

The Mooloolaba

ISSUE 3 | SEPTEMBER '19

CONNECTION

TRAV



The History Assignment:
telling the story of 100 years

Plus: A Presidential Profile

Then & Now



It was big news when surf legend Graham White left Lorne in Victoria to compete for Mooloolaba in the mid-1970s. He arrived with four Australian Senior Surf Race wins under his belt, one of only two lifesavers to have ever won four titles in the event.

Unsurprisingly his arrival attracted the attention of the local press which ran this photograph of Graham behind the reel, being welcomed to the club by (L-R) Pat Parsons, Brad Boustead, Graham Dakin and Alan Inwood.



The same group today minus Graham Dakin (L-R) Graham White, Brad Boustead, Alan Inwood and Pat Parsons



Harnessing M emories

The team responsible for producing MSLSC's 100-year History in time for the 2022/23 Centenary celebrations want to do things a little differently but to succeed they'll need as many people as possible to engage in the process.



Histories can be dry affairs, weighed down by so many facts and stats that the human element goes missing. But those now working to tell the story of MSLSC's past 100 years will be doing their best to avoid that pitfall.

They have set themselves quite a challenge – not just to convert 100 years of activity into a comprehensive and accurate historical record, but to bring the history to life through the eyes and the voices of those who have experienced it. Brad Boustead, a former history teacher who is working on the project alongside Jim Hoban and Pat Parsons, said the key to success would lie in being able to collect as many first-hand accounts and memories as possible to capture and record that human experience. “The writing of history can be a dangerous thing because there can be a particular bias if only one or two people write it but, if you can get as much first-hand information as possible you can apply a multifaceted lens,” he said. “The Mooloolaba Surf Club is the sum total of all the effort that has been put in by all the members over the last 100 years and that is significant in explaining why the club has got to

where it is." Jim Hoban said the first decision that had to be made about the project was whether it would be outsourced, as had been done previously, or handled in-house.

"We thought we could streamline the process and add more authenticity by doing it ourselves rather than having to communicate everything to another party," he said. "We also had to decide whether to start from scratch or to focus more on the last 25 years and combine that with the history (*Our Club Our Story 1922-1997*) that historian, Robert Longhurst wrote with Ted Turner for the 75-year anniversary."

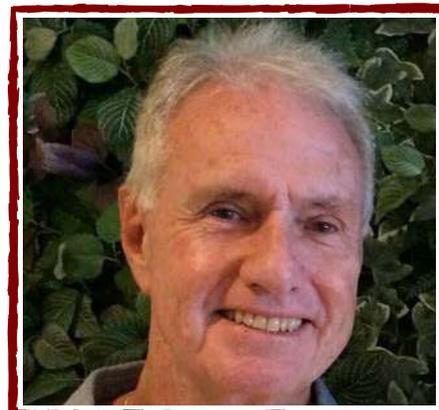
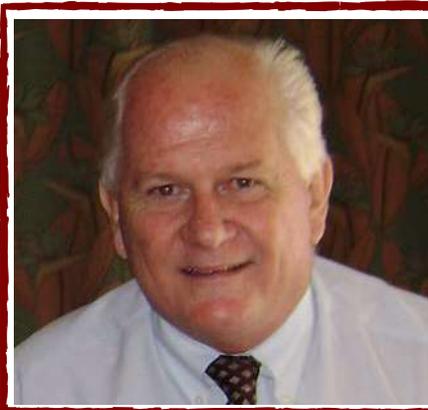
He said they decided not to reinvent the wheel for logistical reasons and because of the comprehensive coverage the historian had given to the early years of the club. "We will be using that history as the foundation, but amending and adding to it where we can, particularly for the last section of the book where it became a bit lighter on detail."

Brad Boustead said focusing in on the past 25 years meant it was vital that current and more recent members were very involved in the process.

"We really need more modern stuff because if it's just left to me and Jimmy and Pat, there could be a particular bias informed by our earlier experiences. We need to get much more of that contemporary material from the people who came after us."

Brad said the main mechanism being used to gather first-hand accounts from past and current members was a short questionnaire, first distributed at the Old Boys/Past Members lunch and later via email. He said while the deadline to complete the book by the time the Centenary celebrations kick off might seem comfortable, it was imperative that all the source material be collected as

“ It’s been really interesting to see patterns and trends emerging once these individual items of information that might not have seemed significant on their own, are compiled into a spreadsheet. ”



soon as possible to ensure enough time for collating and writing.

He said responses had so far been slow coming in, possibly because people didn't understand the urgency of the timeline or because they simply did not think their stories were significant or important enough. "They are all significant," he said. "The more information we get, the more interesting a read we are going to end up with."

Jim said apart from the human stories needed for the book, the team also had to source, assess and curate a massive amount of information from a variety of sources, including official records such as Annual Reports and meeting minutes. He said they had now reviewed all the annual reports from 1998 to the present, recording relevant information in a series of topic-specific spreadsheets. "It's been really interesting to see patterns and trends emerging once these individual items of information that might not have seemed significant on their own, are compiled into a spreadsheet," he said.

"The last 25 years have been a period of huge historical change for the club in terms of the demographics of the area, the composition of members, changes in technology, the clubhouse itself and all of this needs to be reflected in the history." He said the team was also keen to gather any historical information, memorabilia, photographs or print material relating to the club from anyone who might be prepared to make it available on loan.

"So far we have had some fabulous material supplied to us, including a treasure trove of photographs and other material from Wendy Graham and Lee Purchase but we'd like a lot more," he said.

If you do not yet have a copy of the questionnaire, go to the final page for details.

Mooloolaba **V**s Melbourne

No Contest

Andrew Cairns knows this time last year many of the club's past members had never heard of him. A lot has changed since then. He has worked hard to forge links and engage with the Old Boys/Past member fraternity. But there is still more to know about the man who assumed the presidency seven years after he joined the club.



Andrew with his wife Trina and daughters Lyla (L) and Ella

ANDREW Cairns vividly recalls the moment he decided to take a 180 degree turn and prematurely pursue his ambition to live on the Sunshine Coast.

He was 20 years into a successful banking career and working as a national sales manager for a financial services company in Melbourne when he arrived home to find his wife and toddler daughter sitting on the footpath drawing with chalk.

The reality of inner city, space-poor, family living struck home. "Growing up on the (NSW) Central Coast, that was not how I had envisaged bringing up kids," he said. "I literally went into work the next day and resigned." The Sunshine Coast and Mooloolaba were by then very familiar to him. He and his wife, Trina, had good friends in the club in Rob and Liz Marchant and they liked the area so much they already had an investment/holiday property there. They had even travelled back from New Zealand, where he was posted at the time, to hold their wedding reception at the Surf Club.

"There was always that novelty of, 'Oh wouldn't it be great to live here, but then reality sets in and you realise it doesn't mean anything if you can't get a job locally, but then when we made the decision to leave Melbourne I got

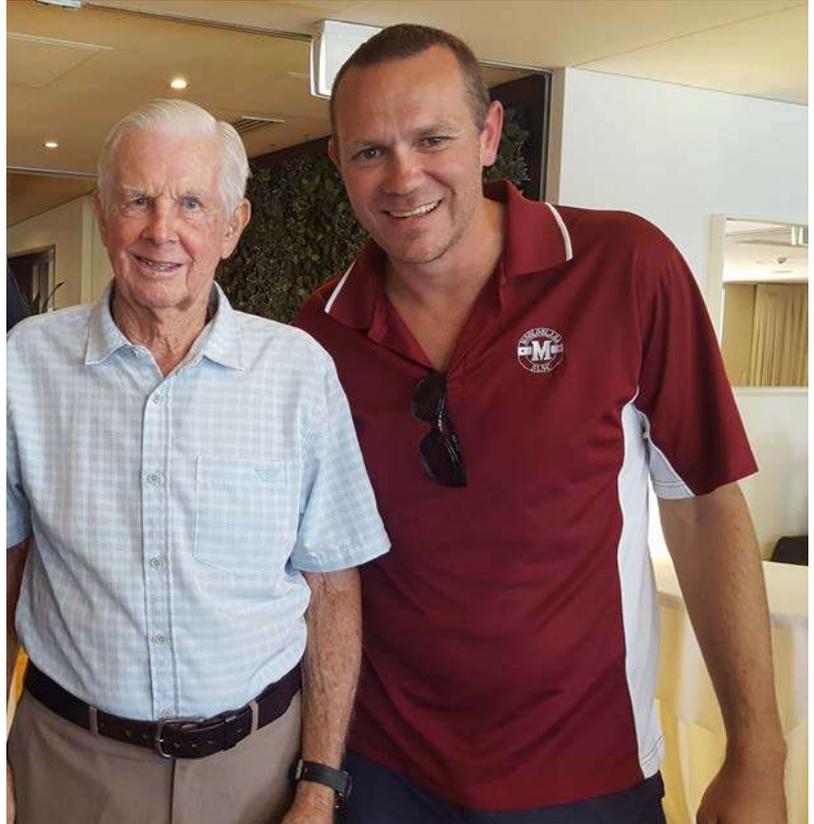
offered a role with the Commonwealth Bank in either Qld or WA.’’

Naturally he chose Qld and, for the next six years commuted from the coast to work in Brisbane, first in the CBA role and then as state manager for ING.

‘‘That then morphed into state manager for Qld and WA, so I did the commute to Brisbane and once a month for a week I would go to Perth,’’ he said. Another crunch point was reached. ‘‘I realised I was becoming a part-time dad, so we had to make a big change. I found a role in real estate, took a pay cut and never looked back.’’

Encouraged by Rob Marchant, Andrew joined the club as an active member in 2011, resuming an interest that had been cut short by career demands. He had first got his bronze medallion through Freshwater surf club while he was at school in Sydney, then followed his brother into Ocean Beach SLSC on the Central Coast, which was closest to the family home in Woy Woy. ‘‘I did just over 12 months but when I finished school, work took me to Sydney and I never went back to Ocean Beach to patrol,’’ he said.

Andrew took over from Dave Jewry as president last year after serving as Dave’s vice-president in 2016/17 and as treasurer of both the Lifesaving and Supporters clubs the following season. ‘‘I think that was the best pathway I could have taken, albeit it wasn’t a deliberate pathway,’’ he said. ‘‘Dave was 100 per cent the person for the job at that time and he did a fantastic job and I would say to anyone who wants the role, they should definitely do a stint on supporters first to understand the mechanisms on the fundraising side.’’ Despite that exposure, he still concedes he was under-prepared for some of the challenges of the job. ‘‘The hardest thing is accepting that people have agendas,’’



Andrew Cairns with 92-year-old Old Boy Ken Chadwick at this year's Old Boys/Past Members lunch

he said. ‘‘I’ve had people ask if I’m legit’, if what I say is what I mean and I can honestly say, I don’t have an agenda. I actively patrol, I don’t compete, my kids don’t compete. I’m a trainer, I’m an assessor and I genuinely want to engage all sections of the club.’’ This has been borne out by his readiness to forge links with and engage past members, through initiatives that include quarterly meetings with Life Members to brief them on club matters and give them a forum for input. Despite the dramatic changes in lifesaving since most of the past members last patrolled the beach, Andrew firmly believes current members could learn a lot from the way things were done in the old days, most notably the sort of culture where everyone was expected to and was willing to pitch in. ‘‘This is what I learnt

from the history of the club,’’ he said. ‘‘No job was beneath anyone, whether it was cooking a barbecue or cleaning the kitchen. Everyone had their chores and everyone embraced it and that’s one thing that is missing in the surf club today ... that’s what I’m trying to get back.’’ He said despite the impressive current membership numbers, as in any club, it was often the same 30 or 40 people doing most of the work. ‘‘Culturally I do believe that we’ve got a long way to go. I really struggle with that mentality of, ‘I’ve done 10 years; I’m a long service member and I don’t have to do anything else’. ‘‘From my point of view, when you renew your application to be a member of Mooloolaba, by definition you are putting your hand up to say, ‘I want to volunteer’.’’

Big Lenny Meets his Match

by Graham "Spider" Dakin

Len Dittmar was probably as tough as they come; a fearless Rugby League second rower for Brisbane Brothers and Queensland who almost played for Australia. But it turned out there were some things that could send big Lenny into a tailspin. We were at a surf carnival at Dicky Beach in the mid-90s when his son Ben was rowing for Mooloolaba. I was in the commentary position on top of the Sunshine Coast Branch caravan with club mate Gary Enser when we noticed a strange kerfuffle on the beach. A surfboat race was about to start with all the crews in the water and in the hands of the starter Barry Hallam. He had the rifle raised ready to get them underway when he noticed what he originally thought was a long stick in the water - that is until it moved and he realised it was a 3m long snake. Recognising the danger, he very calmly urged all the sweeps to get their crews from the starting position back to the beach. They then radioed out



Graham Dakin

to one of the IRBs and asked it to return to the beach. They responded not knowing what the problem was but, as they got in to shore, they managed to run over the top of this huge king brown snake. As you can imagine, it was not happy and it started heading back up the beach looking for cover. From our position in the commentary box we had no idea what was happening. All we could see was the boaties on the beach scattering like nine pins. Apparently this massive serpent then managed to lodge itself

underneath Mooloolaba's boat. The next thing we see from the commentary position is big Len running up the beach in a panic carrying a hessian bag and yelling 'Spider, Spider get the North Caloundra Crash Patrol!' Apparently one of the Mooloolaba boat crew (SEE STORY NEXT PAGE) had managed to catch it and get it into the bag. Poor Len was shaking and as white as a sheet. No wonder. From the way this big thing was writhing around inside the hessian bag it was obviously very big and very angry. Thankfully the Crash Patrol got there pretty quickly and removed it from the carnival area and temporarily put it in one of the lockers in the dormitory until the guys from what was then Sunshine Coast Zoo (Steve Irwin) got there. Lenny then settled down but it had certainly put the fear of God into him. From where we were Gary and I had a bird's eye view and let me tell you it was a massive reptile, as thick as your arm.

What Clarence Did Next

If you've read the story by Graham Dakin on the previous page you might have been left with a question – who got the snake from underneath the boat into the hessian bag?

According to Len Dittmar, it was Indigenous boat crew member Clarence Slockee who has since gone on to make a name for himself in fields far removed from lifesaving.

Clarence, a Mindjimbingal man who grew up in the Tweed Valley, has said that he always loved being out in the bush with his cousins and uncles learning about nature and the environment, which may explain why he was unfazed at having to wrangle a 3m long snake on Dicky Beach.

That bush experience has certainly played a big role in his career success as an environmental and cultural educator over the past couple of decades, first as education coordinator for Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens, then as manager of cultural tourism at the historical site Barangaroo on Sydney harbour. But he is probably most recognisable as a regular presenter on ABC TV's Gardening Australia, sharing his knowledge of native plants and bush tucker. Clarence first went to Sydney to study music and dance and later travelled the world as a member of Indigenous dance troupes. But it might be his latest initiative that



Clarence Slockee with Gardening Australia host Costa Georgiadis

proves the most significant and far reaching. He is the mastermind behind Australia's first Indigenous Rooftop Farm, created in collaboration with property developer Mirvac. It sits atop Mirvac's major redevelopment of the old Eveleigh Railway Workshops site in central Sydney. Planted with about 2000 native medicinal and edible plants, it has been designed as a show-

case for Aboriginal permaculture and knowledge and sells its native produce to local chefs. Clarence is hoping it will serve as a prototype for other property developments. The garden only opened in April but is already earning plaudits, including a national award for Outstanding Native (food) Producer in the recent *delicious* Produce Awards.

100 Club Final Update

The recipients of the funds raised by the 100 Club – a Life Members' fundraising initiative instigated by Graeme Vierow – have now been decided.

Graeme said instead of one recipient, the funds would be used to benefit three children in the one family to pay school fees and for their surf club membership. He said the family was nominated by two different sources familiar with their

circumstances. "We made the decision because they are doing it tough financially and because the kids ticked every box as far as the selection criteria went," he said. "They are great competitors but they're also great club members as well. They never miss any of their

duties within the club." Graeme said it had been decided for the children's privacy not to publicise the recipients' names. He said he hoped to expand the initiative next year into a 200 Club. "We will start in February and hopefully we can help more kids," he said.

The section where we catch up with some of the past club members who have moved far away from their Mooloolaba roots but remain strongly connected.

Man on the Move

Ross Drayton's Far & Wide story could have ended 10 years ago when he and his wife returned from a decade in the Middle East ready to retire in Mooloolaba. But, in retrospect, that was never going to happen. Fat Cat, as he has always been known in the surf club, soon got very bored and, inspired by one of his hobbies, went out looking to buy a motorbike shop he could run in conjunction with his ongoing business interests in Dubai.

As it happened, the only one he could find for sale was in Emerald so he happily headed west. But now after a decade in the town, Ross is looking to get on the move again and head even further away. "We really like cold weather but out here it's two days of winter and 363 days of summer so we are looking at a small resort in the high country in Victoria," he said.

Even before he left Australia in 2000, Ross's CV was crammed with interesting experiences – a police officer for 12 years, intelligence analyst seconded to the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence in Canberra looking into organised crime for four years and Chairman of Stipendiary Stewards for the greyhound racing authority.

But he counts the decade he and his wife, Andrea, spent in the United Arab Emirates after she was offered a job on a major IT upgrade for the National Bank of Dubai, as the greatest 10 years of their lives. "Dubai was nothing like the experts in the pub would have had us believe," he said. "It was vibrant, bursting with construction and with a welcome mat stretching as far as the eye could see." Ross describes his travel experiences until then as fairly staid, but his new found taste for travel and adventure was amply satisfied after



Ross enjoying one of his latest travel passions: cruising

he took up a role with the Royal Family-owned Abu Dhabi Investment Company and started jetting around the world assessing its underperforming assets.

He once shared breakfast with Tony Bennett and BB King in one of the corporation's hotels but that was topped by an encounter on an international flight between Dubai and the UK. "The company always flew us first class so I was sitting in row three and I saw this guy walk on in a bright purple suit. I thought to myself, 'Look at this prat' until I realised it was Paul McCartney. I got to chatting with him for a fair while during the flight and it was so funny watching people's faces as we walked from the plane to customs."

Ross said from a career perspective a real highlight was leading the investigation into an elaborate A\$450 million fraud on the Abu Dhabi Investment Corporation and winning the court case in the UK. "That was 18 months travelling back and forth between London and Dubai and across the length and breadth of Europe piecing it all together." As business and construction boomed in Dubai Ross then saw new opportunities, so he and a good friend decided to form their own company using a unique Australian-designed fast-build construction system which got good traction in the market. Although back in Australia, he is still a partner in the business, which has now diversified into solar lighting.

From the Vault

Extracts from Executive Meeting Minutes

February 5, 1949

Donations:

The secretary reported that the following donations had been received from Dr A Mayes and family: 1. A Ross safety belt 2. A cooked ham and two dressed chickens to be raffled 3. 6 roast chickens for club members Easter dinner 4. 1 windmill pump Dr Mayes suggested that the windmill pump be considered as the starting point for raising funds for the erection of a windmill to ensure water supply to the club buildings. In addition, he offered his serious advice for the installation of the mill.

Transport:

The secretary reported he had occasion to caution some members about behaviour, particularly language while in the truck. Quoting the first by-law "Such behavior was an embarrassment to club officials and to Keith Blake the driver."



Cartoon by Doug Schmidt

The Piano:

Moved Messrs. Dearlove and Venning that the piano be left alone by non-players.

Working Parties:

It was generally decided that on the long weekends following Easter, working parties be organised for the cleaning and sanding of the surf boat, checking all gear for repairs and replacements and cleaning all three buildings. The gear stewards take an inventory; that nails, paint etc. is required and should be purchased.

Socialising



IT MAY have been winter but the Old Boys and Past Members have still managed to remain active through the off-season. They were out in force at the MSLSC Social Club gathering that took place in August to promote social links between the different sections and generations of the club. It included a presentation of the new Life Members' blazers to those who attended.



And, in a first for the long-established, Brisbane-based Old Boys drinks/lunch club, the event moved north to the Landsborough Pub on September 6. It was a pay-back for the stalwarts who regularly travel down to Brisbane for the get-togethers. This time the roles were reversed and it was the Brisbane contingent on the train. Brad Boustead even arranged for a welcoming sign to be erected at the train station as they arrived.

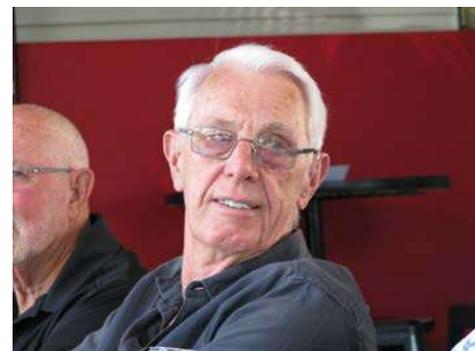


Social Club

From top: Cathy Harding, Judy Western and former club captain John Lowe; Tony Imbrogno, Gus Gordon, Mick Allwood and Bill Ochman; (below) the new blazers

Social Club

From top: Steve McDougall, Jim Hoban and Alan Murray; Brian and Julie Johns and Ann Boustead



BELOW and RIGHT The Landsborough Excursion



Above Left: Brian Marsden and Dave Jewry; Gary Schmidt Above: Doug Schmidt; Terry Bell and Brian Marsden

An Unforgettable Rescue

By Gary Hall



"I was 19 and on Jet Boat patrol duty with Richard Hart and either Abe Gordon or Peter Graham. Anyway, we had finished up for the day – pretty sure it was a Saturday – and we were all up at the Club just blowing the top off our first frothy when we got an emergency call from the Coast Guard, about an overturned boat off Point Cartwright so the four of us took off.

When we got out there we found the Coast Guard boat just inside the river mouth and some of their crew shitting themselves about the size of the seas, so we zipped out, got the guy and zipped back in to the Coast Guard boat.

The owner had apparently been taking his brand new 18-footer for its maiden trip and got into trouble just out of Cartwright and he was crying for us to try and save his new boat, so we went back to have a go.

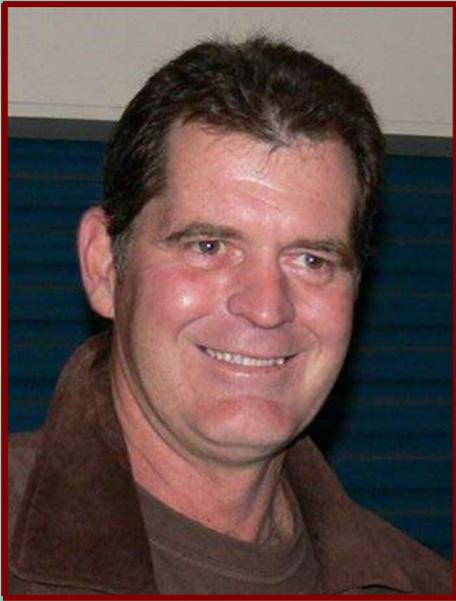
When we got there, I popped over, swam to the boat and threaded the waxed surf reel line that was in the hull of the jet boat (about 6mm waxed propylene) through the front eyelet of the overturned boat and swam back to the jet boat and passed the end of the line up to the boys. Richard Hart was the driver and a bloody good one and while we figured out the best way to tie this line, Richard was watching the swell because we were getting pretty close to the break at Cartys. There was no bollard at the time at the back of the jet boat, just a bar on each side and we were all figuring out the best way to tie off when Richard yelled, 'We've gotta go – set coming!' (There were possibly a few other words mixed in there.) I immediately grabbed the line and started doing half hitches – lots of them. As I yelled out, 'Gooooo!' Richard hit it and at that point it all happened so quick. The line went tight and spun and my hand got dragged into the knot and the bar.



My index finger lopped off and my middle finger disappeared, it was a mess. Everyone screamed. Luckily, we had a shark knife that sat on the side of the driver's stand-up padded rest so I yelled for it. The only problem was everyone used this knife for everything including putting grease on the rollicks on the surf boats! It was blunt so poor old Abe was nearly vomiting trying to cut the rope. I can remember in the middle of all this looking at the end of my index finger sitting just there beside this mess and, to my horror, Stiches calmly leaning over and shoeing it into the ocean. Gone. We finally cut the line, Richard radioed to the Club and we flew into the Mooloolaba side of the groins and the club jeep raced me down the beach to the club. Luckily, there was a doctor on the beach who came up and ... remember the finger that was gone? Well it wasn't really. It had dislocated on all three joints around to the back of my hand so he pulled my finger out straight and they raced me up to Nambour by ambulance. The rest, as they say, is history but the next day was one of the biggest surf days ever and I couldn't surf – some patrol eh?

How I was introduced to the Surf Club

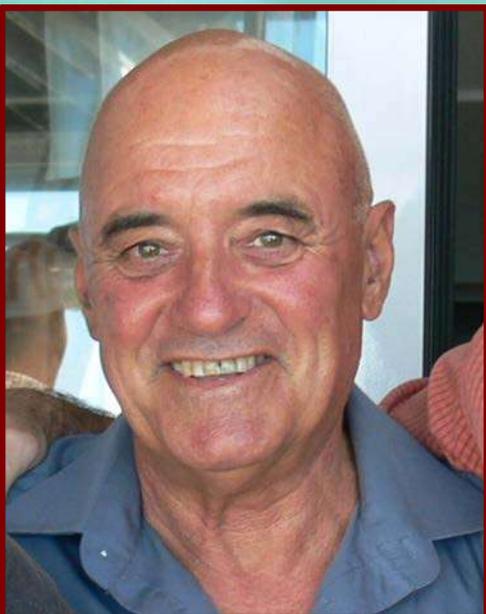
Gary Tanner



“Like a lot of people, I was introduced to the Surf Club by Arthur Parkyn who was our headmaster at Marshall Rd School. Ross Drayton (Fat Cat) and I grew up in Holland Park West and Ross’s dad and Arthur were good mates. Arthur took us both up to the club for the first time in about December 1974 after a swimming carnival at the Valley Pool but first he had to drop all the swimming results off to *The Courier Mail*, so we arrived up there well after midnight. We were both young tackers, still in Grade 10 I think, and when we got there some blokes were just coming up after a midnight swim and I thought, ‘Geez, this is a bit strange’. So, we went up to the bunkroom and we were

told not to take anyone else’s bunk! I think I laid there half the night wide awake. Anyway, next morning it was up at six for a swim and a run then we had to clean the clubhouse. At 11 o’clock Jimmy and Johnny Martyn said, ‘Come on, we’re going up to the Royal George Hotel in Nambour to do raffles.’ I’d never been in a public bar before – I’ve been in a few since I might add – so in the space of 12 hours we’d done a run, swim, run, cleaned the club and then out to do raffles. That was my introduction to the surf club. After that Ross and I used to spend every weekend at the club. I’d even miss big family events to get up there.”

Graeme Coghlan



“I was swimming at the Ithaca baths at the time and Mr Chips, as they called him, came along. His name was Alf Roberts and he was a great fundraiser for the Club, which explained the nickname. He saw me swimming and asked if I would be interested in joining a surf club. Oh yeah. I was 16 at the time and he said, ‘Well, I’m in Mooloolaba, would you be interested in doing R&R.’ I didn’t even know what R&R was. He told me he was going up that weekend and asked if I would like to come up and have a look around, which I did and, oh, I fell in love with the place straight away. In those days in ‘56 it was like a sleepy old village with a beautiful beach and I just fell into it.

Anyway that first time it took us about two and a half hours to get up there on the old highway in his Austin A40 so we arrived up there about nine o’clock on the Friday night. He said, ‘Well grab a bunk’ and I went to grab a bunk and someone said, ‘Oh don’t take that one, that belongs to Barry Daley!’ Anyway I finally found one I could use and, you know, at 16, with probably 60 or 65 guys in the club at that time, I don’t think I slept all night, between that and the surf crashing in and all the windows open. I soon got used to that and got right into all the duties involved in being in the club like kitchen duties and cleaning the toilets and the showers and so on. I didn’t mind. I was right into it.

The History Project Questionnaire

- What led you join Mooloolaba SLSC? What year was it? Was any particular person involved in your introduction to the club? Why Mooloolaba?
- When did you get your bronze? Who was your instructor and do you remember who else was in your squad? Have you received any other awards?
- How many seasons did you serve as a member? What is your relationship with the club now?
- What do you recall of your patrolling duties? Any memorable rescues?
- Were you a competitor? Do you have any favourite memories?
- Surf clubs are also social places. Are there any particular events you recall or fundraising activities?
- Is there anything that you particularly value from your days at Mooloolaba?

Responses can be sent to Brad Boustead, bonkers@bigpond.net.au or Jim Hoban jimhoban@biscomms.com If you need assistance call them on 0449774381 (Brad) or 0410517240 (Jim)