desire

from the moment he became secretary. It was held on 29th December, 1928.

With the results of the 1921 carnival still vividly in some members' minds — it was with a certain amount of trepidation that this carnival began. And trouble came, when sharks put in an appearance, forcing the cancellation of many of the swimming events.

This was unfortunate, but indicated the bond between the clubs, as there were no claims for refunds of entry fees. It showed also another danger that lifesavers face — the risk of being taken by a shark. No shark tragedies have occurred at Curl Curl Beach, though sharks have often been sighted fairly close to shore. The alarm has always been raised early enough to clear the surf. The sight of the dreaded fins has been the cause of the curtailment of many surf carnivals.

It is probably the last thing members think of as they dash into the sea during a rescue or surf race, but the chance — minute as it is — is always there. Should an attack occur, the chance of surviving would be very minute also. Wild seas, 20 foot dumpers, do not worry the average lifesaver as a rule, but the shark is one section of his chosen hobby that carries no counter-acting instructions.

The boat scared the sharks away, but time and again they came back and the risk to swimmers was considered too great. Though bad luck seemed to plague them, credit was bestowed upon the organisers in having the necessary initiative in holding the carnival.

The Club was fortunate in having a strong band of willing lady helpers, who set about organising socials and assisting in many fund-raising activities. One function which proved rather successful was the Bazaar, held for the first time in November, 1928. The women associated with the Club in the early days of the development reflected the true spirit of team-work.

The Beach Sports and Fete — held at Easter, 1929 — was another very successful function which had been held regularly in previous years. With the Club stimulated by a more vigorous committee — the running of this function was met with great enthusiasm. The Belt race, more commonly known in those days as the Alarm Reel Race, was won by Arthur Olson, who was already proving that he was not only a great committee man, but a great swimmer. D. Wiseman, another prominent man at that time, won the Open Surf Race.

Another key-figure of the Club around that time was Ernie Raymond, who was building a high reputation in the surf boat. He was elected Boat Captain in 1924 and held that position till 1933. His keenness in the future of South Curl Curl and the work he put into the development of the Club was paramount. People knew him for his frequent week-end visits which he made from his home at Drummoyne.

A number of the foundation members resided in the Drummoyne-Balmain area, and made Curl Curl their week-end retreat. It had all the qualities of an escape from the hum-drum of the busy, growing city, and to spend a week-end by the sea, with the combination of the flanking bushland, was their greatest pleasure. This was the ideal arrangement for which they worked.

Arthur Olson was the leading figure in the management of the Club, and he fervently set about to boost its morale and distinction. With the first ten years of the Club's inauguration over, the prospects ran high. There was every indication that the Club would aspire to greater heights and become a familiar name in the Surf Life Saving Movement.

During this era club spirit was very strong. There was little else one could do in those days; cars not being so prevalent and board-riding not having aroused any great interest.

The wives never seemed to mind their men-folk devoting long hours to the Club, for many a love story began during the early days of Curl Curl Beach. One might say that through the evolving acquaintances — the Club was able to grow and due to family links, on which it was mainly dependant, the Club's tradition carried on. It was like one big happy family, amalgamated from various families. Some lived in the district, up in the hills, others lived on the other side of the harbour.

The happy atmosphere of the developing area, and the more intimate association between members was of great significance. The father-to-son image became the significant aspect by which the Club benefited. Hard work and responsibility was shared and loved.

Winter activities were established for members to keep fit during the off-season. Table tennis was a popular sport among a large section of the Club, a tournament went right through the winter. A group who called themselves the "Polar Bears" swam right through the winter. The sight of these agile men became a familiar one, as they congregated at the surf

displaying their enthusiasm while others, clad in heavy winter clothing, looked on bewildered.

The year 1929 saw the Club's first Rescue and Resuscitation team. The R. & R. event was one which was of special interest at surf carnivals. Displaying the combination of speed and regimentation, it has always been the blue riband event. When South Curl Curl entered this hard-contested event it marked a further milestone in its progress, and the team attained a good standard.

The first New Year's Day Carnival took place in 1930. The day was perfect, the display went like clockwork, and all events were finalised in good time. This was the third carnival held at Curl Curl Beach, and it seemed at last that the Club would be able to continue holding this function which became a popular "picnic" carnival. As more clubs formed and affiliated, so the annual carnival grew in the number of events, and pretty soon it became an all-day carnival.

At the 1930 carnival, the Judge in boat at the buoys was Adrian Curlewis, now His Honour, Judge Sir Adrian Curlewis — President of the National Council of the S.L.S.A.

Social functions were increasing, thanks, to a large extent, to the ladies — with euchre parties and dances being held. A new piano was purchased to help make the functions more attractive. Assistance by both the members and the ladies auxiliary was admirable.

It was at this time that the Club House was extended for the second time. It was enlarged to double its previous size at a cost of \$117.87. This was the culmination of a lot of planning, and members of the committee looked up with pride at the new work. A new front was added to the verandah, a longer hall extended to the northern end. At the southern end stood the boat shed, with a ramp to the beach.

It was not a very dignified looking building, but it was the beginning of a new development which served well. The entire Club House was repainted and the Secretary's office completed.

Forty percent of the material was supplied by the Council, sixty per cent by the Club. Voluntary labour did the work. It was again built entirely of timber and iron, and stood well for its remaining few years before the passage of time spelt the end for many of the "old world" timber dwellings.

Members behind this operation included E. Tovey, A. Wilkinson, T. Keep, P. Cremer, M.

Jones, A. Olson, R. Roberts, J. Rollison, T. Morton and R. Pirie. The alterations to the Club House, together with the extra work carried out on the reels, boat and numerous other gear was indicative of the club spirit at that time.

The depression, which had gripped most of the world, had hit Australia, and members had only the Club to turn to brighten an otherwise dull existence. With the inevitable hardships that prevailed it was a good time to be in the Club, where, while spirits elsewhere were low, were vibrantly high at the beach. Problems were shared, so was the work of the Club's development.

The 1930-31 season saw the completion of the largest building yet seen at Curl Curl. The Stewart House Preventorium — a special children's home.

Opened in February, 1931, it has become a land mark of the district. Facing the beach at the southern end, it offers the perfect refuge for children who would otherwise be deprived of such pleasures. The close proximity to a beautiful beach with its safe rock baths, provides wonderful enjoyment for the youngsters. The rows of children parading down to the beach have become a familiar sight, and the existence of the Surf Club has assured they will always be safe.

Through this development, the Club was successful in getting certain improvements on the beach reserve in front of Stewart House, including drainage work. Official representatives of the Club attended the opening of this building.

Richie Roberts was elected Boat Captain in 1933, and it was from this time that the Club started showing its colours to the full. It had already proved relatively successful in the March Past and R. and R. events, but the boat event was the one in which it shone. Strength, ability and endurance was needed; Richie and his crew had these attributes.

A new and better boat was needed to allow the skills of the crew to be put to best advantage. The old "Koompartoo" was seeing its last days — after serving the Club well for six years. Already, clubs elsewhere were acquiring boats of the carvel plank-type, which were fashionable in that period. Curl Curl had to follow suit.

The Committee decided to make the purchase and the order was placed. Realising that the old boat was wholly unsuitable for speedy work so essential in the surf, they

resolved to retain it for use in laying buoys, etc., and kept it in a sea-worthy condition.

During the season many efforts were made by the lady supporters to augment the New Boat Fund. Mrs. Edith Woods, a well-known identity in the district, generously donated \$120 towards the new boat.

A "Popular Girl" beauty competition was held during the latter months of the season, to help raise the rest of the money. The sum of \$149.46 was raised from this, and along with the various other donations, the purchase of the boat became an accomplished fact.

Five girls entered the Contest, each of whom collected so much throughout the series. The winner, Miss Olga Tebay was elected at a special function held in the Club House on August 4th. Mr. Arthur Still, the then Club President, assisted by Mrs. Still, presented to her gifts donated by Mrs. A. Olson Senior, Mr. Myles and Mr M. Jones. Second in the competition was Miss Jean Olson. The other three girls were May Harvey, Flora Gillies (Flora Roberts, wife of Richie Roberts) and Nell Hyman.

On the Club's behalf, a trophy was presented to each girl in the competition as a token of appreciation for their magnificent effort.

A total of \$757.63 was raised, a wonderful achievement. The following season (1934-35) the new boat was launched. It was named the "Edith Woods" following a unanimous decision by Club members as a token of esteem to this lady.

This boat's history began from the time it left the slips at "Waddy" Ford's boatshed at Berry's Bay, North Sydney — it was rowed from the yards to South Curl Curl Beach. The crew consisted of R. Roberts (Captain), A. Nash, A. Olson, D. McErlane and Dave Pitcher.

### **New Boat Christening**

On January 12th, 1935 — the christening of the new surf boat "Edith Woods" was held. Mrs. Edith Woods, in whose honour the boat was named, performed the ceremony, assisted by the five girls who were candidates in the recent Popular Girl Competition. Representatives from Queenscliff, Freshwater and North Curl Curl Surf Clubs were in attendance, together with representatives of the Warringah Shire.



It was an impressive ceremony, which attracted a large crowd who milled around the gleaming new boat. Members were satisfied that this boat was one of the best on the coast and, at that time, the very latest in styling. It was a double-ender of varnished plank, and looked very immaculate, standing on the beach by the launching dais. It looked as though it was rearing to be tested, and the men concerned were only too willing for that moment to arise.

Short speeches were made from various visitors, and then, with a shower of champagne, the boat was christened — “EDITH WOODS”. After the boat crew gave a display, events were held for members, and also beach races for children. In the evening, a grand concert was held in the Club House, which made an excellent finish to a great day.

The Club was able to surge forward with the advent of its new boat. The boat performed fairly well at inter-club carnivals and was placed second to Cronulla in the final at Dee Why’s carnival. The Club now had the type of craft suitable to the conditions of the surf, a fact to be realised, for its first test in rescue operations came soon after the christening.

It happened early in 1935 — when a youth was swept out to sea in a canoe. It was about 12.30 p.m. when a lady resident of the district happened to notice the youth being blown to sea from the North Curl Curl point. By this time he was about one mile out. She at once contacted the Club Captain, but owing to the severe stormy conditions the canoe was out of sight. Strong westerly gales whipped up huge seas, and it seemed that the youth would be lost.

The “Edith Woods” — under the captaincy of Richie Roberts, put to sea. Freshwater Club’s boat joined in the search about 1½ miles from shore and both proceeded seaward, keeping well apart. With the wind behind them, both were soon two tiny specks on a vast turbulent sea.

They battled out farther and farther bobbing about wildly on the choppy sea, “white horses” dipping all around them. The sea was worse than they had ever previously known, but the crews soon overcame the conditions. With the life of the boy at stake, the crews struggled on tenaciously. They searched and searched — he was nowhere to be seen.

The Pilot Station was contacted and the “Captain Cook” sent to assist in the search. Station 2UW was notified and a surf patrol

plane despatched to give additional assistance, but owing to the severe wind — it was forced to return. A larger plane, piloted by Captain Follett, flew out near the horizon and commenced a long search. About 3 p.m. a member of the Club, Mr. E. Nash, looking for the surf boats with a very powerful telescope, was astounded to see the canoe and occupant still battling with the strong wind about 10 miles out at sea. By this time, the surf boats, aeroplane and pilot steamer were miles too far south. Efforts were then made to get in touch with the “Captain Cook” and the aircraft, but, alas, neither were equipped with wireless. Those who could see the operation from the headland could only look helplessly as the three boats bobbed about near the horizon and the plane circled above.

The Club then launched a second boat to endeavour to reach the youth, but once out at sea, glasses or telescope were of no use owing to the choppy sea. This boat continued on in a course that was thought to be the right direction. Just on 6 p.m. — five and a half hours after the distress signals were first sighted, the plane, on a final search, luckily sighted the canoe with the youth still battling on, though obviously nearing exhaustion, well out to sea.

The Pilot Steamer was signalled and with the two surf boats in tow, proceeded to the rescue of the canoeist.

After the canoe was picked up, the third boat was taken in tow and all headed for shore, which was reached about 6.45 p.m. The youth was brought ashore at South Curl Curl and given attention at the Club’s First Aid Room. His only “injuries” were red-raw hands through continuous paddling, and after attention he was allowed to leave. He also suffered severe exhaustion from his ordeal.

The rescue wasn’t affected a moment too soon — as the last light of the day was drawing near. Soon the darkness would have closed in and the youth may never have been found.

Due to the stamina and vigilance of the three boat crews, the services of the pilot boat and Captain Follett’s plane a life was saved.

The members of the first boat were — Richie Roberts (Captain), A. Jago, D. McLane, R. Ogg and D. Shaw. The members of the second boat were — A. Nash (Captain), Arthur Olson, R. Morgan, W. Maderas, N. Murray and A. Sterland. Letters of congratulations were received by the Club for the part the boat crews performed in the rescue.

## **Access Improves**

**Progress in area entered a new level in 1935. The road to Dee Why via North Curl Curl was opened and transport facilities vastly improved, with the new bus service passing along outside the Club house.**

The resulting benefits became apparent with the various successful social functions held there in the ensuing months. No longer did people have to walk over the steep hills separating Curl Curl from the nearby regions, or clamber over the headland from Harbord — the farthest point to which the tram travelled.

A comprehensive scheme for the beautification of South Curl Curl Beach and environs was submitted to the Shire Council. Among the plans was the enlarging of the boat shed to house the additional boat.

A sad note in this season was the resignation of Mr. Ernie Raymond from the position of Captain. He had resigned as Boat Captain at the end of the previous season, being succeeded by Richie Roberts. Now he found it necessary to step down from all official positions as pressure of business prevented him from carrying out his duties as he felt they should be carried out.

The Club was to be continually faced with such problems as the commercial world of Sydney grew.

Already, Curl Curl was developing — along with the surrounding areas, and with business life becoming stronger, fewer members were finding the time for the Club they had in previous years.

It was with deep regret that Ernie Raymond's resignation was accepted. He had earned renown in the Club serving in many positions since joining in 1917. But he was not to be lost forever as he returned to committee work soon after.

North Curl Curl had attained a good position competitively by this time, and rivalry between the clubs was keen.

The rivalry was of a friendly nature, and this was best demonstrated by the "North versus South" competition. It proved to be very popular among both spectators and competitors, so from this inauguration it was proposed to make it an annual event. This particular time the competition was held on two consecutive Sundays — a day at each end of the beach.

At South Curl Curl — the Baths Relay, Boat, Junior Belt, Open Surf and Beach Relay races were run, while on the following Sunday — at North Curl Curl — the Senior Belt, Junior Surf Teams, Beach Sprint Boat and Open Surf Teams Races were run.

## **The New Clubhouse**

**The new building, in which the Club is now housed — became a reality after a great deal of deliberation and fore-stalling. It was officially opened by the Hon. E. S. Spooner Minister of Works and Local Government, on Saturday afternoon, 18th September, 1937.**

The new clubhouse was a credit to the Warringah Shire, and even with the delay — all members were appreciative to the Government and the Council for having made this structure possible.

It marked a turning point in the Club's history, and from then on — prospects became brighter and more encouraging. Having been housed in a small weatherboard building in the preceding years, members adopted new pride in their Club. It compared favourably with any other surf club house on the coast at that time, and stood out distinctly on the beach-front. It blended in well with the back-drop of the rugged hillside, upon which houses were now appearing, while in front a promenade was built which separated it from the beach. For the first time, South Curl Curl was beginning to look something like a Sydney beach — attaining more of a metropolitan atmosphere instead of the country atmosphere it had held for so many years.

This was a contentious matter with many residents and week-end visitors who enjoyed its isolation from the ever-increasing activities of the "outside world". Dissension grew among those who thrived on its unspoilt peacefulness.

But progress has never been conquered, and its defeat was certainly not likely then. The new clubhouse was a vital necessity, and all members realised it only too well. With its erection came a new and more dignified era, in which the Club took on a higher status.

It helped to encourage an influx of new members. With fifty-two active members it became a more recognised body, proudly taking its part in the great organisation of the Movement.

Increase of patrol hours was applied during this season following instructions from the Surf Life Saving Association. Official Saturday afternoon patrols were inaugurated, and this addition seemed to be perfectly justified as many bathers were beginning to patronise the beach.

This particular season marked a record in patrol attendances from which the ensuing seasons were to be moulded.

Patrols were always carried out effectively and with the utmost vigilance. It was fast becoming a popular beach; with the new pavilion, new baths and new houses bobbing up behind the road.

Every fine week-end saw a greater number of cars on the areas fringing the beach. Though a small number of rescues had to be made that year, one performed during the Eight-Hour week-end was outstanding. Three men were swept around the rocks at the southern end of the beach during a strong nor'easterly wind, which caused a treacherous undercurrent to prevail near the baths. Big seas were whipped up and a very nasty situation arose. Three members, R. Hilliard, D. Shaw and D. McErlane dived into the boiling sea from the rocks, whilst a boat was sent out. It was too rough for the boat to go right alongside the distressed swimmers, so club member, S. Davis, swam from the boat.

All three men were saved but the dangers of this beach were becoming more and more to the fore as each season passed. With this thought firmly in mind, the Club sought to take every possible advantage of the extra members available in the continual safeguarding of the surf-bathing public.

In competition — the R. & R. team proved to be the most consistent. Three teams were in training, but owing to injuries sustained by two members, the teams were reduced to two. On the day of the Club Competition this particular year, big seas prevailed, providing a tough and exciting swim was both "patient" and beltman. The distance was long, and at the end of it — all knew they had taken part in a very gruelling event.

The winning team comprised, David McErlane (Captain), K. Agnew, J. McNally, N. Murray, H. Hansen and N. Nixon.

The March Past team was also coming to the fore — gaining second place at the Club's official carnival. Once again, rough seas hampered the proceedings, and some of the

events were cancelled. However, the boat events provided thrills for the crowd as crews dared the huge combers. Though there were a lot of spills — no one was hurt.

The social activities heightened somewhat with the advent of the new Club House. Functions were held more regularly during the year which helped to maintain greater spirit as well as raise additional finance so desperately needed.

## ***The Surf Club and the War***

**The Annual Carnival on New Year's Day 1938 will always be prominent in the records of both the Association and Club as a surf boat epic. The seas were huge, surpassing even the previous year.**

The weather itself was perfect, but the sea seemed to come from nowhere. The huge combers rolled in, increasing in size as the morning wore on. At one stage it looked as though the carnival would have to be postponed, and officials stood by hoping that the sea would abate. But, this was not to be, and once again — spectators were to witness the fury and the dangers of this beach.

The crew of the official boat had a perilous task, attempting to lay the buoys and eventually had to set out from Freshwater, after being repeatedly swept back at Curl Curl. The boat capsized when they had almost completed their task and the crew took a severe battering before being brought ashore. Beltmen battled through the savage breakers fixed lines to the boat and brought it ashore. This incident was the start to a chain of events which followed throughout the day as the sea increased in fury.

The three boats in the first heat, after trying desperately for about an hour (there being no time limit) were unsuccessful in penetrating the break of the surf. Try as they did — they were washed back to shore, sometimes with near-disastrous consequences. In the second heat — two boats managed to sneak through, only to be unmercifully swamped on the return journey. Both boats capsized, but the crews managed to avoid injuries.

In the third heat, the North Steyne crew, with "Rastus" Evans as sweep, skilfully battled to a position where they appeared to be beyond the grip of the breakers. Then, when they seemed to be clear of any danger and excite-



ment from the crowd had temporarily abated, a wave of terrific proportion caught the boat and threw it into the air, tipping the crew into the sea about 250 yards from the beach. The peril of their position was heightened by the fact that they were close to the rocks. A joint effort was required in order to rescue all crew members.

Magnificent swims were carried out by E. Morgan, R. Mullumby, W. Furey and R. Rowley of North Steyne Club, R. Michaelis of Cronulla and S. Davis of South Curl Curl. E. Morgan's swim was a wonderful effort, about 600 yards of line having to be used before he reached his patient. He received a Meritorious Award for his heroism. South Curl Curl's boat was also in the same heat when its captain, Richie Roberts, noticed the plight of the North Steyne crew, who by this time had been carried into the most treacherous of positions beyond the southern point. It was at this juncture that he called for a beltman, and when R. Michaelis volunteered he was taken as far out as possible. When it appeared imminent that the boat would be swamped — he left the boat and swam to one of the men in difficulty.

Ritchie Roberts and his crew showed great skill and courage in forcing their boat through such a formidable wall of foam.

Several times the boat was in danger of being dashed on the rocks, but the determination of the crew carried them through to a position, a little safer, beyond the breakers. Here they picked up two of the swimmers, one of whom had just carried out a strenuous belt swim. It was then noticed that "Rastus" Evans was being carried helplessly towards the rocks. The boat crew made several attempts to reach him, but without avail, owing to the danger of the boat being overturned with its extra load. S. Davis then donned the belt in the boat, and swam strongly through the angry sea to reach "Rastus". They were then hauled back to the safety of the boat.

The craft by this time was very low in the water with its three extra passengers and a quantity of water that had been shipped on the way out. It would have been disastrous to have attempted to land at South Curl Curl beach in such pounding conditions, so Richie Roberts very wisely took the boat to Freshwater. After a fine exhibition of seamanship, he beached her with everyone on board, under the lee of the northern head of the beach. The R. & R. event set down for the morning was postponed. During the afternoon

all water events were cancelled, with the exception of a challenge boat race, whilst beach events were carried out to programme.

The Club received a Certificate of Merit bearing the names of the boat crew as an award from the S.L.S.A. of Australia for the gallant and heroic effort in carrying out the rescue. The members of the crew were, C. Doodson, V. Garisyne, E. Cooper, S. Davis and R. Roberts (Captain).

S. Davis was also awarded a Certificate of Merit for his swim from the boat.

The Club received great recognition from various sources. Congratulatory messages in connection with the rescues were also received. The carnival was gravely disrupted — but in its place, valuable publicity was obtained.

The club put up a fine performance to win its first March Past event, although it had filled minor placings at other carnivals.

Towards the end of the season, the rock baths were almost completed. The extension of the baths was a good amenity for the public, though during heavy seas, the danger of being washed over the wall, was prevalent. With a swimming pool comparable with anywhere else in the Shire, more people flocked to South Curl Curl. With the larger size, it became of great assistance to the Club for training purposes.

The season that followed was marked by the beginning of World War II which, understandably enough, severely hampered the Club's activities. The Club had already experienced the consequential circumstances of a war having been virtually extinguished during World War I. It was a little stronger this time and had the members to withstand the brunt of a mass enlistment.

However, a lot of members did leave to serve their country on the battlefields, which made it very difficult to keep the Club functioning.

Membership dropped rapidly after December 1939 — with members enlisting.

The War reached out like a giant hand and grasped the Club within its hold. The whole of the Surf Life Saving Movement was badly affected. Honour Rolls are filled with the names of those who served and those who died. As they served in guarding the lives on our beaches — so too did they serve in guarding our land against invasion.

Many changes occurred among the officials during this season — the key positions of Secretary and Captain having been filled on three

occasions owing to enlistments. This in itself made it hard for the committee to preserve the continuity of the Club's work. The membership became a severe problem owing to the many enlistments and the compulsory training scheme which almost immediately came into effect.

This was the year that Arthur Olson resigned as Secretary and was elected President. J. McDonough became Secretary but resigned in January of 1940 to join the A.I.F. R. Foster was elected in his place, only to resign himself four months later to join the R.A.A.F. Finally, John McColm was elected towards the end of the season, a position he held for seven years.

Dave McErlane, who was Captain, resigned to join the A.I.F. in November, 1939. H. Paul, who was elected, resigned for the same purpose in March, 1940. In his place, J. Robinson was elected.

The Club continued to progress despite the difficulties, with the patrols being carried out just as vigilantly. The purchase of a combination radio receiver proved the keenness and club-consciousness that existed. Members decided to contribute part of the cost of the set by small weekly instalments, which they paid to the elected official collector. Much of the work in installing the equipment was handled by members, particularly Richie Roberts and C. Doodson, who put in many hours of work in construction of the wireless cabinet. The wireless equipment was stolen soon after completion when the clubhouse was robbed.

### Members on Service Abroad

With the A.I.F. in Palestine, the Club's ex-captain, Dave McErlane gained fresh laurels in the athletic field, giving the Club international publicity. He virtually put South Curl Curl on the map with his splendid performance. In the A.I.F. Athletic Championships held on 10th August he won the 100 yards, the 220 yards, was second in the 440 yards and won the javelin throwing competition.

Competing at the Surf Carnival held at Gaza, Dave was a member of the winning team in the R. & R. event, and also registered a third placing in the Open Surf Race. A further triumph was his selection to represent Australia in the Rugby Union team which defeated France in Syria.

Another representative in the team, well-known to members, was Jack McIvar. Jack

had made application to join the Club and was drilling with the Bronze squad when war was declared.

### South Curl Curl Surf Life Saving Club Roll of Honour

1939-45

V. Agnew	S. Lands
K. Allen	C. Leggett
J. Archer	*F. Leggett
*P. Armstrong	L. Mills
D. Baker	K. Ming
A. Barnes	J. Hodge
E. Barnett	R. Pearce
J. Bell	D. McErlane
S. Bigg	(prisoner of War in
L. Brown	Germany 1941-44
W. Brown	J. McDonough
D. Cameron	D. McDougall
B. Carmody	A. McIntyre
L. Challoner	F. Morrissey
K. Chapman	J. Morrissey
J. Cooksey	*F. Nash
S. Crannage	N. Nixon
R. Dodd	F. Oliver
J. Donnell	H. Paul
T. Elliott	G. Phegan
J. Fairall	W. J. Saunders
*W. Fibbins	J. Stevenson
R. Foster	*R. Stein (D.F.M.)
V. Goulding	J. Sullivan
H. Hansen	A. Taylor
A. J. Heaton	W. Tegar
S. Hogan	M. Van Der Klei
J. Hourigan	J. Whitty
A. Jago	L. Wiltshire
*C. Kenkins	F. Woods
J. Johnson	J. Wood
P. Kenna	E. Wilcox

### Ex-members

K. Allen	L. A. Nash
S. Davis	J. Ogg
N. Eckford	R. Ogg
C. Hansen	D. Partridge
L. Hine	D. Shaw
A. Lye	G. Shaw
R. Morgan	T. Rynan
*A. Moorcroft	A. Williams
T. Morrissey	A. Wilkinson
G. Murray	

\*denotes members killed in action or on active service.

As can be seen by the list above, quite a large number of our members were engaged in active service during the war. The Club's active membership was seriously depleted by 1941-42 season due to enlistments. At this period, the War Effort was the predominating consideration, with the threat of invasion forever imminent, and all ordinary activities had to be subordinated to it. As a result, the young lads who came to the rescue of the Club during its darkest period, were themselves subject to military duties in the 1944-45 season.

Dave McErlane sent home an Italian flag captured by the Australian Sixth Division at Benghazi. He had the flag autographed by members of the winning R. & R. team at the Surf Carnival held by the A.I.F. in Palestine. Pride of place was reserved in the Clubhouse for the flag. On the day the flag arrived at Curl Curl, it was heard that L/Cpl. Dave McErlane was reported missing, and after many anxious months — it was learnt that he was prisoner of war in Germany.

It was during this season (1940-41) that the surf boat — "Richie Roberts" was christened — (in honour of the veteran sweep who had already put South Curl Curl to the fore in the boat events). The ceremony, which took place on Sunday, 10th February, 1941, was one of the most spectacular held on Curl Curl beach. March Past teams from neighbouring clubs formed a guard of honour while Mrs. Olson broke a bottle of champagne over the bow of the new craft.

During the balance of the season the boat performed well at inter-club carnivals, registering one first and four seconds from seven races. It was the first new boat since the "Edith Woods" six years previously, and was a double-ender of similar style. The same crew was available with the exception of E. Barnett — bow oarsman, who had joined the R.A.A.F. With renewed confidence they looked forward to many spectacular results in the season's to follow.

Success did come in a sweeping form the following season with the Senior Boat Crew winning all four carnivals held that year. The March Past team also performed extremely well, with a first and three seconds. It was not the first year that this Club was registering such outstanding ability, the March Past team had already scored many placings at carnivals. The lady supporters of the Club, who were already "holding the fort" on the homefront, formed a March Past Team. Their display was

an outstanding feature of the Club's 1941 Annual Carnival.

The Season 1942-43 was marked by a number of rescues that were effected in a relatively short space of time. The rock baths was the main danger area. On one occasion, a lad was swept from the eastern wall of the baths into a swift-running channel. Beltman, Len Brown, dashed in smartly to reach the boy, and brought him to safety. He was treated for immersion and shock. A matter of three weeks later a child was swept from the northern wall of the baths. P. Mulray went to the rescue, with a Bronze squad who were under instruction, assisting.

Later in the day, a lady was swept from the same wall into the channel, and was rescued by member, R. Stenning. She required resuscitation.

Just one month later, two women were caught in a channel and were rapidly being swept to sea. Club member, F. Morrissey, quickly donned the belt and swam to their aid. They were both hauled safely to the beach neither of whom were any the worse for their ordeal, save for a little exhaustion.

Fortunately, prior to the holiday season of this year, there was an influx of junior members, which enabled the Club to revert to the old system of morning and afternoon patrols.

The scene at the beach during those times was not pretty — a row of barbed-wire fencing stood in spiralled form between the water's edge and the promenade, serving as a barricade against invasion. It was a stark reminder of the war, the sight of the barbed-wire obliterating the beauty that the beach had always held.

To celebrate the record influx of new junior and cadet members the committee invited all juniors to bring along two friends as guests of the Club on the 26th December, 1942. This innovation was an outstanding success, and everybody present thoroughly enjoyed the party. The seniors entered into the spirit of the occasion and enjoyed the fun as much as the kids.

The year 1943 was memorable in the history of South Curl Curl from a competitive aspect. The fine performance of the Club's senior boat crew bore fruit following man hours of hard training, and proud moments came to the sweep Richie "The Wrecker" (as he became known) Roberts. It was undefeated in the elimination heats held at Freshwater carnival on 14th Janu-



ary, South Curl Curl on 31st January and Dee Why on 14th February. The win at the Metropolitan Championships held at Manly on 27th February was the culmination of previous efforts. This gave the Club its first win in Open Championship. This achievement also gave to the boat crew members greater confidence, which spurred them on to greater heights.

Further success came in the following year, this time to the Junior Boat crew. It put up a very fine performance to win the Junior Metropolitan Championship. Heartiest congratulations were extended to Boat Captain Richie Roberts, who by this time was becoming a well-known name in Sydney as a phenomenal sweep. The members of that crew became renowned in latter years due to their continued efforts. They were, L. Wiltshire, L. Brown, R. Picard and C. Sugars.

Some bad luck was experienced at the State Championship Carnival at Bondi that year. Owing to the heavy sea the boat events, and a number of the swimming events, were postponed for three weeks. South Curl Curl team was doomed to bad luck, having the misfortune to split an oar in the early stages of the Grand Final. However, it showed a magnificent effort in gaining second place, which was most creditable considering it was under such adverse conditions.

Many inter-club carnivals were curtailed during the latter years of the war, but at the carnivals that were held, South Curl Curl displayed top form, particularly in the Surf Boat events; while in the March Past, the name appeared in placings on a number of occasions.

### **Carnival Day Resumed**

**Annual Surf Carnivals were resumed at South Curl Curl on New Year's Day, 1945, after a lapse of two years due to the war. It was an outstanding success, particularly from the point-of-view of entries, a record for the Club, and attendance figures — while having regard to transport difficulties — exceeded all expectations.**

Representation at all other inter-club carnivals continued on the same high level. The standard of the boat crews was paramount, particularly the Junior Boat crew whose performance was unmatched. In the season 1944-45, from a grand total of 18 races contested, the

crew registered 16 firsts, 1 second and 1 third placing. The culmination of this splendid record of consistency came on 10th March, 1945, with a meritorious win in the N.S.W. State Championships. This gained for the Club its first State Title — a wonderful achievement, and yet another triumph to Richie Roberts and his crew, R. Picard, L. Wiltshire, B. Buckingham and V. Morrissey.

Despite the handicap imposed by a continuous change in personnel, due to military duties the Club's Senior Surf Boat crew put up a very creditable performance also — registering a number of minor placings during the season. The highlight of those efforts was a dead-heat for second place in the N.S.W. State Championships.

The shortage of senior-active members during the war was felt in most surf clubs throughout Australia, hence the apparent upward surge of the Juniors. Some of the junior members who joined the Club in the early part of the War, were also drafted into the Armed Forces towards the end. Those who entered later were thus able to stay behind, and so — in effect — carried the Club. It was a 'copy-book' situation in those difficult times, and a most praiseworthy effort by those who were on the beach to carry on the fine work that had been instigated by their predecessors, some of whom were doing an equally fine job on the world's battlefields.

It was realised early in that season that a junior Rescue and Resuscitation team would be impracticable, and so efforts were concentrated on forming a senior R. & R., with the then two leading Juniors, A. Cuneo and R. MacPherson as the pivot. The team performed splendidly throughout the season, invariably finishing close to the leaders. In the elimination contests for the State Championships, they were successful in winning a qualifying heat — defeating on that occasion — all club teams in the northern metropolitan division, but failed to qualify for the finals. The performance of this team brought further laurels to the Club. The team comprised: A. Cuneo, R. MacPherson, V. Agnew, T. Middleton, D. Wakefield, L. Jones and A. Barnes — as a reserve.

Quite a number of members were successful in individual events during that season, among whom Bob Macpherson was the most outstanding. He won the Novice Surf Race at Maroubra in February, and was second in the Obstacle Race at Manly in January.

Whilst the active side of the Club was dependant mainly on the junior members — the social side of it was dependant on the more senior ranks. Social activities were conducted very vigorously during those dark days, the ladies committee lending a hand whenever needed. The atmosphere was one of close unity — the Clubhouse providing the venue for many an association and acquaintance. The stalwarts of the Club, especially the ladies, kept the “home fires burning.”

More finance was needed to keep the Club on a sturdy footing so the Social Committee intensified this important section of the Club's activities — by conducting a weekly series of Housie and social parties in the Clubhouse. This innovation was highly successful and contributed largely to the income of the organisation. The members mainly responsible for the social affairs were L. Lock, M. Hogan and A. Warman, who capably conducted this section of the work over a period of years.

They carried on when the inevitable resignations of the younger members were tendered. Their efforts contributed in no small measure to the success of the functions. They were helped by Mesdames Macpherson, McColm, Roberts and Miss E. Doodson of the Ladies' Committee.

The war having come to an end — there came the natural rejoicing.

South Curl Curl Surf Club joined in the many other clubs in welcoming home the members who served in the fight for this country. A special re-union, which took the form of a smoko, was held in the Clubhouse on Saturday, 20th July, 1946. Over one-hundred people attended, including many ex-servicemen and members still in the services. The onward march of time for this occasion was given a back seat and in an atmosphere of gaiety members revelled in reminiscences of pre-war days at “Curly”.

It could be safely assumed that the stretch of beach known as Curl Curl was in the minds of those members as they fought in far-away lands. Having returned home, they could review the past six years with the knowledge they had gained about the world, and look to their future years with a sense of optimism. The Club is indeed proud of these men who, just as they volunteered to safeguard the lives of the public in the surf, were equally ready to lay down their lives in the cause of freedom.

## **Postwar Activities**

**During the winter of 1946, a series of exceptionally high tides with a strong undertow scoured the beach to an extent which threatened to undermine the main road. The foundation of the Clubhouse and public pavilion was also in danger.**

In conjunction with ratepayers and residents of the district, the Surf Club executive approached the Warringah Shire Council with the proposition of extending the retaining wall from the ladies' dressing pavilion to a point opposite Gardere Avenue, and to resume the area bounded by Carrington Parade, Farnell Street, Adams Street and Gardere Avenue, with a view to straightening the main road, the residue of land to be dedicated as a public reserve.

With the assistance of Mr. Darby, M.L.A., a deputation comprising representatives of the Warringah Shire Council, the West Harbord-Curl Curl Progress Association and the Surf Club approached the Premier, the Hon. W. McKell, with a view to securing financial assistance for the proposed work.

It is to the credit of all concerned and to the proud record of this surf club, that some of the land was resumed to allow that work to be carried out. Until then the beach suffered little from the ravages of the sea, and no trouble evolved to cause any great anxiety. Since the beach erosion of 1946 there has been the necessity to keep a watchful eye on the condition of the beach and land.

The threat to the Clubhouse, pavilion and adjacent houses is ever-present and work is always necessary to counteract the ravages of the surf.

The Annual Carnival of 1947 was nearly washed out by the heaviest hail storm ever experienced in the history of Sydney. The weather was threatening all day, but late in the afternoon the worst came as the hailstones fell. It was a storm which people will remember for many, many years.

After observing a noticeable decline in public patronage at carnivals held earlier in the season, the committee decided to brighten up the Carnival with novelty events — interspersed between events on the official programme. The highlight of the novelty show was a Cavalcade of the Surf — featuring fashions in swimsuits from 1890 to 1947, displayed by girls from the South Curl Curl

Ladies' March Past Team — which by this time had attained a precedent in the Surf Life Saving Movement.

These displays virtually saved the day, and prevented what would have been a wash-out. It showed good organising ability on the part of the committee members and provided good entertainment.

At other carnivals, the Club was successful in the boat events — winning eight out of twelve races. It just missed obtaining another title, and always put up a good effort to always stay within sight of the trophy.

The surf clubs at around this time were enjoying wide-spread recognition. They were sharing the public interest with other sporting bodies, while on the more important active side, interest grew with every rescue made.

### **A Rescue at Any Time**

Rescue operations are not confined to the official season or set patrol hours. Indeed, in the history of surf life saving it has never been that way. Whilst in the winter months there are no patrols to keep the same constant vigilance, there are always enough members around to effect a rescue. This was certainly the case on the morning of 17th August, 1947.

At this time a launch was observed off Curl Curl Beach on the fringe of very heavy breakers about 450 yards from the shore. It was heading in the direction of North Curl Curl and was obviously in serious danger.

Club members walking towards the beach at that moment, spotted the distressed craft and immediately raced to the Clubhouse. Just then — a large wave struck the launch and overturned it. The plight of those on board was only too clear — the members didn't have a moment to lose. After that first wave struck, a series of huge waves continued to pound the launch, driving it ever closer to the beach. Of the five passengers, one was trapped in the cabin, while three clung to the craft. One passenger was swept overboard when the first wave struck.

Club member, Tony Cuneo, swam in the belt to the launch, assisted by members of both North and South Curl Curl Clubs. They managed to extricate the occupant from the cabin and brought the other three with the launch to the beach, by hooking a line to the boat.

The combined efforts of both clubs, carried out this operation quite rapidly. Then it was realised that one man was missing and was being swept out to sea. South Curl Curl's prominent swimmer, Len Brown immediately entered the water without a line, followed by Tony Cuneo, both making their second swim in the thundering sea.

Two more reels were brought from the clubhouse and L. Cook of North Curl Curl and H. Hansen of South Curl Curl donned belts and endeavoured to take the lines to sea.

After battling for twenty minutes in a gallant effort to get through the break, both belt-men were hauled back to the beach.

Boats were not available, and the two members who operated without lines displayed both courage and initiative. At the commencement of this operation, Manly District Ambulance was notified. The patient who had been trapped in the cabin was conveyed to the Club's casualty room where he was treated by ambulance men, who had arrived on the scene almost at once. The Officer-in-Charge at the Ambulance Station kept in constant touch with the Club during the time the rescue was in progress.

In the meantime, Boat Captain, Richie Roberts, arrived and instinctively organised a boat crew, consisting of R. Picard, B. Buckingham and L. Baxter, all of South Curl Curl, and A. Denning of North Curl Curl. They then proceeded to sea in the North Curl Curl boat.

Cuneo and Brown had located the patient about 350 yards from the beach and were supporting him in very heavy surf. He had drifted rather rapidly out to sea, and his condition looked grave. On the journey out from the beach, the surf boat shipped a large quantity of water. It reached the rescue party and proceeded to pick up Len Brown and the patient, while Tony Cuneo swam back to the beach to avoid overloading the boat.

The patient by this time was unconscious, and to add to the hazard, the boat was very low in the water. It was swamped about fifty yards from the shore on the return journey, but members of both clubs assisted promptly to beach it, and all were saved. Manly Ambulance officers applied Carbogen gas to the patient, and after an hour's treatment he began to show signs of life.

It was 12.30 p.m. by the time the last patient was brought safely to shore. The battle had lasted an hour and a half. Tony Cuneo

and Len Brown were in the water for well over three-quarters of an hour, in shocking conditions. Eye-witnesses said the work performed by the two beltmens and members of the boat crew was excellent, but that the actions of Cuneo and Brown were outstandingly meritorious.

All five patients were taken to Manly Hospital, two were admitted.

This rescue was an example of the bravery that exists right through the year, whenever needed. The leading rescuers could be excused if they had walked away from the beach with chests and heads high, but such was not the case with those two lads. Modesty has always been part and parcel of their nature, as indeed it seems to be with every lifesaver.

Cuneo and Brown received Meritorious Awards, while Richie Roberts and the crew received an award from the Royal Humane Society.

**In the 1947-48 season the success of the swimmers was highlighted by Bobby Macpherson's win in the Open Surf Race at the Australian Championship carnival in Southport, Queensland.**

He and Tony Cuneo were the two top swimmers of the Club at that time.

In 1949 the Junior Boat Crew came very close to winning the Australian Championship title. It actually did win, but due to several protests, lost on a "no race" verdict. The decision was challenged, but the Judiciary Committee of the Association was adamant in its stand, and there was nothing they could do but accept and hope for a clearer win in the future. The fact that the referee's decision ruled in their favour was of no consequence.

The Senior "A" crew was a little luckier the following year at Coolangatta, by coming a close second in the National Titles final. The crew comprised, Richie Roberts (Captain), B. Bennett, H. Bailey, B. Buckingham and J. Buckingham.

An addition to the boat "family" came this season — a Senior "B" crew entering the field. Under the capable captaincy of Len Brown, with four sturdy men — K. Stanford, G. Crawley, R. Brown and J. Buckingham this crew further strengthened the competitiveness and status of the club.

1952 saw a proud Richie Roberts, for he had at last brought home the long-awaited Australian Senior Surf Boat Championship. The

carnival was held at North Wollongong, and brought the fulfilment of the ambition which Richie had held for years. This was the culmination of hard training and years of perseverance. The crew had been runner-up three times prior at Maroubra (N.S.W.) 1948, Coolangatta (Qld.) 1950 and Scarborough (W.A.) 1951.

In addition the Club's four crews scored extremely well at the Abbotsford Regattas, dominating the Still Water Championship for some eight years. This was an annual event, run in conjunction with the Sydney Rowing Club, and is best remembered by the "A" Crew's achievements. It won in 1948-49; and held this title till 1955.

The 1954-55 season was most significant by the fact that the Club had wins in all the surf boat events. The last win was by the "C" crew in 1955-56 season, ending an epic era in the history of the Club.

### ***End of an Era***

**In the 1952-53 season, Richie Roberts resigned as Boat Captain and Len Brown was elected to take his place. Before long, however, Richie returned to his "first love," and came to light again by sweeping a "C" crew. There were so many starters for the boats that an "A" and "B" crew were already in operation. It was clear that a third crew was necessary for this boat-minded club, and with the enthusiasm that had built up, it wasn't too difficult to bring this in prominence.**

Consisting of the "older" members who had so often rowed the Club to victory on previous occasions, the extra crew did extremely well. It carried nearly everything before it, including a remarkable series of wins at North Narrabeen, North Steyne, Manly, Freshwater, Maroubra and Coojee carnivals.

The Club came to the end of the boat race winning era during the early fifties. A certain amount of bad luck was experienced and crews continued to try hard, but when the end came — it came beyond redemption. South Curl Curl had commanded attention in the surf boat epics for almost a decade, so a temporary lull in achievements was to be expected sooner or later. They did, however, score placings in that year (1954), including a second in the Freshwater Marthon by the "A" crew, and a second at North Narrabeen by the "B" crew.

## Shire Council Liaison Committee

During the winter of 1952 the Warringah Shire Council set up a committee to co-opt all the surf clubs in the Shire with a view to raising funds for clubs. Great initiative was shown on the part of the Council and members of the various clubs concerned. It also brought the Clubs considerable finance, and was viewed as a good sound way by which the Movement could exist and continue to do the job on the same high standards required.

President of the Shire (Cr. Fisher) was one of the main instigators of the scheme, and all members of our Club were behind it in principle. Dick Burns was elected as South Curl Curl delegate to this Committee and carried out his part effectively. It was envisaged that this move would help to get essential attention to various matters — such as the pool, and certain equipment so badly needed. It was also deemed that it might obviate the endless correspondence to Council on minor matters and bring the clubs and council closer together.

By the second year, this body had carried out excellent work — its fund-raising potential bringing great credit to all concerned. Delegates M. Hogan, R. Burns, A. R. Roberts and B. Buckingham attended the meetings regularly. They held concerts at Queensliff and Narrabeen, a barbecue at North Curl Curl, ran a Button Appeal and an Art Union — with a Holden car as first prize — all of which greatly assisted the clubs of the Warringah shire.

At the North Steyne Carnival in 1954 — the "A" crew again struck bad luck. It was pounded by a huge dumper which badly damaged the boat "Flora Roberts." They returned to South Curl Curl to obtain the "Arthur O. Olson," and succeeded in winning the final of the Senior Boat Race. This boat proved its quality by its performance that day. It showed that it was built more for the big seas and that it handled better than any boat this club had previously.

The "A" crew also won the Marathon at the Coogee Carnival and gained a second place at North Narrabeen. At the Royal Carnival held at Bondi — the Juniors came good with a win.

At about this time, the Movement was entering another era, in which the general public was recognising the importance of the surf clubs. Looking at the beach then, one could not help noticing the change that had taken place.

Grouped at the southern end of the long strip of sand lay the brown, sun-absorbing bodies — thinning to just beyond the pavilion to the north. The only thing that broke this pattern was the occasional beach umbrella that appeared at certain spots, adding to the colourful scene. South Curl Curl was obviously becoming more popular.

The initiative shown by the Social Committee projected the Club's image also, as efforts were never too restrained in this respect. One event which was very successful was the Annual Ball. This was held in the Clubhouse with a marquee at one end — which greatly assisted the running of the function. Another successful function was the Brookvale Show, where three stalls operated for three days. Richie Roberts — ably assisted by R. Marvin, M. Hogan and a number of the members plus the Ladies' Committee — played commendable parts to make the stalls a success.

During this season — the Association ran an Art Union for the purpose of financing a team of lifesavers to visit South Africa in July. The Club nominated Tony Cuneo for the team, but he failed to gain selection.

## Gale, Rescue and its Sequel

**On Wednesday, February 16th, 1955 — a fierce gale struck Sydney, whipping up savage seas. Off Manly Beach — three men in a small fishing boat were caught in the fury of the elements and swept northwards. Their boat capsized and they clung to it desperately.**

South Curl Curl Chief Gear Steward, Neville Nunney, home from work early, had gone to the beach to watch the big seas. As he arrived he saw the overturned boat with three figures clinging to it.

Without a moment's hesitation he broke into the locked clubhouse to search for a box line, but could not locate one. Just then a youth came on the scene, and Neville enlisted his help to carry a reel to the beach where he donned the belt and dived into the boiling surf.

It was a big sea, with mountainous waves crashing a long way from shore, while beyond the mass of foam — a vastness of white capped waves rolled on endlessly. It was not the kind of sea anyone would enter ordinarily, but to stay out would have meant seeing three men drown.

The plight of the three men was fully realised by Neville as he swam out relentlessly through the turbulence to make his lone rescue. It was a long, hard swim, at one stage he felt he would not make it in time, but he plodded on tenaciously. On reaching the distressed boat, he grabbed two of the men and took them to safety, their condition being satisfactory enough to negotiate the treacherous run to shore. Thinking the third man was under the boat — he went out again, but in vain, as unfortunately this man was drowned. His body was recovered later further up the beach.

Neville's action was all the more heroic by reason of the fact that he was not a champion swimmer and could easily have lost his own life in the mountainous surf, but this did not deter him. It was by far one of the most spectacular rescues effected in Sydney, and goes down in the records of this Club as the most heroic single handed operation in its history. The death of the third man was unfortunate, but it seemed he was already dead before Neville reached the scene. The fact that two of the men were safe, warranted the highest praise.

The rescue drew widespread newspaper interest, including a special article in the Sydney "Sun-Herald" in which an interview with the young hero was featured. His final remark in the interview — "if anybody would like to express their gratitude they can do so by helping our club buy a boat," — showed the unselfish spirit of the lifesaver. At that time, the Club was desperately in need of a new boat, as the "Arthur Olson" was getting a little "tired" and the changing trends demanded something a little faster.

It attracted vast interest among the public, not the least of whom was Mr. W. H. Lober, who, on reading the article in the paper, decided to do something about it. He drove down to see the members, had a talk with our hero, then instantly decided to assist the Club to purchase a new surf boat. Mr. Lober requested that the boat be named in honour of Neville's wife, so — the "Marjorie Nunney" it became.

Together Neville and his wife shared the pride of receiving the highest honour that can be bestowed on a member by a club. It was a fine craft and served the Club well.

Major rescues seem to be a main focal point with this Club, as the records clearly show. Few seasons have gone by that there hasn't been at least one rescue in which emer-

gency action had to be applied. Mass rescues have been a frequent occurrence, usually caused by the collapse of a sand bar, and the persistent under-drag that inevitably follows. Others have been caused by the nature of the sea itself, the sparse few are caused by a boat capsizing.

Another rescue worthy of mention — occurred at South Curl Curl on the day of the North-South Inter-club carnival, on February 15th, 1959, when the Senior Boat crew was swamped by a huge wave during the boat race. It was on its way out to the buoys, about 100 yards from shore when this happened, and the position soon became very precarious. The boat, with its five members, was rapidly being swept southward, coming dangerously close to the jagged rocks at the foot of the southern headland.

At one stage the position was extremely grim, and there seemed little hope that the boat would be saved. The rip at the southern end was running fast, the waves were crashing with full velocity — whatever could be done had to be done quickly.

As mountainous seas constantly threatened the struggling crew, Club Captain Brian Lerner, swam nearly a quarter of a mile in a belt to reach them — accompanied by Club member, Peter Burke, who, with flippers on, swam with out a belt. Junior Captain — Peter Renwick also swam out in a belt, diving from the rocks.

In the meantime — North Curl Curl lifesavers manner their boat and were quickly out to aid the crew of the distressed craft. They attached a line to the swamped craft, but as they were about to haul it in, the line fouled on the rocks.

**It this point, the South Curl Curl boat captain, Len Brown, who did a wonderful job in restoring order and aiding the crew from when the trouble began, swam to the rocks, obtained a knife, cut the fouled line, then swam back to the boat where he remained with crew member, Dave Olivey, who had been hit in the stomach by an oar.**

Freshwater Surf Club joined in the rescue, sending out a boat to pick up the crew. A crowd of over 2,000 eagerly watched from the cliffs as the battle against the treacherous sea continued for over an hour. They stayed to see the two rescue boats hauling the distressed boat and crew to Freshwater Beach — bringing the struggle to an end. The rescuers in the water then swam back to the beach.



Fortunately, no one was seriously hurt, but there could have easily been loss of life. However, thanks to the brilliant work and prompt action of the rescuers and the crews, a major disaster was averted. Boat Captain Len Brown won the most acclaim for the marvellous job he did. He displayed tremendous courage on this occasion, which was just one of the many cases in which he typified his character.

The surf clubs received additional publicity through the Mr and Miss Australian Surf Quest, held during the 1958-59 season. Sponsored by Westinghouse Rosebery Pty. Ltd., it carried a prize of a flight around the world. Representing South Curl Curl Club was attractive Raelene Orr — who went close in the finals. She made the semi-finals in fine style and did very well through to the finals.

In the male section, Ben Acton representing the Club, succeeded in the Part 2 elimination. It was a tough contest in both sections, with several clubs in the State competing, and our entrants put up a good effort. Some money was raised in beach collections during the Quest, which made the entry worthwhile.

Both entrants had to swim certain distances in the surf as part of the contest, while the male entrants had to also ride a surfboard. The quest was not wholly one in which physical appearance was the prime factor. It was an important factor, but intelligence and athletic capabilities were of equal importance in order to qualify.

The following season was heralded by the Miss Gidget Contest, another beauty quest of a fashion — strictly for teenage girls. It was run in conjunction with a film then currently showing in Sydney, entitled "Gidget."

The film itself had a surfing theme, featuring the teenage way of life at an American beach, and was quite enjoyable in content. The object of the Quest was to find the girl that most typified "Gidget" — the girl of the film. Main qualifications were that she be of similar appearance, both physically and in dress, and have a pleasing and intelligent manner.

Most surf clubs in the metropolitan branch entered the Contest and attracted wide interest. South Curl Curl's entrant was attractive Glenys Deer, who reached the finals.

Glenys, who was 16 at the time, came through very well as representative of South Curl Curl. Her charm and courtesy at all times proved a great benefit for this Club. She attended the gala premiere of the film, escorted by our Standard Bearer for the night — Ron

Levitt, who also did a good job in representing the Club. The prize, which was worth over \$400, included a week's flying holiday for two at Surfers' Paradise — all expenses paid. A fully-equipped reel valued at \$170 was balloted. This was drawn by Bondi S.L.S.C.

The Contest was won by Queenscliff entrant — Jennifer Baldwin. It was a great opportunity, that placed the surf clubs in the limelight. It also provided Sydney with a bit of colour and festivity.

Towards the end of this season, this Club as well as other clubs in the State, was approached on the matter of assisting an appeal for the Crippled Children Society of N.S.W. This was a State-wide appeal, which was conducted in April in order to raise \$500,000 for expansion purposes. Just how many clubs took part in this appeal is unknown to us, but this Club responded in the best way it could.

At it was at the close of the season — the availability of members was scarce, but we managed to have three members who volunteered to assist in the dor-to-door collection. The area allocated was naturally South Curl Curl — Harbord, which we covered one Sunday afternoon till sundown — collecting a sum of \$72.

The helping of such worthy causes could be more in the scope of surf clubs if they were in a more lucrative position. Unfortunately, the Surf Life Saving Movement itself is a charitable organisation fighting for financial existence year after year, making it virtually impossible to assist in any material way. The provision of general welfare to the public — outside its normal activities — is the dream of many members within the Movement. But it is controlled by a very restrictive means of revenue, keeping it to the object of its formation.

### **Carnival Day Rescue in 1960**

During the 1960 Annual Carnival, a young surfer was swept out to sea. A pounding surf was running and the youth's predicament looked grim. From the rocks, without equipment, Club members, R. Palmer, J. Monk, R. Jarvis, J. Garnett, D. Fitzgerald and A. Nunney dived into the turbulent sea. They swam out together, losing little time in reaching the distressed swimmer.

Freshwater member, Don Williams, assisted by swimming from the shore in a belt. He had



*State Championship Surf Boat winners, 1945. Crew: A. Roberts, R. Picard, L. Wiltshire, B. Buckingham and V. Morrisey*



*Mrs. FLORA ROBERTS  
Member of South Curl Curl S. L. S. C.  
Ladies Committee 1933-69.  
President of Ladies Committee 1947-67*





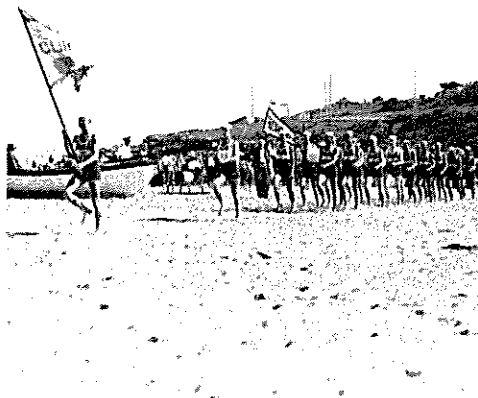
*Club group*



*Christening of "Edith Woods" (1935) by Mrs. Edith Woods. In foreground is Arthur Still who was President for 11 years*



*The second clubhouse after additions and improvements. Also shows the clinker built boat, known to members as the "Koompartoo", in the boat shed*

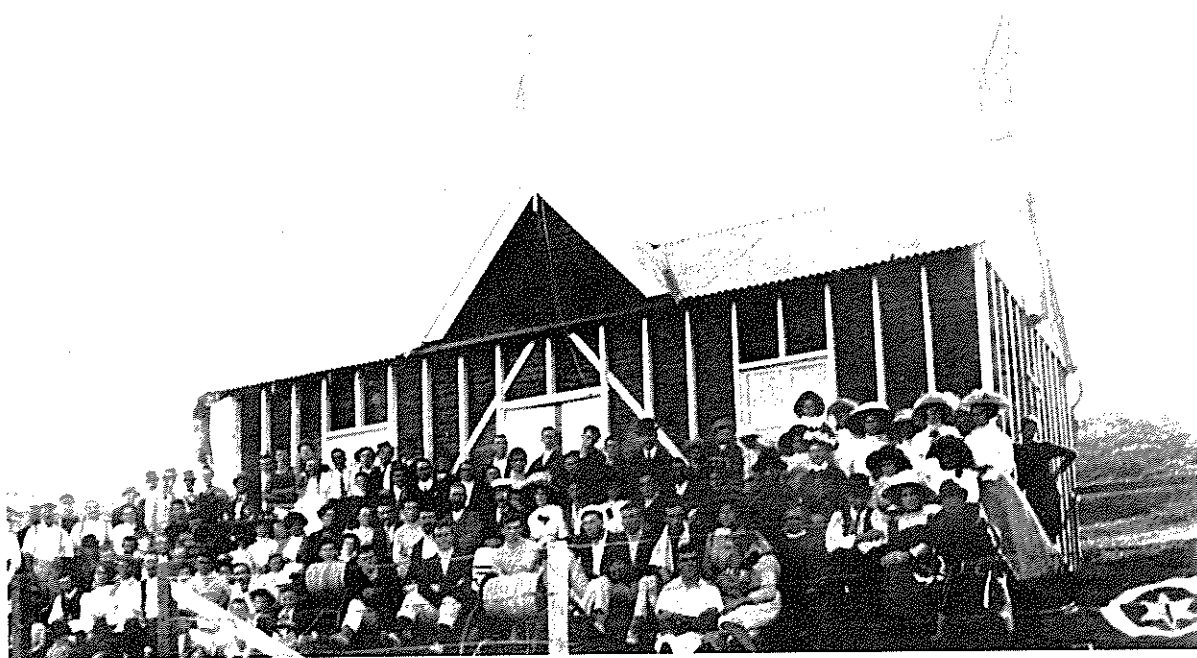


*Club March Past Team wearing costumes quite different from today*

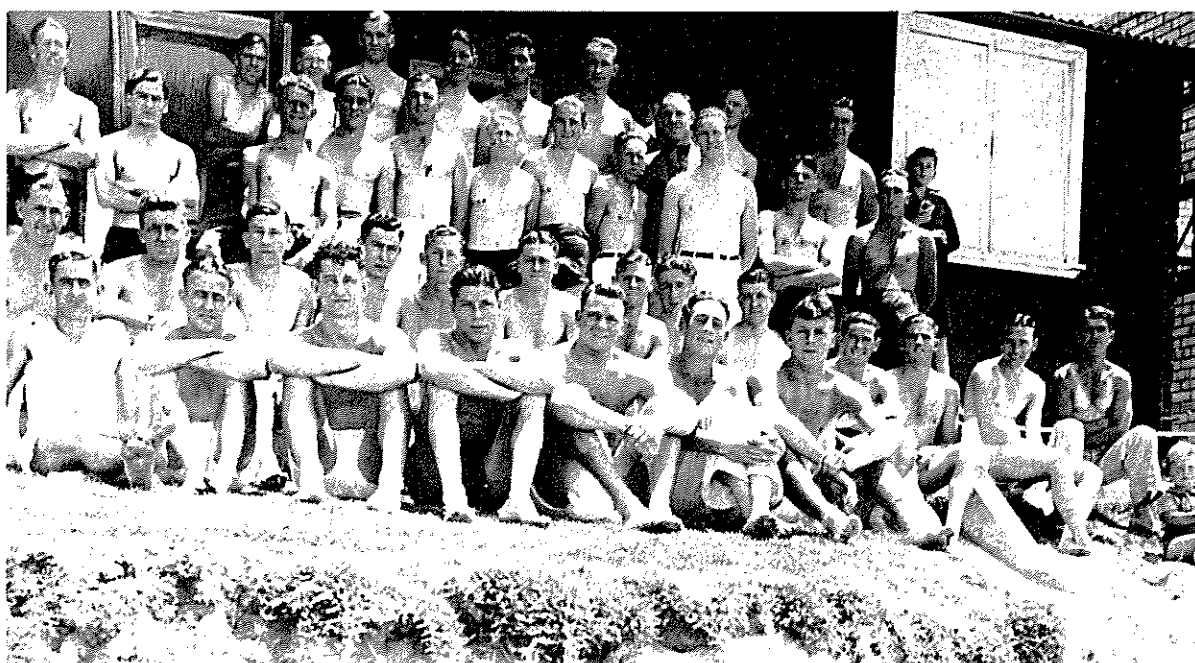




*After much agitation the original rock pool was built and opened for public use*



*The start of South Curly Club. First clubhouse opened in 1911. A few years later club went out of existence owing to enlistments in World War I. In centre of group, wearing white cap, is Mr. C. Paterson, President of Surf Life Saving Association of New South Wales*



*in front of clubhouse before alterations were done . . . shows club active strength*



*1937 . . . Opening of present day clubhouse*





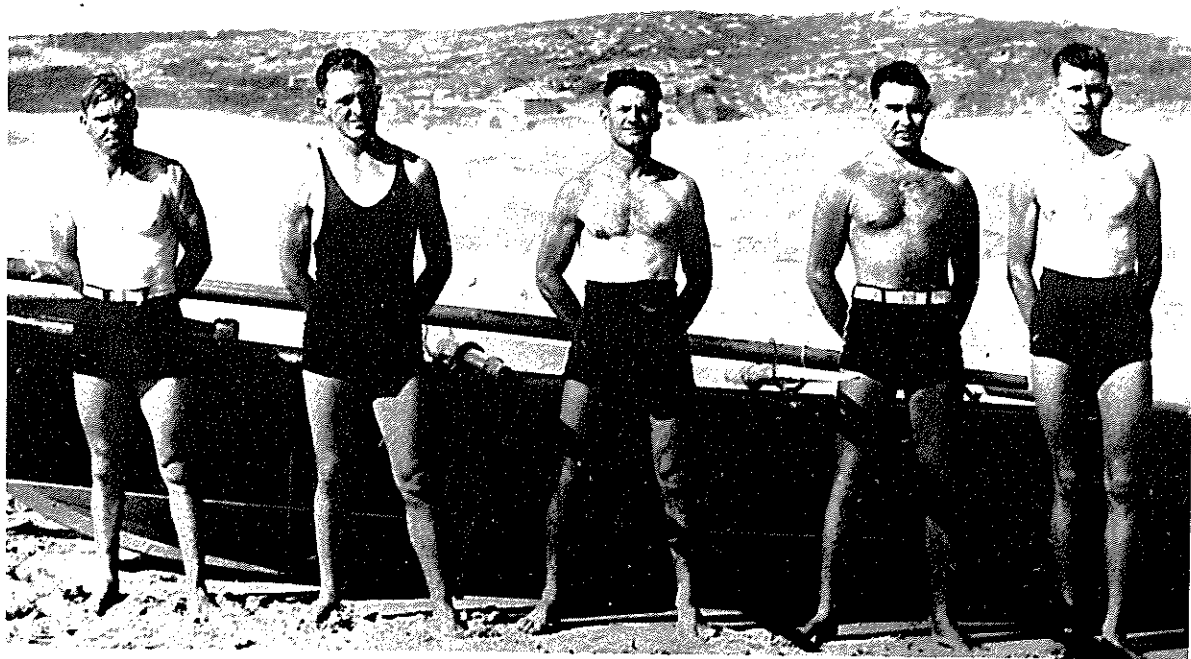
*The Old and the New*



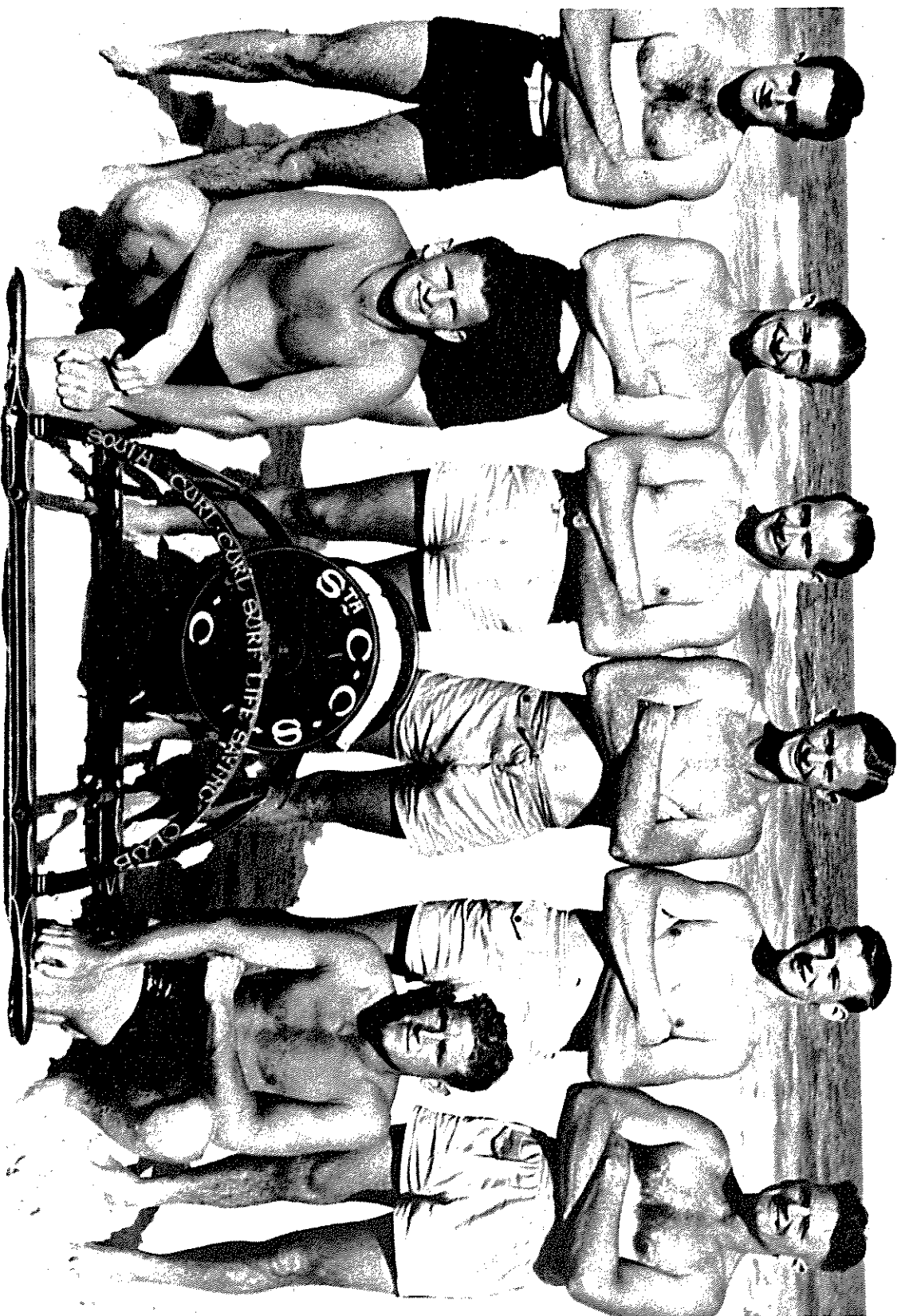
*Club group very proud of new clubhouse*



*March Past team, Australian Championships, Coolongatta, equal winners*



*Meritorious Award Boat Crew, January 2. 1938. A. Roberts, C. Doodson, E. Cooper, V. Garrison and S. Davis*



*Meritorious Award winners for rescue of launch crew, August 1947. R. Picard, H. Hansen, A. Denning, B. Buckingham, I. Baxter, A. Roberts. Kneeling: Awarded Meritorious Silver Medal, A. Cuneo and L. Brown*



*The latest and most up-to-date in power boat rescue craft. The Jack Wilson, presented to South Curl Curl, North Curl Curl, Freshwater Surf Life Saving Clubs by Harbord Diggers*



An aerial photograph of a coastline, likely in New South Wales, Australia. The image shows a dark, textured body of water with white foam from waves breaking along the shore. The coastline is visible as a bright, irregular line at the top and bottom of the frame. Several labels are placed on the right side of the image, identifying specific locations along the coast from north to south: Manly, North Steyne, Queenscliff, Freshwater, and North Curl Curl. The text is in a white, sans-serif font.

Manly

North Steyne

Queenscliff

Freshwater

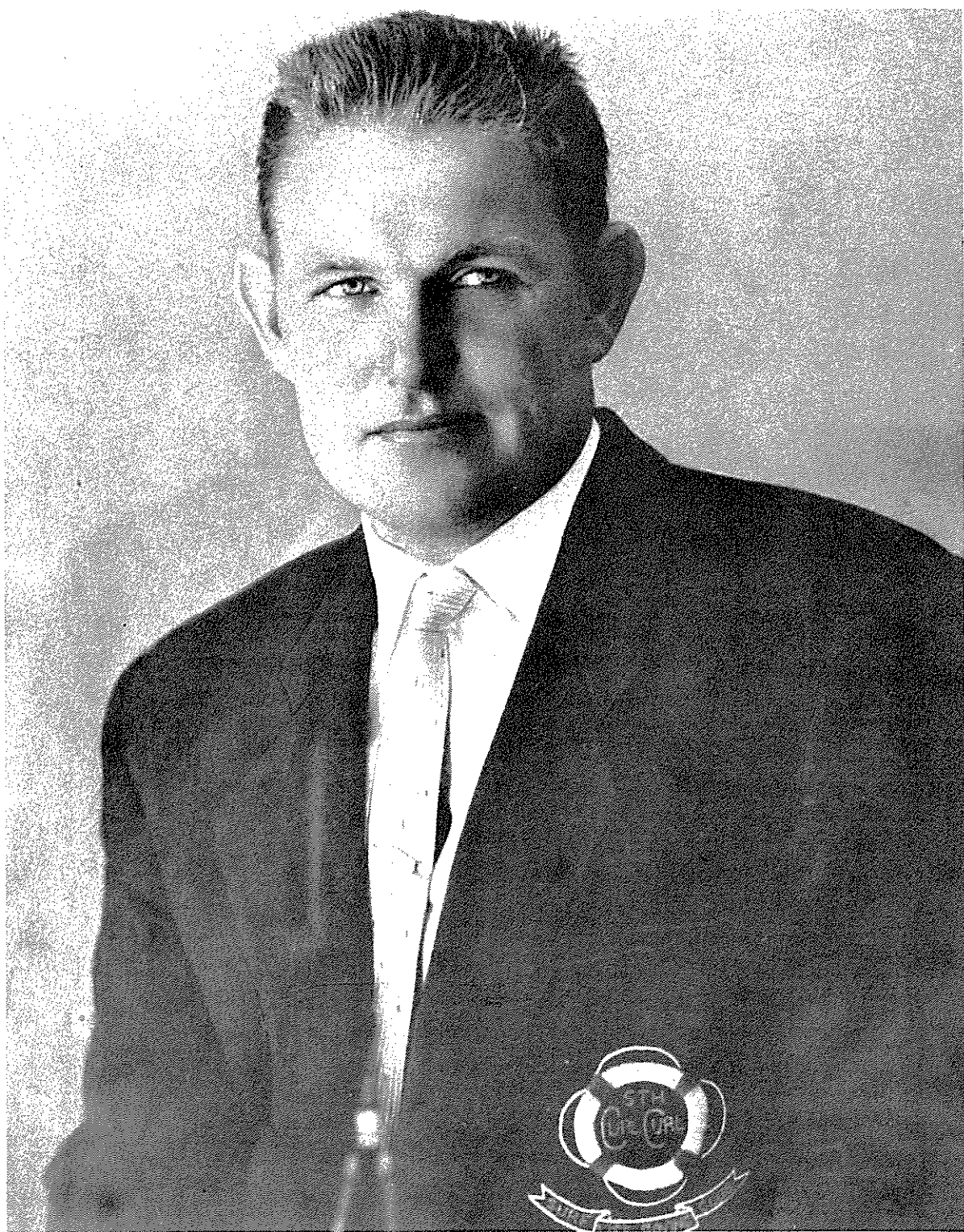
North  
Curl Curl



er

South  
Curl Curl





*Neville Nunney . . . Awarded Royal Humane Society's Bronze Medallion and Certificate of Merit and S. L. S. A. Meritorious Certificate of Merit*



**A. O. OLSON**  
*Secretary 1928-38; President 1939-58*



**B. BUCKINGHAM**  
*President 1967-*



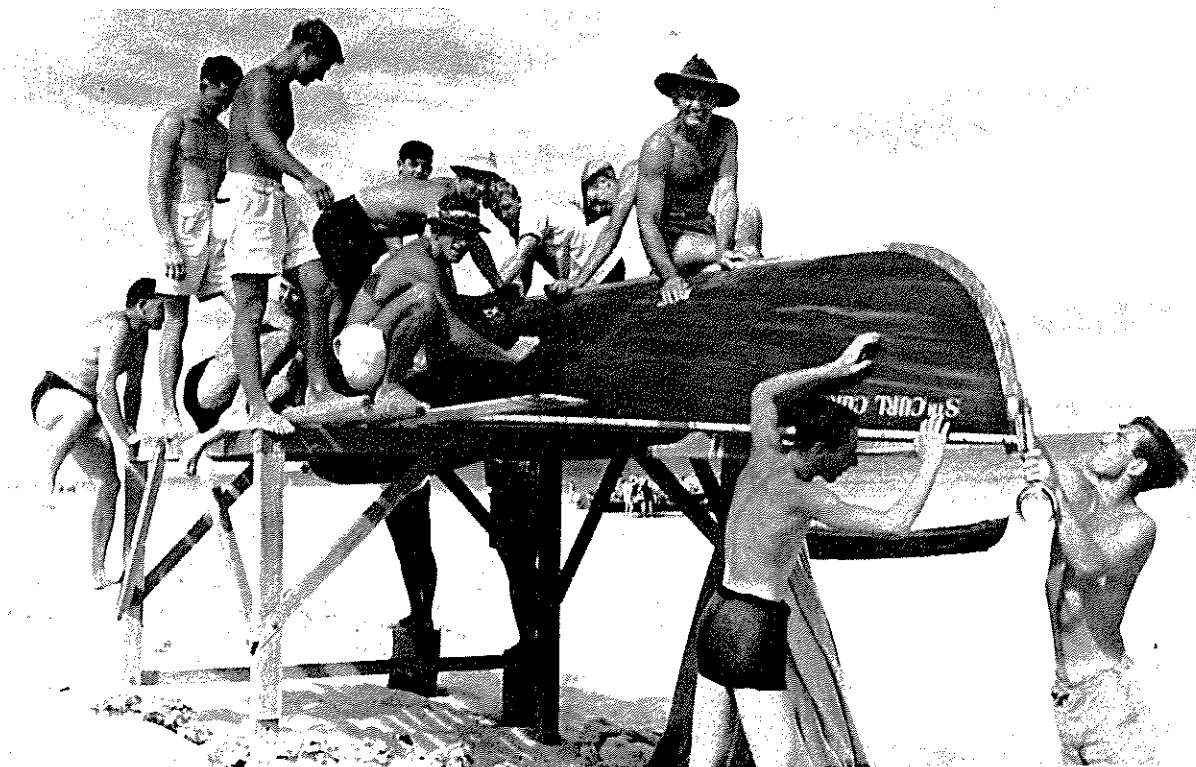
**A. R. ROBERTS**  
*Boat Captain 1933-52 President 1959-67*



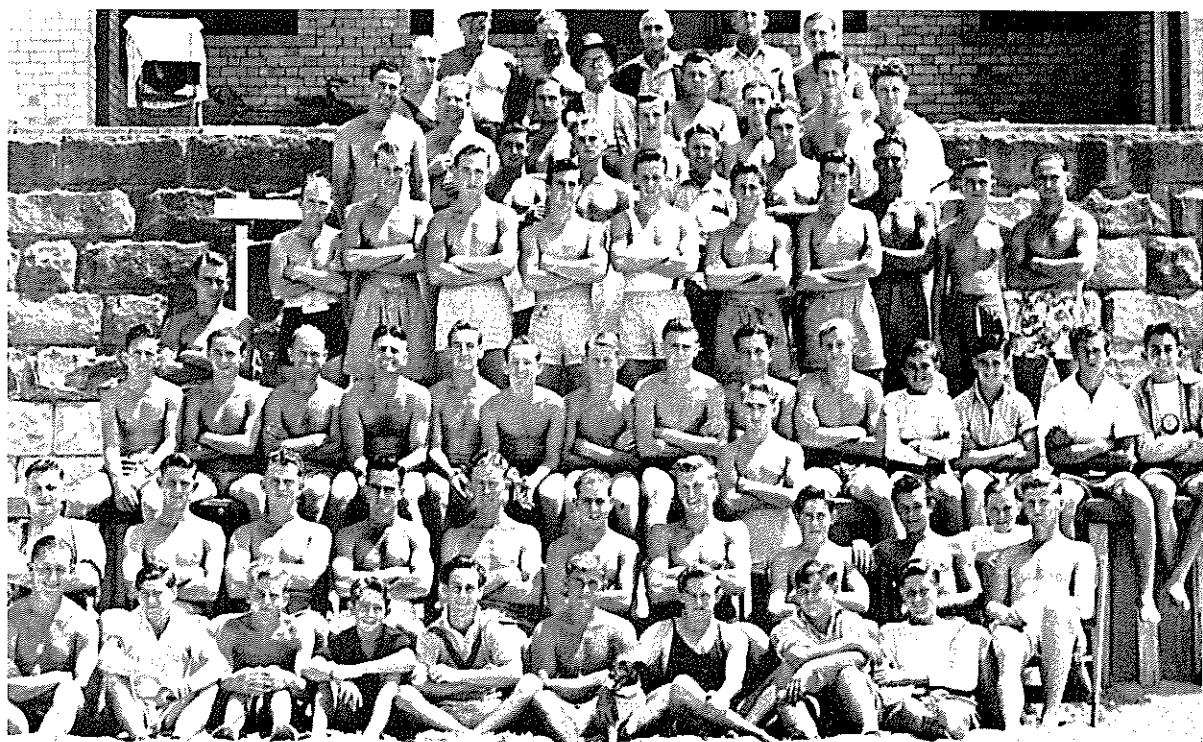
**A. STILL**  
*President 1928-38*



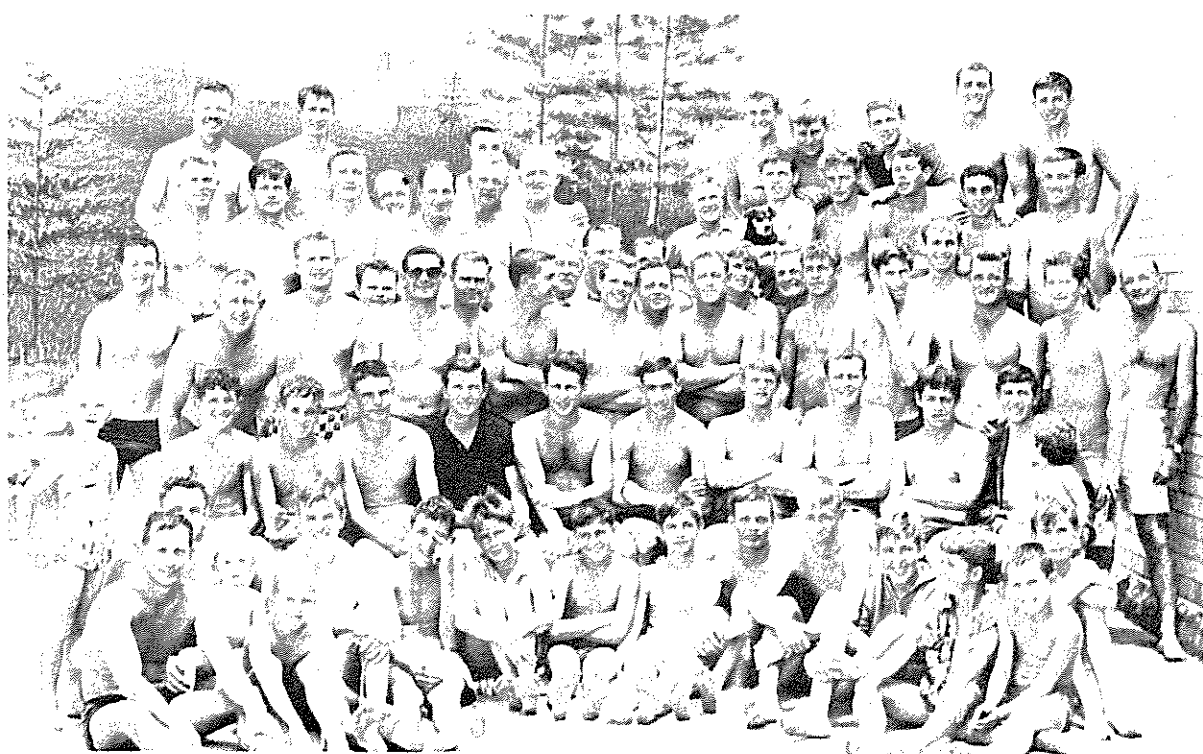
*Waiting to start at State Surf Championships, Byron Bay, 1952*



*Preparing for the Australian Championships, Scarborough Beach, W.A. Easter, 1951*



*Club group*

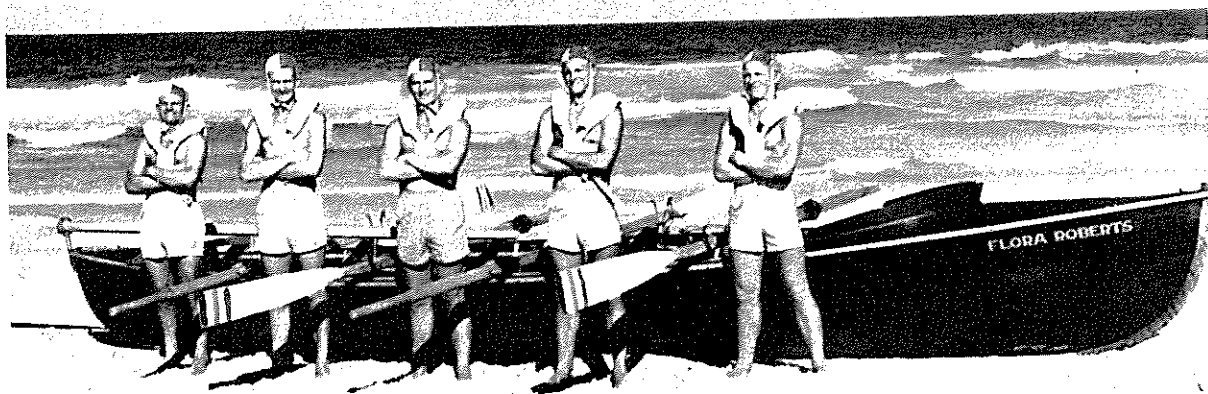


*Club group*

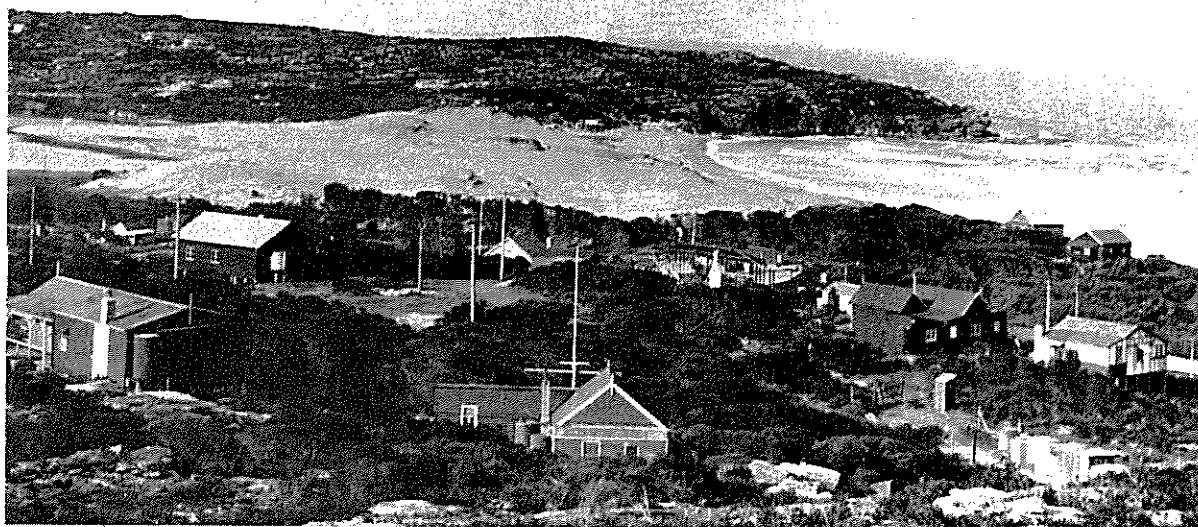




*Final of Australian Boat Championships, Coolongatta . . . South Curl Curl nearest camera*



*Senior boat crew, winners Australian Boat Championships, Wollongong, 1952.  
Crew: A. Roberts, B. Buckingham, A. Cuneo, R. Brown and A. Brown*



*The South Curl Curl area in the old days. It was about this time that a move was being made to restart the Surf Club*

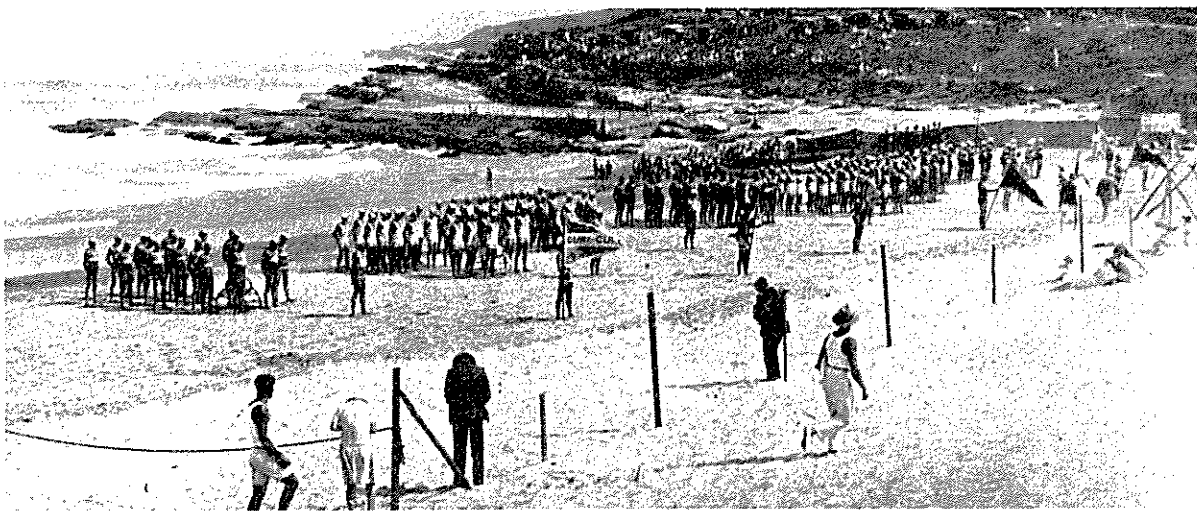


*It is not known why this group was photographed. Seated between ladies is the second President of the Club from 1919 to 1928, Mr. S. H. Newman*





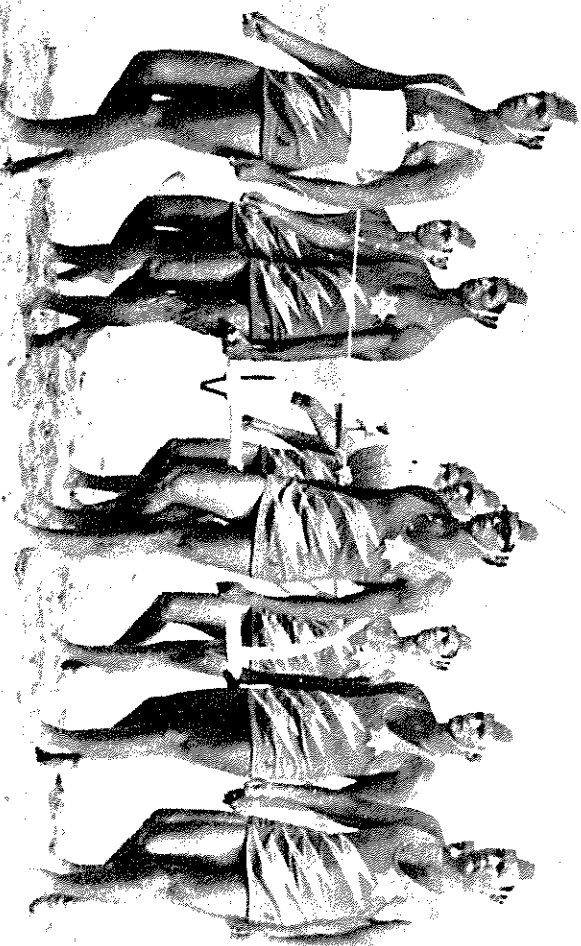
*Clubs first boat ... clinker built ... banana shape ... shows vast difference in seating arrangements compared to a boat of today.*  
*Crew: E. Raymond, A. Jones, H. Martin, W. Ramsland and A. Vimpany*



*First official carnival, New Years Eve, 1928. Public has not changed much over the years ... more outside hessian than paying customers inside area*



*Club group*



*March Past Team, runners up, Australian Championships, Elouera Beach, N.S.W. 1967-68*

a long way to swim, while the other six rescuers had but the outer break to negotiate.

When they did reach the youth, they had to fight frantically to prevent themselves and the patient from being dashed against the rocks. The waves were gigantic, and it seemed that at any moment they would be pounded against the jagged rocks of the notorious southern corner. Each time a wave crashed on them, they had to bear the full brunt of its turbulence, endeavouring to keep the youth from swallowing any more water.

The patient was almost exhausted by this time, and it was only the sight of the Club's surf boat that raised the hopes from a dismal outlook. The youth and the six lifesavers were picked up and taken to shore, ending one of the most dramatic scenes observed at this beach. The rescued youth was taken to the casualty room, where ambulance officers treated him.

The rescue was described as one of the most daring at a metropolitan beach, and certainly one of the most outstanding at South Curl Curl. All members who participated deserve great credit, as there was no doubt, action was taken at extreme personal risk. Don Williams was particularly highly praised for his magnificent swim against such great odds. He had a hard struggle all the way, but he made it to render desperately needed aid to the rescue party.

The boat crew — under the captaincy of Len Brown, did a wonderful job also. To have taken a boat through such seas so close to the rocks was a feat on its own. To master the course so well and reach the spot so soon — was a tremendous achievement.

Treacherous as the surf was — the programme continued regardless, although this naturally caused delay in the schedule. It was one of those days where stamina and training proved their true values. To the spectators it was the witnessing of a carnival filled with excitement and interest, sprinkled with the epics through which the prime objective of surf clubs derived.

### **The Social Club**

The need for a licensed social club became only too obvious. During this year (1960-61), and moves were made to establish the much sought after club. It was a dream idea, an ambitious thought in the minds of many members.

Delegates were appointed by the Club to explore the possibilities of forming the Social Club in association with Freshwater, North Curl Curl and Dee Why Surf Clubs. They acted liaison officers, sitting on the special Social Club Committee, and reported to the Club the various resolutions of its progress. It was quite active and raised widespread public interest, as it was the first suggestion of such a scheme between these clubs.

The object of the scheme was to provide permanent income for the four surf clubs concerned, thus relieving members from the everlasting canvassing for funds. In short — it was the one real answer to financial anxiety.

The approach was made to the Warringah Shire Council, who unanimously supported the scheme and gave approval in principle. It even selected an ideal site for the proposed club building, which was provided willingly. It was a block in Greendale Park, on the south side of the lagoon.

A company was formed, with Richie Roberts and Bob Macpherson representing South Curl Curl being elected to the Board of Directors under the chairmanship of Eric Johnston of Freshwater.

All was set for the land to be obtained and the foundation stone subsequently laid. Millers Breweries promised most of the finance needed to erect the initial building. It was dependent on the approval from the Minister of Lands to give the necessary sanction for the Club to be built. Following is a report submitted by Mr. R. Macpherson, Secretary of the Board of Directors:—

"The representative of the District Surveyor's Office, Mr. O'Keefe, and I met on the site of the proposed building. Mr. O'Keefe was impressed with our scheme and our objects. I feel sure his report and recommendation was made out in our favour.

"At this stage we have two main hurdles to clear. Number 1 is the fact that Crown Land has never been released for the erection of a mere social club. For instance — bowling clubs do play sport on the land allotted them, and R.S.L. Clubs are dedicated as "Shrines of Remembrance." Number 2, is — that if land is granted to us, a precedent has been set, and many clubs along the coast would apply. This aspect will probably be discussed on a ministerial level before we have our answer."

Just what was discussed we do not know. What we do know it — that the grant was refused by the Lands Department, and the matter

ended there. That was seven years ago — a lot of water has swept onto the beach since then — a lot of lives have been saved since then. By the graciousness of Providence, the surf clubs have managed to exist without the social club. But how much easier it all would have been had the money-earning club become a reality.

### **Enter a New Branch**

Improvement came into the Club's competitive field early in 1961 — the highlight was the winning of the Manly-Warringah Branch Junior Boat Championship at Newport. This was the first championship win for nine years, and was an example of the enthusiasm that still prevailed in the boats within this Club. At the same carnival — the Senior Boat Crew added to the success with a third in the finals. It seemed, as in previous years — that the boat crews were the "backbone" of the Club, keeping it in a competitive position.

The Manly-Warringah Branch was a relatively new name within the Movement at that time, for it was then at the end of its first year. This naturally restricted the number of clubs that could enter a carnival, but it didn't necessarily prevent clubs of the Sydney Branch from entering a carnival held in the north, providing there was no carnival held within that branch on the same day — or vice-versa.

Much scepticism was raised regarding the formulating of the new Branch, but it has adequately justified itself.

### **The Swimming Club**

A new organisation at South Curl Curl Beach came into being at the start of the 1960-61 season — the Curl Curl Amateur Swimming Club. It was decided at a special meeting of the Surf Club to call a public meeting to have the Swimming Club established — as an opening for boys and girls from the age of six or seven to commence in competition swimming and practice. It was also resolved that it act as a means of training and advance coaching for surf club members.

Operating with the support of the Surf Club, it proved a great success, and brought

an added interest to the beach. It also provided wonderful opportunities for the members, some of whom gained tremendously from it. It was acclaimed by senior members as a great achievement and a great necessity. Today, it does not hold quite the same impact in its bearing on the Surf Club, but the latter has gained many members from the Swimming Club over the years, who have been well trained.

The main instigator of this new club was Howard Hansen, a member of the Surf Club for many years, and a man who has done a lot for competitive swimming in this country. He could see the necessity of having a swimming club operating in liaison with the Surf Club, serving the dual purpose of providing extra training facilities for the members, and also teaching children to swim — thus contributing an even greater service to the public. He, together with Rus. Dunn and the other officials concerned, were duly congratulated for the successful inauguration of this Club. It is still quite active, with events being held at South Curl Curl baths every Saturday afternoon through the summer.

### **"Miss Gidget" Contest**

Another "Miss Sydney Gidget" competition was held in 1961 — the second of such contests. It was held in conjunction with the Columbia Pictures film then currently showing in Sydney, "Gidget Goes Hawaiian." South Curl Curl's entrant on this occasion was Maureen Lowe, aged 19, of Harbord. She was chosen by the Club's Special Committee from several entrants.

Maureen did a fine job right throughout the Quest. She attended all functions including a television interview. She also sold most of the theatre tickets for the gala premiere of the film as well as local theatre-party tickets, thus helping the Club financially as well as publicity wise.

### **The Nipper Movement**

1963 was a year of momentous change, for it was then that a new division came into the Club, the Juvenile Division — or as it became more widely known — the Nipper Movement.

The original concept was to encourage membership of a much younger generation. Sons of senior members had always been a problem, as there was nowhere for them to go when their fathers were in the Clubhouse. They wanted to be in the Club, to be a part of it, even if they were too young to realise it, an exuberant desire was being instilled in them.

The age range was from 5 to 13, up to cadet eligibility. This enabled senior members' sons, who were keen on the lifesaving activities, to enter the Club as members. They were, and still are, at an age when lifesavers take their place alongside the various idols of the world, and boys yearn to have the chance to become one of them — a part of their boyhood dreams.

A special general meeting unanimously approved Juvenile membership. South Curl Curl was one of the first Surf Clubs to introduce this type of membership, which started with just six lads, rapidly reaching 54, and today is 113. Freshwater and North Curl Curl Clubs soon followed, and its popularity spread along the New South Wales Coast. The Nipper Movement has become very popular among the surf bathing public, too, the sight of the little fellows in their costumes, marching along so proudly, always arouses interest among the people on the beach. It was good publicity media, through which clubs benefited in their general appeal. It had the added advantage of encouraging boys' mothers to take an interest in the Club. They were soon found at the beach assisting in the running of events and attending carnivals, giving their sons moral support.

The Nipper Club was a brainchild of Jim Routh, who became Secretary in that year. He had many revolutionary ideas and spent a great deal of time in establishing the movement. Basically, the association holds sporting events specially adapted for age groups, and prepares the boys for the main aspects of surf lifesaving in the future.

Nine division, ranging from the 5-year-olds to the 13-year-olds, are trained in swimming and beach events. Of course, up to the nine-year-olds, the "swim" being little more than a wade, but this is sufficient to give them a taste of the surf. The 12 and 13-year-olds learn how to handle the surf — touching on active membership.

The first of the Nipper carnivals was held at South Curl Curl between Freshwater, North and South Curl Curl, and was subsequently made an annual event. The Harbord Diggers'

Trophy was won by South Curl Curl and placed on display in the trophy case. Other carnivals followed at Collaroy and North Narrabeen. South Curl Curl held a prominent position during the early stages of Nipper development.

The organisation that went into the running of the Juvenile Club was really remarkable, as was the public support received. The club continued to score many wins in the ensuing years, particularly in the March Past — an event which drew a lot of attention. Success is clearly evident by the number of pennants that decorate the Clubhouse hall.

The Juvenile Movement is a step in the right direction, and all concerned are to be congratulated for their initiative at a time when membership was so drastically low.

Another Jim Routh "brainchild" was the collaboration between the Club and Parramatta Police Boys' Club. The scheme was implemented between Sgt. Con Hansen of the Parramatta P.B.C. and Jim, as Club Secretary, in 1965, with the object of encouraging P.B.C. members to join the Surf Club. This plan became a successful way of building up junior and senior membership.

A branch of the Surf Club was set up at the P.B.C. hall, Parramatta, so boys in the Parramatta area could attend the Bronze Medallion training during the week without having to travel the many miles to South Curl Curl.

Club instructors journeyed to Parramatta for the training of the new recruits. On Sundays, a bus was chartered to transport these lads to and from the beach. These arrangements still exist today and have proved a great benefit to all concerned.

Sydney has been divided by the two ways of life kept apart by the geographical differences. The distance between east and west is considerable, so much so that half-a-day's travel would be involved in covering same. At the start of the 1965-66 season, this barrier was torn down by this ambitious move. It brought youth together, enabling them to be useful in the community, and to take part in a healthy invigorating sport. As Sergeant Con. Hansen said:— "It is a matter of recognising that the problem of conveying youngsters from the inner suburbs to the beaches — and then giving them something constructive to do there — is a very real one."

It can be agreed that the implementation of the Parramatta Scheme, has been most suc-



cessful in encouraging men to join the Club who would otherwise be denied the privilege through lack of proximity between them and the sea. The advent of this collaboration has made a strong impact on the efficiency of our Club. It has helped greatly with the manning of patrols, thus easing a strain on a vital aspect. It was another "first" to South Curl Curl, which once again showed the initiative that is within this small but active club.

Through continued effort and enthusiasm South Curl Curl attained a Champion March Past team, when, after a number of placings through the 1965-66 season, the final triumph came with a win at the Australian Championships at Coolangatta. South Curl Curl tied with Bundaberg and Merewether, champions in this field for many years, and this was an achievement to be remembered. It was the Club's first National Title for 14 years, the last win being the Senior Surf Boat Crew in 1952. The triple dead-heat was unique in the history of surf life saving.

Formation of this great team is something of which members are proud, as it was the result of a long arduous struggle to attain a significant position at carnivals, and it is very important to a surf club to have teams in both these fields. Efforts made in previous years to form a satisfactory team had failed, but the entry in 1965 of some keen young men who wanted to see the South Curl flag adorn the beaches, brought the necessary enthusiasm.

Gratitude goes to the men of the March Past team for the great amount of time and work they put into the training right throughout the season. It is symbolic of what can be achieved when some extra effort is put into an objective, and a lot of effort was needed, as there is tough competition in this event, especially when on a national scale.

The team's coach and leader, Tom Stacey, deserves special commendation, as it was his efforts and training that led them to victory. He succeeded where others failed in building a strong team in this highly competitive field.

The Club's entry into the March Past event proved to be a very lucky omen for six people, as it was due only to the training programme that members happened to be present one night when four youths and two girls were swept out to sea. It was a very warm evening in November of 1966 when large numbers of people flocked to the beaches. Several people were in the surf at South Curl Curl as darkness fell.

Team members were in the Clubhouse when screams were heard. Realising someone was in trouble towards the southern point, they immediately ran onto the beach. Ron Gosper and Alan Hatten were the two members mainly instrumental in the rescue operation. They swam in belts some 80 yards in the dark to reach the distressed people. They risked being attacked by sharks as they ploughed the sea, not knowing how far from shore they were. In the light of the moon, they could make out the dark form of heads bobbing in the water.

Four youths on two surfboards had apparently gone to the aid of the two girls swept out in the rip.

A large wave swept two of the lads off the boards into the surging current. These two were helped to the beach by Ron Gosper, who, with the help of Alan Hatten, swam out again to the remaining four persons, while the rest of the team assisted on the lines. It was a tough battle, swimming in the dark after people who could hardly be seen — but all were brought safely to the beach.

It was only by chance the lifesavers were at the beach, they had luckily changed their training night from Thursday to Wednesday. If they had not been there, fatalities would have occurred. Due to quick thinking on the part of these members and their fortunate presence, a possible tragedy was averted.

Earlier that same evening, three men and a young girl were swept to sea. Beach Inspector, Johnny White, donned the belt and dived in. He experienced great difficulty, as the girl was nearly exhausted. He instructed two of the men, who were seemingly in better condition than the others, to proceed farther out to sea, turn in a northerly direction and wait for him. He then grabbed the girl and proceeded to shore with the aid of the line, the other man clinging close by.

Then trouble struck — the line fouled on the rocks. John signalled to the beach to cease hauling in, but apparently his crew didn't see the signal. He started to go underwater as the line became more entangled, he could feel the line pulling him down. Before he could do anything he was dashed against the rocks — his back badly cut.

The only one thing for him to do was to release the safety pin of the belt. In order to do this easily, he passed the girl to the male patient who was in fair shape, released the belt and proceeded to shore with the distressed pair less hazardously.



The girl, safely recovering in the casualty room, our young hero dashed out again to rescue the other two men, who by this time were half-way to the beach. He assisted them the rest of the way to safety. Thus ended two gallant rescues on a night that will long be remembered.

The three members responsible, John White, Ron Gosper and Alan Hatten, have since received meritorious awards for their bravery.

Each received the commendation of the Surf Life Saving Association. Since that memorable night, Club officials have issued warnings to the public on the dangers of surfing at night. It is a foolhardy practice, even for the experienced surfer, for with vision obliterated, it is impossible to swim with any degree of safety. The high temperatures at that time brought added dangers to our beaches, and the necessity of lifesavers being present at nights became a very real one. People were warned to use the pool, which is flood-lit and much safer — but advice, no matter how sound, is seldom accepted, so this danger continues during the warm summer nights.

### **The Power Surf Boat**

A new surf rescue era began with the introduction of the turbo-craft power jet surf boat, of which South Curl Curl Club has a third share. Donated by the Harbord Diggers' Club at a cost of \$5,600, it is owned jointly by North Curl Curl, South Curl Curl and Freshwater. The three clubs combine in operation and the maintenance with fully trained crews representing each club. The boat is named in honour of the late Jack Wilson, the original Diggers' House Manager, and a great worker — not only for surf clubs, but all sporting bodies.

Surf Club members could see the potential of power surf boats necessary to cope with the bigger crowds flocking to the beaches. Collaroy and Newport operate power craft and at least two are in operation on the south side.

Our power boat is different from most of the others, as this revolutionary unit does away with projections such as propellers, fins and rudders. It can be driven across lines during a rescue without fear of snagging and can be driven at full throttle right up on to the beach without fear of damage.

Turbo-craft surf rescue boats can be turned in their own length at any speed whether in forward or reverse power positions. Reverse can be engaged when the boat is travelling at full forward speed and used to brake it to a standstill within two to three boat lengths. Full thrust from the take-off is a characteristic of the jet unit, there being no cavitation or slippage, which results in fast acceleration. It can be dropped off its trailer at the water's edge and launched in about eight inches of water. When planing, the boat will cross sand bars and rocks covered by only a few inches of water.

Constructed of fibreglass, it requires the minimum of maintenance. The hull is reinforced and stiffened to ensure that it will withstand the heaviest sea. The foredeck is raised for the protection of the crew and to keep the boat drier. The gunwhale is lowered to facilitate the picking up of patients. A Venturi pump, operated by the jet unit, ensures that any water entering the engine well is quickly removed.

This fascinating boat should be of great benefit to this beach in particular, and has already proved its worth.

With its maximum power of 155 b.h.p. and a top speed in excess of 40 knots, plus its great manoeuvrability, it is the best craft ever to enter the surf life saving movement. It has been tested in all kinds of conditions, and all crew members have been thoroughly trained in the operation of the craft.

### **Richie Steps Down**

The year 1967 marked the retirement of Richie Roberts, who, after 39 years on the Committee, felt he should step down. He completed his role of many offices in the club with eight years as President. His decision not to seek re-election came after long and deep consideration, as his heart was — and still is — in the Surf Club. But he earned that rest, and as much as members were sorry to see him go.

He had many years to look back on; years that meant a lot, not only to his life — but to the lives of many others. In those years he had dedicated much of his time to training with the Club's R. & R. teams, boat crews (in which he was most famed) and football teams. He has in many ways, helped to mould the lives of the younger members of those teams.

His retirement from surf club activities is best remembered by his last words to the Club that year:— "Although I derived keen satisfaction from competing in surf boat racing, from friendships formed, from taking part in rescues, an outstanding memory is of a lady coming up to me on the beach saying simply and fervently, 'I would like to thank you, that was my daughter you saved.' Incidentally, I was the reelman."

Participation in rescue work, no matter to what position one may be, is important to all members. The success of such an operation is dependent on all who take part. While one man's life may be in greater danger, he would be in a worse predicament without the competence of the rest of the team.

Such were the thoughts of Richie Roberts as he stepped down at the conclusion of a very fine career — and the end of an era for South Curl Curl.

### ***A Surf Club Continues***

Today, under the presidency of Bruce Buckingham, the Club continues to rank high in the field of surf life saving and competition. It is still, in the true sense—a young club with many improvements to come, but keenness is building up with the entry of young members. In a way, it is reminiscent of the Club's early days — when members pulled together with all the enthusiasm needed to build the new "organisation." Such spirit is more highly appreciated these days in this ever-changing country, with its many and varied distractions available to the young people. Though the length of service given to the club by its members is a great deal shorter on average than was the case in former years — the work continues to be fulfilled, thanks to the abilities of the men, young and old, within its ranks.

Over the years some surf clubs have been renowned for their March Past teams. South Curl Curl was well-known in this field many years ago and has achieved a greater position in more recent years. Our club was second in the Australian Championships at North Cronulla in 1968. This was a marked improvement over previous efforts that season, when it gained 6th, 5th and 4th placings.

As in previous years, the running of the

Club is hampered to some degree by Army call-up, which was responsible for the reforming of the March Past team, but these difficulties must be — and are — overcome.

So ends the 50 years story of South Curl Curl Surf Club — a history of dedication, of many changes in people's lives. Looking back on those years, and looking around the district today, one may well wonder about the future of this one-time lonely outcrop of Sydney had those fun-searching lads not stumbled on the idea of forming a club. It was to their initiative that many lives have been saved and to which we all owe gratitude.

The district that skirts the beach has changed vastly since the early days of the Club. The rocky slopes at the southern end of the beach are still there, but the dense bush has disappeared, replaced by the many homes. The sandhills are no longer there, and the lagoon remains as the only remnant of Curl Curl's past. Most of the homes are extremely modern, some command sweeping views of the ocean and beach, while interspersed very sparingly, a few older homes still exist.

It may not be the same beautiful retreat that it once was, but South Curl Curl Beach is a popular spot today, as can be seen on any Sunday in summer. A small group of people clustered at the southern end of the beach used to be the full complement of the public, but now, with the ever increasing number of motor cars, it is far different. With the extra parking space available and the long, broad expanse of beach, it is more like a scene at Bondi or Maroubra. Whilst there is little bush in the area today, it is still a place of beauty, with land values exceedingly high.

Looking along the beach and watching the waves breaking, one can ponder on the Club's past with the knowledge that the work which has gone into its development has been a valuable contribution to mankind and to the humanitarian spirit of this worthy movement. Like most surf clubs, it has family linkages, its memberships continued from generation to generation, fathers make way for sons in the surf.

With the same spirit and enthusiasm that has ruled the surf clubs over the last half century, the motto of "Vigilance and Service" will continue to be carried through. Safety for all attending the beach will be maintained. As assuredly as the next tide will wash upon our shores — this will prevail.

## Personalities

The following members were outstanding in the development of South Curl Curl Surf Club — this ultimately earnt them high honours, including Life Membership.

**C. N. BACKHOUSE** (deceased): The first official President, gave light to the Club that was struggling for survival. The new group had only just begun and under his chairmanship, a constitution was drawn up and affiliation with the Surf Life Saving Association forwarded.

He was a real estate agent, operating in the Curl Curl-Harbord area, and his interest in the development of the surf club ranked extremely high. He was elected President in 1914, before the Club became fully inaugurated. It was during the second big attempt to get the Club formed, and he put every effort he could into achieving that goal. When the First World War was over, during which time the Club was non-existent, he was re-elected as President. He held this office through to the following year, when he resigned to be succeeded by S. H. Newman.

One of his most noteworthy moves was the donation of the Trophy, which he made each year with his business partner, Mr Goyder. This became known as the Backhouse and Goyder trophy, and was a perpetual award presented at the end of each season between 1923 and 1927. It was held as the prize for the member with the highest number of points in six events contested throughout the season. This produced a lot of incentive within the Club, and the top swimmers fought tenaciously to win it.

He was elected a Life Member in the 1926-27 season.

**A. JONES:** Joined the Club in 1920, and was elected Secretary in 1924. He worked very hard for a number of years in the interest of the Club. He was primarily responsible for the construction of the original rock pool, and collected money for the undertaking. He was also responsible for the addition of lighting above the pool. Through his help, the Club successfully raised the fifty per cent of the cost for the pool. The Warringah Shire provided the remainder.

He obtained his Bronze Medallion in 1920 and went on to gain his Instructor's Certificate

in 1923. He was also very successful in the competitive aspect and was among the leaders in the belt races and came second in the Championship in 1927-28.

One of his main feats was winning the surf race in the first of the Backhouse and Goyder series, held in 1924. He won the trophy that year, having gained the highest number of points. Although Club Secretary at the time, his swimming activities continued on a very high level, and he was rated among the top swimmers in the district.

The offices he held included: Chief Instructor (3 years); Selection Committee (3 years); Social Committee (1 year) and Secretary (six years).

He was awarded Life Membership in 1927, the year he resigned as Secretary.

**S. H. NEWMAN:** Sam joined the Club in 1922, instinctively taking an interest in its development. He was one of the group that frequently visited South Curl Curl at weekends, and was renowned for the maintenance work he contributed on the Clubhouse. A carpenter, he never seemed to be without a hammer or saw, being willing to offer his valuable services in the Club's interest at any time. He helped build the extensions to the second clubhouse plus any other jobs that intermittently needed attention.

He was the second President of the Club, being elected in 1919, and kept this office for nine years. The favourable reputation that South Curl Curl steadily built during those years is attributed to a large degree to Sam's ability. He would never say very much, but he worked hard.

He later built a house at Curl Curl Beach, making it his home. Trudging over the hill, or walking round the rocks every weekend was getting beyond him, and he relished his weekends close to the water. At the end of his term of office he was elected to Life Membership.

**M. JONES:** Joined in 1923. The brother of Alex, he was among the campers who visited the area at weekends. He was elected Assistant Secretary in 1924, and following his brother's retirement in 1927, was elected Club Secretary. He was a very enthusiastic worker for the Club over a great number of years, and after resigning as Secretary in 1928, was elected to the position of Assistant Secretary.

In 1926 he was elected Social Secretary — a position he held for four years — during which time he worked very hard in the raising of funds.

He gained his Bronze Medallion in 1926, and following his many activities, was awarded the Life Membership in 1932. He did not possess the same athletic abilities as his brother, but he was successful in other ways in his contribution to the development. Even to this day, he has a keen interest in the Club, and in a regular visitor to the Carnival which he helps to promote.

**ERNIE RAYMOND:** Was one of the earliest members of the Club. Ernie joined in 1918. He gained his Bronze Medallion in 1920 and the Instructor's Certificate in 1931. He became Boat Captain in 1924 — a position he held until 1933, and was one of the first boat sweeps of this Club. He was also elected Club Captain in 1931, and continued in the office until 1937. Other positions he held included Delegate to the S.L.S.A. (two years) and Vice Captain (one year). He was on the committee for a total of nine years.

He assisted greatly at Club dances and social functions, and his interest in the developing surf club was very high, especially in the boats. Since 1934 he has faded out, and in later years ill health prevented him from visiting the Club frequently.

He was elected to Life Membership in 1934.

**ARTHUR STILL:** Joined in 1927, and immediately launched schemes for a better clubhouse and amenities for members. He was also a prime mover in the formation of a local progress association, which assisted in the expedition of work on the new clubhouse.

Through the local Member, Mr. A. E. Reid, he arranged interviews with Mr. Spooner, M.L.A., the Minister for Local Government and in conjunction with the Council, a grant was made for the Clubhouse and public dressing sheds to be erected. This work was carried out in 1937, and at a special dinner, the new building was officially opened in September of that year.

In attendance was Mr. A. Parkhill, M.H.R., Mr. Reid, M.L.A., Mr. Spooner, M.L.A., the President of Warringah Shire Council and Councillors and Mr. Scott — the architect. It was the third official clubhouse to be erected at South Curl Curl Beach.

In 1939 he resigned as President of the Club, after 11 years in office, and became Vice Patron. He was always a keen supporter of South Curl Curl, assisting its future progress wherever he could. He was elected a Life Member in 1935 in recognition of his services and guidance.

In May, 1967, he passed away, a sad loss to a community for which he worked hard.

The Arthur Still Memorial Trophy was donated to the Club through his Will. A perpetual trophy, it is awarded to the cadet or junior member showing the most diligent effort throughout the year. It is an encouragement trophy, awarded by the Executive Committee, which any lad, not necessarily a champion swimmer, can win.

As a final and fitting tribute to this great man, the new surf boat presented to the Club in the Jubilee Season, is named in his honour.

**ARTHUR OLSON:** Of all the men to join South Curl Curl, Arthur Olson must rank among the foremost. His enthusiasm was responsible for much of this club's development and its successes. Improvements including the enlargement of the old clubhouse, concrete paths and green lawns following his joining in 1927.

He was Club Secretary for 11 years and President for 20 years. During this time he was also delegate to the S.L.S.A. and Publicity Officer. Since retiring as President in 1959, he has sat on the Judiciary Committee, a position he holds to this day.

His outstanding abilities were not confined to administration. During his earlier years he was very prominent in the competitive field, gaining many placings in Club events. He won the Belt Championship in 1929-30, and again in 1930-31 — winning the Honour Blazer that same year.

His prowess was quickly recognised by the National body and he was appointed to the Board of Examiners, a position he still holds today — soon after he gained his Examination Certificate in 1933.

He gave a lot of time and work to many Club projects, including the erection of the present Clubhouse. His award of Life Membership in 1932 was deemed as a very worthy acknowledgment, but as the years went by, and he proved his capabilities as Secretary, and later President, the Club found a higher honour was in order. They named a surf boat after



him in 1958, bestowing one of the highest honours obtainable in the surfing movement.

Arthur obtained his Bronze Medallion in 1928 — the year he became Secretary — and three years later, the Instructor's Certificate. In 1933 he gained the Examiner's Certificate.

In addition to Club Life Membership, he was awarded the same honour by the Sydney Branch, the Manly-Warringah Branch, the State Centre and the National Council. He is the only member of the Club to receive any of these awards.

He is still a familiar identity at the beach, with the same undying interest.

**C. LEGGETT:** Joined the club in 1924 and gained his Bronze Medallion in 1925. He was elected Treasurer in 1928 and soon proved his capabilities in this important office. He held the position for 11 years.

He was also a Delegate to the S.L.S.A. from 1926 to 1928. A keen competitor in all events, he was a very enthusiastic member in every way, which attributed to his Life Membership in 1935. He won the Surf Championship in 1926, and was second in the Water Point Score in 1930-31.

In 1942 he enlisted in the R.A.A.F., in which he served for the remainder of the war.

**CLIVE OLSON:** Joined the Club in 1927 as a Junior and gained his Bronze Medallion in 1928 and Instructor's Certificate in 1931. The brother of Arthur, he was an ardent worker and was elected Gear Steward in 1928, a job he carried out very effectively till 1938. He was also a delegate to the S.L.S.A. from 1932 to 1936 and First Aid Officer from 1933-38. He was Social Secretary and Deputy Chief Instructor for one year each. He was elected Vice President in 1967, a position he still holds.

Among his competitive feats was a second in the Belt Championship in 1930-31 and third in the same event the following year. He rated third in the Club Honour Blazer in 1931. During the years the Club held a beach marathon to North Curl Curl and return, Clive was the winner on almost every occasion.

At one period during the winter months, table tennis competitions were held, in which he won the Club Championship several times. He also won the handicap point scores in this interest-raising game.

In 1938 he was elected Life Member.

**J. BLAND:** Joined in 1921, gaining his Bronze Medallion in 1923. He was Vice Captain of the Club from 1926 to 1930 and sat on the Committee for 17 years. He was always a keen competitor in Club events — a keenness which paid dividends in 1928-29 by winning him the Honour Blazer. The following season he was placed second in this event.

He was elected to Life Membership in 1941, in recognition of years of dedicated service.

**A. R. ROBERTS:** Richie "The Wrecker" Roberts was one of those members destined to make a legend in the field of surf life saving. Renowned for his surf boat epics, he carved for himself an enviable reputation — matched by the all-time "greats" of the Movement.

"Rastus" Evans, of North Steyne Club, was the only captain who could come anywhere near him in boat sweeping — while Arthur Olson was the only one against whom he could be measured in administration.

Richie joined in 1928 as a junior, and obtained his Bronze Medallion in the same year. From the time he joined his interest in surf boats could be clearly seen, as he had an undying love for boats and canoes. His interest in surf life saving generally rated very high, and three years later, he gained his Instructor's Certificate.

He was elected Gear Steward in 1928, a position he held till 1931. In 1930 he was Vice Boat Captain and held this position till 1933, being also Vice Club Captain from 1931 to 1934. He became Boat Captain in 1934, and was the longest-reigning boat captain in the history of the Club, having held the office for 19 years. During that time he performed a number of feats, among which were the wins in the Met. Senior Surf Boat Championship in 1942-43; the Metropolitan Junior Surf Boat Championship in 1943-44; the State Junior Championship in 1944-56, and the hard-fought Australian Senior Championship in 1951-52.

In 1951 he took the boat crew across the Nullabor Plains to Perth, to compete in the Australian Championships, a journey well remembered. In appreciation of his integrity and achievements, the Club named a Boat in his honour in 1945, and the famous name became a familiar one at carnivals.

His resignation ended years of prominence for the Club, for it was in those years that surf boat races and South Curl Curl were aligned. It didn't mean the entire end for him, however,

as he just could not keep away from the boats. At every available opportunity he would be there, at the helm, offering his valuable knowledge and guidance to young crews in training. In later years he formed a "C" crew out of the members who had been in the previous championship crews.

He was Deputy President from 1952 to 1955, during which time he was still quite active. He succeeded Arthur Olson as President in 1959 — holding office till 1967. He then retired from all official capacities, having completed 39 very active and beneficial years. In that time he had fulfilled all the objectives for which most members strive, and it was with the utmost understanding — though with sadness — that he stepped down and handed the role to a younger man.

His leadership as a boat captain was highlighted, by the rescue operations in which he took major parts. He and his crew were awarded the Certificate of Merit for the rescue at the 1938 carnival, and a Certificate from the Royal Humane Society in 1947 for another rescue.

His abilities weren't restricted entirely to the boats, he had a number of success in individual competition also. He won the President's Trophy in 1929, the Beach Point Score in 1938, was second in the Beach Point Score in 1941-42 and first in the Baths Point Score in 1943-44. He was also a member of the R. & R. winning team in 1932-33. He was elected a Life Member in 1940.

**J. McCOLM** (Deceased): "Mac" joined the Club in 1937 as an Associate Member, and at once became interested in the maintenance of the gear, etc. He was elected as Club Secretary in 1941, at a time when membership was being drastically upset owing to World War II.

He took office to replace two predecessors who left to join the Armed Services, and held that office for seven years. He was also Association Delegate from 1941-1956, and was an untiring worker for South Curl Curl Club in all of its activities.

He was made a Life Member in 1940 -- which was something of a "record" for he had only been in the Club for three years. However, in that short time, there seemed little doubt of his capabilities and keenness.

He died in 1959 — leaving behind a legacy of ideas and achievements.

**L. O'KEEFE** (Deceased): Lindsay O'Keefe, known to all members as "Paddy" joined South Curl Curl in 1923 as an Associate, and was elected Treasurer in 1924 — an office he held for four years. He was a member of the Club Committee for 15 years and was Handicapper for both summer and winter activities for 12 years.

Throughout his membership he showed keen interest in the activities of the Movement. He was elected a Life Member in 1942 and continued to be interested in the Club until his death in 1965.

**C. HOURIGAN** (Deceased): Cecil, known to all and sundry as "Pop," joined the Club as an Associate Member in 1928, and took a keen interest in all Club activities from then on. He became First Aid Officer, a position he held for many years. He was also Registrar for some years, but was mainly known in his latter years for his work in the Casualty Room and his invaluable guarding of the Clubhouse.

Senior members today can best remember him for the commanding power he seemed to hold over the members in keeping the Clubhouse clean. After his retirement from work he acted as Honorary Caretaker, and the cleanliness and maintenance of the Club were his main thoughts.

He was elected to Club Life Membership in 1943 — an honour he justly deserved. In 1960 the Club named a surf boat in his honour, in recognition of the work he did around the Clubhouse. In 1946 he passed away, a great loss to the Club.

**TOM MIDDLETON**: Joined South Curl Curl Club in 1936, obtaining his Bronze Medallion in the same year. He went on to gain the Instructor's Certificate in 1939 — the year in which he was elected Treasurer. He held that office until 1944, having also been elected to the position of Club Vice Captain three years earlier.

He was Social Secretary for a year, which was the start of the many offices he held. He was elected Club Captain in 1942, and Chief Instructor in the same year. The latter position he held till 1946, and for four years he was Publicity Officer.

In 1948 he was Club Secretary, resigning to make way for Reg Stevens the following season. At present he is Club Auditor, an office he has held since 1951.

He has always been a Club-minded member — a characteristic which earned him his Life Membership in 1944.

Tom was also very active in competitive events, gaining a third in the Water Point Score in 1939-40. He was a winner of the Honour Blazer in the same year, and again in 1941-42. In that year he won the Water Point Score and was second in the same event in 1944-45.

**DAVE McERLANE:** Another of the all-time "greats" in surf life saving, Dave joined the Club in 1930. He obtained his Bronze Medallion in 1931, and his Instructor's Certificate in 1935, and from the time he joined, proved his capabilities.

He was the winner of the Dr. Boag Point Score (a special contributory award) in 1934-35, and again in 1936-37. He won the Honour Blazer in 1934-35 and in 1936-37. He was second in the Belt Championship in 1935-36 and was Belt Champion in 1936-37 and 1938-39. 1936-37 was his best season, as on top of his many wins, he won the Surf Championship. In 1938-39 he was third in the Beach Point Score.

On the administrative side he also displayed high capabilities, becoming Deputy Chief Instructor in 1936-37. In that same year he was elected Vice Boat Captain, and Club Captain the following year — the position for which he is best remembered. He held that position until the start of World War II in 1939.

Back from the war, after spending some years in a German prison camp, he again took office as Captain in 1946. He wasn't such a familiar figure as he once was for some time after this, but 1957 saw a resounding return of the gallant personality. In that year he was the Club's Publicity Officer, a job he carried out very enthusiastically, and Clubroom Steward.

His occupation as a physiotherapist has been invaluable to this Club, and his conscientiousness fruitfully displayed in his latter positions in the Club's benefit. These included First Aid Officer, Assistant Handicapper and Race Judge, which kept him busy from 1960 to 1966.

Life Membership was awarded to him in 1946, and whilst his job occupies him elsewhere, he is still a keen and active member during the summer months.

**WILLIAM MACPHERSON:** A Vice President. He joined the Club in 1942 and was

elected on the Committee in the same year. He was elected Deputy President in 1945 and held office for seven years. He worked very hard for the Club in many ways, especially at the various functions to raise finance.

He was also very active in the Club's football teams. He was elected a Life Member in 1950.

**MICHAEL HOGAN:** Joined South Curl Curl Club in 1941 as an Associate Member and immediately engaged in the activities. In 1941 he was elected Social Organiser, an office he carried out extremely well to 1944. The conducting of socials during that period was most welcome, particularly by servicemen on leave from the war. This important function of the Club was enriched with Mick Hogan's enthusiasm.

He was also a very good voluntary worker, particularly in the painting of the Clubhouse, which he undertook on several occasions. Up until 1959 he was the Race Judge and Handicapper.

His club spirit and undaunting interest earned him the Life Membership in 1952.

**REG STEVENS:** Joined South Curl Curl in 1947 as an Associate member and was elected Publicity Officer for that year. The following year he was elected Club Secretary, a position he held very efficiently for 11 years. He was also Association Delegate for two years and a member of the Judiciary Committee for nine years.

In 1959 he resigned as Secretary to depart on a world tour. When he returned the following season, he was elected Assistant Secretary, and office he still retains after eight years.

He was elected to Life Membership in 1956.

**BOB MACPHERSON:** Bob was one of the most phenomenal members of South Curl Curl, excellent on the beach and in the Clubhouse. As a surfer he proved to be among the strongest, his build accentuating this fact, which his understanding and interest in this exhilarating sport made him something of a legend.

He joined as a Cadet in 1941, showing his abilities rather rapidly. He obtained his Qualifying Certificate in 1942 and his Bronze Medallion in 1944. In 1946 he gained the Instructor's Certificate, and by this time was among Curl Curl's best swimmers.

In 1942-43 he won the Open Water Point Score, the Junior Water Point Score, and was second in the Junior Surf Championship. He

won the Open Surf Championship, Junior Surf Championship and Belt Championship in 1943-44. He also won the Honour Blazer that year, the Club's highest competitive trophy, which he won six times in all. He was second in the Club Championship the following year and second in the Junior Championship, as well as being second in the Belt Championship and the Water Point Score.

He was Surf and Belt Champion in 1945-56. His many wins and placings ran from his first season to his final season as an active member, which sets a record for this club.

His record continued:

- 1946-47: Dead-heat for 1st Ernie Raymond Point Score Trophy; 1st Surf Championship.
- 1947-48: 2nd Belt and 2nd Surf Championships.
- 1949-50: D.H. 1st Senior Belt Championship; 1st Senior Surf Championship; 3rd Water Point Score.
- 1950-51: 1st Senior Surf Championship; 1st Senior Water Point Score; 2nd Nov-elty Beach Point Score.
- 1951-52: 1st Senior Surf Championship; 1st Senior Belt Championship; 2nd Beach Point Score.
- 1952-53: 3rd Senior Surf Championship; 3rd Senior Belt Championship.
- 1953-54: Winner Honour Blazer; 1st Senior Surf; 3rd Senior Belt Championship; 3rd Beach Point Score.
- 1954-55: Winner Honour Blazer; 1st Senior Surf, 1st Senior Belt Chs.; 3rd Senior Water Point Score; 3rd Beach Point Score.
- 1955-56: 2nd Senior Belt Championship.
- 1956-57: 1st Senior Belt Championship.
- 1957-58: 2nd Senior Belt Championship.

At inter-club carnivals he competed and won many events.

In the administrative field he also rated very high. In 1946 he was elected Club Vice Captain. He became the Captain in 1947-48, an office he regained in 1951 and held for seven years. He was also Gear Steward for a year, and during his second term as Captain was also Club Delegate.

At the end of a very fine career he was elected Life Member in 1958. He still continues to have an interest in club affairs, his immediate involvement being the operation of the Power Surf Rescue Boat — and he represents the Club on that Committee.

**RON MARVIN:** Has always been and still is a keen member, having joined as a Cadet in 1944. He obtained his Qualifying Certificate in the same year, his Bronze Medallion in 1947 and went on to gain his Instructor's Certificate in 1951.

During the early part of his membership he rated high in competition events, winning the Junior Water Point Score in 1944-45 season. He won the Senior Water Point Score in 1952-53, and in 1947-48 he won the highly coveted Honour Blazer.

He didn't restrict himself to individual achievements, and was a member of the champion Junior Boat Crew in 1948-49 — the year they almost won the Australian title. He was also a member of the Senior Boat crew in 1949-50.

In his latter years, he has dedicated himself to the administration of the Club, his first office being Gear Steward in 1948. He was elected Chief Instructor in 1950, an office he held for three years. He was also the Social Secretary for the same period. The following season he was elected Treasurer, a position he still holds.

In 1959 he was elected a Life Member.

**LEN BROWN:** Renowned for his heroism in the surf, joined South Curl Curl as a Cadet in 1941. He obtained his Bronze Medallion the following year. He was an all-round surfer, competing in surf, beach and board events, and was completely devoid of fear where the water was concerned. Big seas never worried him, danger always seemed to be his element; he always put the lives of others first before his own.

The boat was his favourite activity and he succeeded the immortal Richie Roberts in this field.

His swimming ability was another characteristic to his credit, though he didn't rate as high as he could in competition. His main objectives seemed to be devoted more to the rescue work — which, after all, is the main objective of any surf club member. Because of this, his competition successes are fewer than would be expected of a man of this calibre.

His first achievement was third place in the Water Point Score in 1942-43, plus a third in the Junior Surf Championship in the same year. Beach sprinting was his speciality with a third in the Championship in 1951, a first in 1952, a second in 1953 and a third in 1956.

During his boat career, he was a member of the Metropolitan Championship Junior Crew. This crew came second in the State



Championship the same year. He took over the Captaincy in 1952 for seven years.

He was Vice Boat Captain in 1944, assisting in the maintenance of the gear in which he had already devoted many years. In between his duties he has devoted a lot of time to training boat crews.

His other positions in the Club included: Gear Steward (for 12 years — during which time the Club won the Nuffield Gold Cup for having the best life saving gear in the Metropolitan Area). He has also sat on the Judiciary Committee and his last office was Vice Boat Captain in 1966.

Len featured in many outstanding rescues, some of which are detailed in an earlier section of this History. As a result of his tremendous courage he was awarded the Silver Medal by the Royal Humane Society in 1948, and the Certificate of Merit by the S.L.S.A. in the same year. He was elected to Life Membership in 1959, and has continued to serve the Club with enthusiasm.

In addition to his life saving activities he was in the Services during the latter part of the war. He joined the A.I.F. in 1944 and was in Darwin from 1945-47.

As a further honour to this noteworthy member, a boat was named after him. The Caltex boat, which the Club won in a competition, was named the "Len Brown" in 1964.

**BRUCE BUCKINGHAM:** Joined South Curl Curl Club as a junior in 1944 and obtained his Bronze Medallion in the same year. He too was a keen boat man and demonstrated his enthusiasm by becoming a member of the champion boat crew of the mid-1940s, early 1950s. He helped row his team to victory in the State Championships in 1945, and was in the senior crew when it won the Australian Championships in 1952. He was a member of the boat crew for 11 years, during which time many inter-club races were won by South Curl Curl Club.

The boat was his greatest interest, but the running of the Club also attracted his attention. He was Social Secretary for five years, and in 1948 he was elected Vice Captain, serving in the dual offices. He was Clubroom Steward in 1955 and came to light again six years later as Assistant Handicapper.

In his more recent capacities he has been Publicity Officer and Deputy President. In 1967 he was elected President, succeeding Richie Roberts — he still holds the office today.

For his part in the launch rescue in 1948, he was awarded the Royal Humane Society Certificate of Merit. During his years of active service in the Club he has taken part in many rescues. He was elected to Life Membership in 1967.

**A. CUNEO:** Another member of outstanding ability, joined the Club in 1943 as a junior. He obtained his Qualifying Certificate the same year and his Bronze Medallion in 1944. In 1946 he gained his Instructor's Certificate.

Competitively, he could compare with Bob Macpherson, for he was the Club Champion for a number of years. He won the Junior Surf and Belt Championships in 1944-45 and 1945-46. The following year he improved even further, by winning the Honour Blazer — which he won again in 1952. During the major portion of his active membership he held the "Crown" in the surf and belt events.

In 1948 he won the Senior Belt and Senior Surf Championships. In 1949-50 he dead-heated for the Belt Championship, and was second in the Senior Surf. In that year he also won the Beach Sprint Championship. In 1950-51 he was second in the Senior Surf, taking the same position in the Senior Belt the following year. He was also second in the Beach Sprint that year.

1952-53 saw one of his greatest years, with his second Honour Blazer, plus wins in the Senior Surf and Senior Belt Championships. A third in the Beach Sprint and a victory in the Beach Point Score rounded off a very successful season for the young lifesaver. His commanding performances in the Belt continued up to 1955, with a win the Club Championship.

He has the distinction of being the only member of this Club to be selected in an Association team — the team which toured West Australia and various other parts of the country in 1947. During that tour he won several events and assisted in the promoting of the Movement throughout Australia.

As a member of the Boat Crew, he helped his Club win the Australian Championship in 1952, as well as many other inter-club races. He was the Club's Assistant Secretary in 1944-45, and Chief Instructor in 1946-47. In 1947 he was holding this position till 1951. From 1952 to 1955 he was Vice Boat Captain, the position both he and Len Brown shared with equal enthusiasm. His latest position was Deputy President — which he held in 1967-68.

The S.L.S.A. awarded him the Certificate of Merit, and the Royal Humane Society the Silver Medal for his part in the launch rescue at Curl Curl in 1948. He was elected to Life Membership in 1967.

**R. PICARD:** Joined South Curl Curl Club as a junior in 1943 — obtaining his Bronze Medallion in the same year. Eleven years later he gained the S.L.S.A. Instructor's Certificate.

The boat was also his strongest interest and he was a member of the crew when they won the State Junior Championship in 1945, and the Metropolitan in 1944. He also took part in several rescue operations, the biggest being the launch disaster in 1948, for which he was awarded the Certificate of Merit by the Royal Humane Society.

His offices in the Club included Gear Steward for one year, Vice Boat Captain for five years, Clubroom Steward for three years and Chief Instructor for one year. His latest office as Registrar he has held since 1964.

He was instrumental in introducing judo to the Club and took a very active interest in Club gear and premises. At present he is President of the Power Rescue Craft Committee of the Manly-Warringah Branch of the S.L.S.A. He was elected a Life Member in 1967.

### **Among Other Outstanding Members**

The following members throughout the years have devoted a lot of time to the development of the Club and its objectives. Though they did not gain Life Membership, they have cast their impressions in the field of surf lifesaving in both competition and administration. It is realised that there may be several others worthy of mention also, but those whose activities have been recorded are:—

Bon Donald .....	1918	V. Agnew .....	1936
R. Morrison .....	1918	S. Davis .....	1933
R. Burns .....	1919	E. Cooper .....	1936
N. Morgan .....	1919	D. Cameron (Sen.)	
W. Robertson .....	1920		1937
A. Vimpany .....	1922	L. Wiltshire .....	1942
Bob Doodson .....	1923	Wentworth Brown	
P. B. King .....	1923		1943
A. Wilkinson .....	1927	L. Dooley .....	1943
Tom Morton .....	1928	R. "Buster" Brown	
Cecil Doodson .....	1930		1946
K. Agnew .....	1936	K. Stanford .....	1946

J. Monk .....	1949	Alan Hatten .....	1963
C. Kuhn .....	1951	D. Cameron (Jnr.)	
D. Olivey .....	1953		1964
A. Cocksedge (Jnr.)		Phil Harvey .....	1965
	1954	Rod Pearce .....	1965
J. Routh .....	1960	Kim Saillard .....	1965
J. Cassidy .....	1962	T. Stacey .....	1966

Most of these members are either seniors or past members, some of whom joined as Cadets. Towards the end of the list are juniors whose entry into the Club is comparatively recent, and who have already cast their mark in the field of surf life saving; both on the beach and in the Clubhouse.

They could well be on the threshold of making history at the beginning of the next 50 years.

### **Flora Roberts**

The ladies who became interested in the surf club have been of great assistance in the activities within the organisation. Through the years there have been many, some of whom grew up with the Club, having spent their childhood days in the Curl Curl area. Those who aligned their interests with the surf club movement earned themselves worthy reputations, for they worked very hard in the fund raising and various other activities, the organising of which often fell on the "Ladies."

Although a ladies' auxiliary was never actually formed, a very diligent group of women gathered within this Club. There was no certainty as to how long they would be there, but most stayed on to devote several years of service in the public interest. It would be impractical to include all the names and the history of those ladies, but among them, one who stands out as one of the most devoted workers, is Flora Roberts. She has devoted almost a lifetime of constant work for the Club, sharing her interest with her husband, Richie. Most members of the Club remember the vast amount of effort she put into the Club, particularly in catering and raising finance. She was in the true sense, a leader.

It was in 1930 that she first became interested in the Club, when, while spending a weekend at Curl Curl with her parents, she met Richie Roberts. Richie had been in the Club only two years at that time, having already shown his capabilities as a sturdy junior.

They soon became firm friends and from that first weekend kept company frequently. Her interest in the surf club movement grew naturally, following the activities of the young man she later married.

The Popular Girl Contest held in 1934 was best remembered by Flora's entry. Run in conjunction with the Boat Fund, she was one of five girls to enter. Her name was then Flora Gillies. Although she didn't win the Contest, she played a significant part in the collecting of donations.

Having married Richie, she continued to take an active interest in the well being of the Club. Among many of the functions in which she took part was assisting in the running of the bazaars — an annual event in the early years. During the winter months she was also kept occupied in supporting the Club's Football team (mainly in the washing of jerseys and raising of funds, etc.).

She was a member of the Club's successful Ladies' March Past team, formed just prior to the war. Highlights of the team's activities were trips to Terrigal and Nobby's Beach, Newcastle.

At times she took an oar when a member was unable to attend boat training on the harbour, and thus assisted the crew.

The trips on which she accompanied the team were many, some under the roughest conditions. She had three trips to Queensland with the Club (in 1947, '49 and '51), went across the Nullabour to Western Australia in 1950, and to Byron Bay for the State Championships in 1952. In that same year she attended the Australian Championship carnival at North Wollongong, at which the Club won the National Title. On each of those trips she worked diligently, preparing meals for the members and taking charge of the gear. Her moral support at the carnivals was paramount.

Her last trip with the Club was to Torquay, Victoria, in 1956. This was the Olympic year in Melbourne, and the carnival was held in conjunction with the festive period.

South Curl Curl Carnival day showed Flora at her best. The success in the running of this big event was partly attributed to her skill and keenness in the preparation of lunches for the competitors and officials; while her organising ability took care of the ice cream and bottles of drink required for the stalls.

She was the instigator of the Christmas Tree, to which she devoted an enormous

amount of time, particularly in the raising of funds, which was just one of the aspects in the preparation of this annual event. Members and their children spent many an enjoyable day through Flora's achievements. The Housie nights, which ran for about 10 years, were another successful venture.

Catering for the annual ball, held in the clubhouse was another huge undertaking and Flora led the ladies' committee in tackling this mammoth task.

In 1951 she opened the kitchen, and began the much-needed "canteen service" for members. Though not quite a canteen, this additional amenity has been most worthwhile and kept Flora busy till she retired with Richie in 1967. At the Brookvale Show, she worked on the stalls, further assisting in the raising of funds.

It seemed that all her married life she has played second fiddle to a surf boat, but she accepted this lightly and in sharing her husband's interest became "first fiddle". It was her belief that she would eventually find herself pushing Ritchie down to the beach in a wheel-chair — to take his place in the stern of the "South Curly" boat, his whiskers blowing about in the breeze.

Now retired from all official capacities, both can now sit back and relish a more relaxed future, knowing that they have contributed so much to the benefit of mankind. During those 39 years of high activity, Flora has been devoid of any superiority complex, being the unselfish person she is.

In 1950, a surf boat was named in her honour, indicating the appreciation of all Club Members.

### **Additional Members of Merit**

**Throughout the years there have been numerous ladies who have dedicated many years of service to the Club. Space does not permit us to include all the names but among the most outstanding are as follows:**

Mrs. McColm (wife of war-time Secretary).  
Emmy Doodson  
Mrs. McPherson (mother of one-time Captain)  
Mrs. Olson (wife of Clive Olson)  
Judy Joyce  
Mrs. B. Buckingham (wife of current President).

## List of Officers in Fifty Years

### PRESIDENTS

C. N. Backhouse .....	1918-19
S. Newman .....	1919-28
A. Still .....	1928-39
A. Olson .....	1939-59
A. R. Roberts .....	1959-67
B. Buckingham .....	1967-

### CAPTAINS

L. Partridge .....	1918-24
P. B. King .....	1924-27
J. Rollinson .....	1927-30
E. Raymond .....	1930-37
(res. 1934-35 rep. by A. Roberts)	
D. McErlane .....	1937-39
J. Robinson .....	1939-40
V. Agnew .....	1940-44
(res. 1942-43 rep. by T. Middleton)	
D. Wakefield .....	1944-46
R. Macpherson .....	1947-48
(also from 1951-54 and .....	1955-58
A. Cuneo .....	1948-51
K. Stanford .....	1954-55
B. Lerner .....	1958-59
J. Monk .....	1959-64
(ret. 1962-63 rep. by R. Wilson)	
J. Cassidy .....	1964-66
C. Kuhn .....	1966-67
T. Stacey .....	1967-

### SECRETARIES

M. Collis .....	1918-21
J. A. Jones .....	1921-27
M. Jones .....	1927-28
A. Olson .....	1928-39
J. McColm .....	1939-47
T. Middleton .....	1947-48
G. R. Stevens .....	1948-59
D. Isaacs .....	1959-61
R. D. Pearce .....	1961-63
J. Routh .....	1963-67
N. Taylor .....	1967-

### TREASURERS

E. Raymond .....	1918-24
L. O'Keefe .....	1924-28
C. Leggett .....	1928-39
T. Middleton .....	1939-45
L. Dooley .....	1945-47
L. Wiltshire .....	1947-49
H. G. Bailey .....	1949-50

F. E. Rule .....	1950-52
W. T. Courtney .....	1952-53
R. Marvin .....	1953-

### BOAT CAPTAINS

R. Matheson .....	1918-22
E. Raymond .....	1922-33
A. R. Roberts .....	1933-52
L. Brown .....	1952-54
T. Yabsley .....	1954-55
J. Bull .....	1955-56
L. Brown .....	1956-57
J. Bull .....	1957-59
B. Bennett .....	1959-62
L. Brown .....	1962-63
P. Bull .....	1963-66
R. Bull .....	1966-67
P. Van Winden .....	1967-68
D. Cameron (Jnr.) .....	1968-

### CHIEF INSTRUCTORS

R. Burns .....	1922-24
J. A. Jones .....	1924-26
P. B. King .....	1926-27
L. Partridge .....	1927-29
A. Wilkinson .....	1929-34
R. Ogg .....	1934-36
D. Shaw .....	1936-37
V. Goulding .....	1937-40
C. Jenkins .....	1940-41
W. Bowden .....	1941-42
T. Middleton .....	1942-43
also .....	1945-46
R. Nix .....	1943-44
V. Agnew .....	1944-45
A. Cuneo .....	1946-47
K. Chapman .....	1947-48
R. Wilcox .....	1948-49
A. Barnes .....	1949-50
G. Joyce .....	1950-51
R. Marvin .....	1951-53
R. Picard .....	1953-54
A. Page .....	1954-56
N. Nunney .....	1956-57
N. Bull .....	1957-59
P. Bull .....	1959-61
R. Willson .....	1961-62
A. Cocksedge .....	1962-63
also .....	1965-66
R. Gosper .....	1963-64
K. Thorpe .....	1964-65
B. White .....	1966-68
R. Willson .....	1968-



### **Awards Gained**

Following hereunder are the awards that have been gained within the Club since 1920. Additional meritorious awards are included in their respective order.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Bronze Medallion</b>	<b>Instructor's Certificate</b>	<b>Qualifying Certificate</b>	<b>Examiner's Certificate</b>
1920-21	8	1		
1924-25	9	2		
1925-26	8	1		
1926-27	—	—		
1927-28	12	1		
1928-29	7			
1929-30	6			2
1930-31	3 (Proficiency Cert.)	2	4	
1931-32	6	3	3	
1932-33	4	1		
1933-34	7	2		1
1934-35	9	2		
1935-36	21	4		
1936-37	9	1		
1937-38	9 (Meritorious Award to the Club — 1938)			
1938-39	16	5		
1939-40	4			
1940-41	13	3		
1941-42	4			
1942-43				
1943-44	8		2	
1944-45	7		6	
1945-46	19	4	7	
1946-47	11	2		
1947-48	9	1	1	
1948-49	5 (Cert. of Merit 2-1947)	1	2	
1949-50	4	3		
1950-51	9	2		
1951-52	6			
1952-53	3		3	
1953-54	20	3		
1954-55	10			
1955-56	13	1	12	
1956-57	10	1	1	
1957-58	14	1		
1958-59	7	1	1	
1959-60	12	3	4	
1960-61	9			
1961-62	9	3	9	
1962-63	15	4	2	
1963-64	7	3	3	1
1964-65	6	2		1
1965-66	16	4	8	
1966-67	18	3		
1967-68	16	3	1	

### **Total Awards Gained**

1968 — Letter of Commendation awarded to John White, Ron Gosper, Alan Hatten for rescues carried out on evening of 30th November, 1966, by the Manly-Warringah Branch Meritorious Committee.

## Membership

Following hereunder are the membership figures to the present time. As can be seen, they fluctuate in certain periods, climbing steadily from the early days. Up until 1931 there was virtually one type of membership. Since then, and as the Club grew — there are divisions ranging from Cadet to Associate and Vice-President — plus the newly formed Juvenile Division.

All these are included in the list under Total Membership.

YEAR	TOTAL	ACTIVE	YEAR	TOTAL	ACTIVE
1924-25	61		1946-47	153	62
1925-26	64		1947-48	113	56
1926-27	56		1948-49	123	56
1927-28	61		1949-50	117	53
1928-29	69		1950-51	117	59
1929-30	67		1951-52	151	65
1930-31	67		1952-53	138	65
1931-32	78	55	1953-54	135	66
1932-33	74	52	1954-55	155	76
1933-34	75	52	1955-56	153	74
1934-35	76	48	1956-57	146	68
1935-36	89	51	1957-58	133	66
1936-37	83	38	1958-59	133	66
1937-38	86	41	1959-60	135	61
1938-39	78	41	1960-61	131	56
1939-40	71	42	1961-62	130	44
1940-41	102	55	1962-63	113	49
1941-42	103	59	1963-64	132	55
1942-43	148	77	1964-65	176	51
1943-44	142	75	1965-66	282	69
1944-45	157	81	1966-67	332	69
1945-46	162	91	1967-68	276	57

### JUVENILES

1964-65 .....	46	1966-67 .....	133
1965-66 .....	95	1967-68 .....	113

Just prior to the inauguration of the Juvenile Division, between 1960-63, the membership dropped severely. The entry of this particular section helped to increase the associate ranks at least.

Fifty on Active Service — 1943-44.

## Epilogue

The story you have just read is the history in its entirety to this day of South Curl Surf Life Saving Club. Like all surf clubs along the Australian coast — it holds a story of many lives — of dedication and of honour — of the objectives of man, and of his battle against the elements. The story is merely an outline of the lives involved in the development of the surf club and of the functioning itself. There are so many other aspects unrevealed in this book.

There is so much more that could be told; of the heartbreak, of the human drama, and of the sacrifices — all of which centres around the background of the sincerity of an ideal. All these dramas are part of the private lives within the Club, thus they cannot be included herein; however, this “behind the scenes” shows the true character of the Australian lifesaver.

The work that has gone into the surf life saving has — in the main — been a happy, carefree pastime, free from the bondages of selfishness, from politics, from the everyday worries of the troubled world. There are many people who have been connected with the development of the Surf Club in some way — all too numerous to name. We have endeavoured to mention those most predominant in the formation and development of our Club. We apologise for any omission of worthwhile information of either people, or happenings, but all that was received has been included.

And now — as we close — one can well ponder on the ideals of surf life saving, and how such enthusiasm is evolved. How is it evolved? It can be safely assumed that sometime in one's life there comes the desire to do something for the benefit of others without individual financial gains. As well as sharing the honours of humanitarian vigilance, there is the companionship and the derivation of friends attributed to the Movement. These simple things of life all add up to the source through which the surf clubs exist — while the sport itself provides the dual purpose of a public amenity and a sporting body.

In the 50 years South Curl Surf Club has existed — many lives have changed. The way of life has transformed as the nation developed, having a resounding affect on the membership. The clubs today are dependant on the inflow of new members so that the Movement may live on.

As can be appreciated, several people have been responsible for big things being done. They, along with all the rank and file members, are to be congratulated for the time and effort they gave so unselfishly. The Australian surfing image owes much to those men who founded this Club and so escalated the ramification of high esteem.

As a tribute to those people who dedicated their time and efforts in the interest of others — we finish with this poem:

From the far horizon where sea and sky meet,  
Comes the sea surging forth for one to greet,  
Where the golden sands sweep for a mile  
And the waves crash so excitingly wild.

Where the pleasures of nature's grandeur  
Can be seen from either peninsular,  
Where the vividness of the rippling turquoise  
blue

Intersperses with the foam that rushes through,  
To form the pattern that's a turbulent swirl  
That crashes upon the beach, upon the rocks of  
this — this Curl Curl.

This is the place that provides man's retreat,  
and where dwellings are built and set so neat,  
Upon the hill that overlooks the scene

That has become familiar with men so keen,  
Through history there has come the wonderful  
days,

That has moulded the pattern of our present  
ways,

Where young and old can frolic with glee  
To the fun and adventure of the surging sea,  
From across the expanse — from another world  
There lies this beach, that is ours, that is this —  
this Curl Curl.

From men's hearts there comes the full devotion  
Given to mankind that faces the ocean,  
Embracing all riches from the offerings of  
achievement

That come from the goodness of human en-  
dearment,

And filled with desire to do good unto others,  
To help those in need and to honour our  
brothers,

To all there stands but one desire, —  
That of giving, so no one will die.

Here, on the beach — many stories unfurl,  
Of life's greatest joys — that are here, unto this  
— this Curl Curl.