

# History Of Fairy Meadow Surf Life Saving Club 2005

Contributed by Lou Bond

According to Lawrence F. Bond (Lou) Life Member 1990

Fairy

Meadow Surf Life Saving Club was founded in 1950 by a group of local residents, to safe guard the people of Fairy Meadow and the Balgownie areas, that swum at our beach.

They, the

members, walked each Sunday to North Wollongong beach to borrow a surf reel and take it back again in the evening. Their first surfboat was an old Clinker built double-ended boat also acquired from North Wollongong Club.

In the off-season this boat was

left submerged in Fairy Creek to prevent the boards from shrinking so when it was pulled out at the start of summer it didn't leak. It weighed a ton and took around ten or more blokes to lift it.

The

first president was Mr Edwin Denet, who after a couple of year's service suffered ill health and resigned. Mr Bill Grimshaw then was made President with Mr. Leith (Snowy) Herbert and his wife Secretary. The Treasurer was Mr. Terry Murphy and Club Captain was Mr. Barry Fletcher. That's how it was when I joined one sunny summer Sunday morning 1958/59 season.

The clubhouse was

an old brick and corrugated iron boat shed with two swinging doors and it had a very small canteen attached to the southern side. It could fit one boat and some oars in the roof struts and had one small shower up the back right hand corner. It was situated on the edge of the beach on the right hand side of the walkway that runs down to the beach directly in front of our present day club. It was a sad day when we knocked it down.

Our first Ambue Mannequin for

resuscitation training was donated by the Balgownie Migrant Hostel in 1959/60 at a formal function. Bill Grimshaw, Leith Herbert, Barry Fletcher were present and were handed the Mannequin by the secretary of the hostel committee Mr Tom Matthias. It was later used by chief instructor Peter Perneke to train bronze squads.

In the season of 1960 BP ran a patrol competition with a Surfboat the BP Princes as first prize.

With only about seven or eight active members Fairy Meadow managed to win their first ever-decent competitive surfboat. The branch official was Mr Milton Stoyles. The Patrol members last quizzed were Peter Perneke, Lawrence Bond, Milton Turk and Howard Grimshaw. Bond was asked the last three questions. They were answered correctly and Fairy Meadow won on a count back by half a point from North Wollongong. Bond also received Clubman of the Year that season.

The

following year Fairy Meadow once again won the competition receiving

another boat called The BP Prestige. The year after that they were runners up, winning a blazer, which was presented to Mr Barry Armstrong for winning Clubman of the Year 1963, and I'd say he still treasures it.

In 1962, sweep Barry Fletcher trained the junior boat crew of Ron Patrick, Ray Sampson, Hans Kampen, and Allan Hammond using the BP Princes and had eleven wins and two seconds out of thirteen starts for the season. At the nationals in Warrnambool, that year, they were leading the semi by a mile on the way back but were interfered with by a tail ender and knocked out of the final. A protest did no good.

Over the next fifteen or twenty years numbers fluctuated up and down, at one stage down to about four or five members possibly Barry Armstrong, Les Herbert Harry Droken, Jeff Banks and Lawrence Bond. In that time three serious rescues were performed needing resuscitation.

A little baby girl, Sheryl Grimmer, was abducted from the beach in the late sixties but even after many hours of searching by many people she was never ever found.

Though through the years numbers weren't always big, camaraderie was, and many sand dances and kegs were held in the old boat shed. Some amusing events that happened at these times I've immortalised in a number of poems I've written. I'll attach these to this web site.

Some of the members that helped shape our club back then and over a number of years were Milton (Milo) Turk. George Ovens, John Woodbury, Terry, Robbie and Steve Dowel, Mick Smithson, Keith (Leaky) Murray, Johnny (Mo) Split, Keith Guy, Bob White, Paul (Speed) Parkinson, Peter and Howard (Piggy) Grimshaw, Peter Simpson, Brian Easterbrook, Ray, Barry and Bruce Sampson, (Sambo), Peter (Stinky Pinky) Perneke, Terry McGovern, Ron McKinnon, Hans Kampen, Ron (Mick) Patrick.

Les (Herbo) Herbert -served a spell as President, Robert Rich- President a number of years, Billy Pender, Gordon Pender, Richard (Chop-Chop) Errey, Robby (Scotty) McPherson, Mick Browbank, Ernie (Spider) Kurtz, Donny Tweddle, Warren Cram, Stan Woods, Barry (The Slug) Western, Will Pierce, Neil (Boong) Morgan, Geoff (Bluey) and Ricky (Camel) Dennis, Barry (Army) Armstrong, Harry (Safari) Droken, Rex and Baden Perkins, Dave (Surfer Dave) Fetters, Max Belfour. Kerry Turk, Barry, Terry and Kevin Strangman, Barry was President through the sixties to the early seventies, Peter Watson- Club Captain a number of years, Ian Errey, Des Hampson, Evan and Susie Stillwell, Jack Dawson (came from Woonona), Craig and Kevin Delaney, Garry (Java) Goward, Hector Frigo, Peter, Bob and Mick Boyle, Katrina and Glynn Forbes, John, Scott and Louise Allen, Allan Morton, Allan Hammond, Rob (Tic) Latter, Gus Viscos, Saba (Sash) Manolavic, Brian and Mick Homes and Barry Adams- President for a time.

Young Brad Poland came in later and now is our current President and has held that position for a number of years, and of course Lawrence (Lou) Bond

who served as club delegate for many years, as well as Honorary Coach, Publicity Officer and Gear Steward plus a term as Club Captain in 1984 and along with wife Jeanette was Junior Chairman from 1990 to 2000 and has patrolled, competed and marched for forty seven years with the club banner. (Still at it) In those years Meadow's march past teams at Branch have won five bronzes and one silver.

Some

other Junior Chairmen over the years have been Mrs. Hazel Poland (who first started with the help of Les Herbert and Lawrence Bond, the Fairy Meadow Seals Junior Club), Bruce Allan, Kevin Locke, Jeff Banks, Hamish Brown, Vicky Sawyer and Bill Kuiper. Our present day Junior Chair Person (for the last two years) is Michelle Franklin, who is doing a great job handling around a hundred or so juniors- boys and girls.

Through

the nineties we had some great junior competitors. Rachel Sawyer did well in the flags winning, I think, one or two gold's at the Branch Championships. Angela Romanovski, also in the flags, won four gold and one silver at Branch over five years. Andrew Brown won the flags and the sprint at Branch, as well as, gold in the flags at the State Championships on Thirroul Beach. Greg Lynch won gold at the McDonalds Carnival in the sprint, as well as, gold in the flags and the sprint at the Branch and was in the relay team with Andrew Brown, Cory Lesso and Natalie Watson that won gold at the McDonalds.

Due

to the persistent efforts of Barry Strangman, Leith Herbert, Terry Murphy, Barry Fletcher and a number of dedicated building committees, the first floor of our new club was opened in nineteen sixty four. It was opened by Judge Adrian Curlewis, who was patron of Australian Surf Life Saving.

Some years later, around

nineteen eighty the existing club was widened. Then once again due to a number of keen committees and the dogged persistence of one man, the then secretary, Michael Bate, our second story and our club were completed. It was opened in nineteen eighty three, this time by Politician and the then Speaker for the House of Representatives Laurie Kelly. Judge Adrian Curlewis was again in attendance, as was the Wollongong Lord Mayor Frank Arkell.

Some months after this event sadly Judge Adrian Curlewis passed away-a great man.

Other

members that have made an impression in more recent years not only as members but also competitors are Rob Belavic, Derrick and Gareth Morton, David, Anisa, Karen, Michael and Penny Locke, Ian Timbrel, Terry Westblade, Dave Raymond (Fresh Water open surf winner), Lisa Norris (Bronze and silver in national ladies surf), John Russell (silver in the national cadet flags- first ever for the Meadow), Mark Paterson (silver, state junior Iron man at Wanda Beach), John (Coco) Wakeford (won Branch champs junior beach sprint at Stanwell Park), Les Herbert (long time boat sweep steers his B crew to a win in branch final on Fairy Meadow Beach), Shaun (Double-0) Connolly, John Wiseman and Brian Holmes, train R&R teams that win nine branch gold's in two seasons.

But, one man who joined around 1961 Jeff (Golly) Banks is undisputedly the best and most consistent competitor Fairy Meadow has ever produced winning numerous medals in open carnivals and in more recent years in masters' events. At the 1990 East Coast Masters with Lou Bond He won the o/45 board rescue Lou winning the o/50 surf- Jeff the o/45 tube and silver in the o/45surf. Then in 1997 at the state Masters at Mollymook Jeff and Lou managed silver this time in the o/45 board rescue. Since then in masters events Jeff Banks has gone from strength to strength winning a number of gold, silver and bronze at branch, state, national, and world championships in surf, ski, board, tube, and board-rescue with Noel Gracie and iron man races. He's also won medals competing in Royal Life Saving events.

In 1989 he competed around the national triathlon circuit winning the national o/40 point score, contested the Foster Tuncurry triathlon and qualified for Hawaii. He also competed in and finished the twenty-six mile Sydney Marathon.

Back about that time in still water swimming he was rated No 10 in the world for eight hundred free style o/45 and to this day is still at it.

The Illawarra Rescue Helicopter was stationed at Fairy Meadow Surf Club for some years but disbanded not long after a fatal crash that killed Towradgi member, Tommy Thompson. The helicopter hit power lines and went down while transporting a seriously ill pregnant woman to hospital.

A few years ago a reunion was held at the Collegian's Leagues Club organised by Les Herbert, Hans Kampen and Barry Armstrong. A great night was had by all with many old mates meeting up after quite a long absence.

A Sports Man's Dinner was held at The Fraternity Club where champion footballer Wally Lewis was guest speaker.

Over the last five or ten years- maybe because a blokes getting older and doesn't party as much as he once did - time seems to have just flown by. I'm still though doing laps and cycling twice a week and patrolling Sundays so I must be still enjoying it.

Our present President Brad Poland for the last number of years has been running a steady ship and also handling house manager's job, where he handles all the functions that are held in our beautiful function hall - weddings, engagements, twenty firsts, birthdays etc plus the odd 'Tupper Ware party' which continue to bring a steady stream of revenue.

So when having a hot shower or using the gym or having a VB upstairs at the bar or using a board, ski or rowing a boat, give a thought to all those blokes above that went before.

And look after and enjoy our great Club- Fairy Meadow.

Of  
the above members I've mentioned, some are now not with us any more-Edwin Dennet, John Woodbury, Barry Weston, Terry Murphy, Dave Feters, Peter Perneke, Barry Strangman. Bill Pender, Unofficial member- Allyn (Nig) Phillips. 'May they sunbake in peace.'

Our Life Members Are

Edwin  
Dennet, (Posthumously) Leith Herbert, Barry Fletcher, Barry Strangman, Leslie Herbert, Robert Rich, Hans Kampen, Allan Morton, Hector Frigo, Barry Armstrong. Michael Bate, Jefferson Banks, Lawrence F. Bond, Peter Watson and Bradley Poland.

Regards- 'See you in the surf'

Lawrence (Lou) Bond

Life Member F.M.S.L.S.C.