



**MID NORTH  
COAST**

MAY 2021 | VOL.8

# HIGH-TIDE

*Official newsletter of  
Surf Life Saving Mid North Coast*

## President's Message

At the end of another long season I would like to thank all our volunteer lifesavers for their efforts on the beach. Our Mid North Coast members have once again shown their ongoing high level of professionalism and commitment to surf life saving through their involvement in search and rescues, flood assistance, water safety, dealing with COVID-19 requirements, support operations and club call out teams being 24/7 rescue ready.

Congratulations to all those that attended the Aussies held on the Sunshine Coast last month. It was great to see so many clubs from within the Branch competing at the pinnacle of surf life saving competition.

Current Duty Officers and Lifeguard Supervisors were at the SLSNSW Operations Centre in Port Macquarie over the weekend for two days of skills and training updates. As well as the Mid North Coast Branch the North Coast Branch, Lower North Coast Branch and Hunter Branch came together to listen to keynote speaker Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM (ex-NSW Fire Commissioner), SLSNSW State Duty Officer Jim Keough, and SOC Manager Andrew Ugarte.

Congratulations to Talya Moffit of Kempsey-Crescent Head SLSC for winning the female SLSNSW JLOTY.

There will still be many activities throughout the off-season including the SLSMNC Awards of Excellence on 5th June to be held at Kempsey-Crescent Head Surf Club and the Surf Life Saving NSW IRB Championships at South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club. Here's to 2021/22 being a much smoother ride.

Yours in surf life saving,

*Rod McDonagh*

SLSMNC President  
SLSMNC Life Member  
SLSNSW Life Member



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# 2021 Surf Life Saving Mid North Coast Newcastle Permanent Awards of Excellence

The Awards of Excellence recognise outstanding achievements and contributions across all aspects of Surf Life Saving.

This year's awards, which celebrate the accomplishments of members and clubs in the 2020/21 season, will be presented at the Surf Life Saving Mid North Coast Newcastle Permanent Awards of Excellence function on Saturday 5 June 2021, at Kempsey-Crescent Head SLSC.

Online nominations must be in by midnight Sunday 9 May 2021 for consideration and Branch winners to be forwarded to SLSNSW for consideration for the state award.

Documents for award categories, selection criteria, application questions and award nomination forms based on the 2020/21 SLSNSW Awards of Excellence circular 3667 and can be found on the SLSMNC website.

Any queries relating to this memo can be directed to myself or the Director of Member Services at [memberservices@slsmnc.com.au](mailto:memberservices@slsmnc.com.au)

Regards,

*Joanne Hawkins*

Director of Administration  
Surf Life Saving Mid North Coast



## Mid North Coast Flood Response March 2021

On Thursday 17 March 2021, a call was received through SLSNSW that the SES needed volunteers to assist with sandbag filling in Port Macquarie. A number of members answered the call and this was the start of what was to become a unique experience for a number of members within the Mid North Coast Local Government Areas.

As we all know, a one in 100-year flood event was now in progress with a number of low lying areas affected. A further call on Friday 18 March, saw a number of call-out teams activated to be on standby to assist in anyway they could.

On Saturday 19 March, SLSMNC assets were activated as a result of the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) in Port Macquarie tasking us for flood response duties. This continued throughout the week following, as it ramped up. At the start, taskings were slow as we were an unknown quantity and unproven in this arena. Our members knew their capabilities, but other organisations did not. Questions bandied around were “how would our vessels fare in unchartered waters”?

This quickly became a learning curve in which our members adapted to the challenges thrown at them. Tasking began to flow more readily once we had an established liaison in the EOC and with a fair bit of pushing, the EOC realised that we were indeed a usable asset in this flood event.

This was not just in the Port Macquarie area.



Crescent Head, Hat Head, Scotts Head, South West Rocks and North Haven townships were now being isolated due to the flood waters. The greater Port Macquarie CBD still remained relatively unaffected, however the surrounding areas out to Wauchope and Rawdon Island were now affectively an inland sea, with no reasonable way out unless by boat or airlift. The same could be said of the area adjacent to the Hastings River and the northern shore area.

Assets from all clubs across the branch were in some way utilised for flood response duties. Whether it was ferrying supplies to isolated areas, ferrying of members of other emergency services and council representatives to check on infrastructure, or the more serious response to evacuating persons from their flooded home. We all did our part and answered the call. Our IRB crews handled themselves in an exemplary manner under sometimes testing conditions. A lesson was learnt that our RWC fleet is not the vessels to deploy in this situation.

To all members that had an involvement with this response, I thank you all for your efforts. To be in the mix with you all was satisfying and to see you keep backing up was great. It was certainly an experience and I hope you all were proud of what you did as I know Rod and myself were extremely impressed at the achievements made and the involvement that we provided to all of our communities.

Yours in surf lifesaving,

*Paul Rayner*

Director of Lifesaving  
Surf Life Saving Mid North Coast



# MEMBERS SERVICES

Surf Life Saving Mid North Coast was well represented at three SLSNSW Development Programs held in Sydney during April 2021.

The most recent being the Junior Lifesaver of the Year Program (JLOTY) and the Youth Opportunity Makers Workshop (YOM) run concurrently at the Collaroy Centre on Sydney Northern Beaches.

## Junior Lifesaver of the Year

Taylah Moffitt (Kempsey-Crescent Head SLSC) and Cooper Lorgier (Port Macquarie SLSC) attended the three day JLOTY program, where they come together with 20 other finalists from around the State. This program aims to focus on recognition, rewarding the youth members who have been selected as Branch Finalists, with a focus on self-leadership, socialisation, teamwork, Surf Life Saving and self-awareness.



The JLOTY facilitators ran a number of in house sessions such as Lifesaving where the aim was to understand what group loves about Lifesaving, Pathways where they discussed different opportunities and pathways available in SLS and Nippers Re-imagined which focused on the nippers program that currently shapes our future Lifesavers and how it can be reworked and improved for future generations.

The JLOTY interviews took place on the first day and after a long deliberation a female and male JLOTY was selected.

This year the announcement was live streamed to allow all from around the State to be a part of the announcement.

The panels selection for JLOTY 2021 being Taylah Moffitt (Kempsey-Crescent Head SLSC and Mid North Coast Branch) and Vivek Sirkari (Warriewood SLSC and Sydney Northern Beaches Branch).

Congratulations to Taylah on her JLOTY achievement, she has a bright future in Surf Lifesaving and our organisation is better for her contributions thus far.



# Youth Opportunity Makers Workshop

Alyssa Slattery (Tacking Point SLSC) and Georgia Gaddes (South West Rocks SLSC) were selected to attend the SLSNSW YOM Program. Both these young Lifesavers have attended our Mid North Coast Development Programs in the past, having been great ambassadors at both Club and Branch level which made an easy choice for their inclusion for YOM.

The Yom workshop brought 35 lifesavers from around the State together for 3 days, actively engaging them throughout the jam-packed program. The YOM facilitators also ran Lifesaving and Pathway's sessions along with an Innovations session where the team discussed the future of SLSNSW and explored new ideas to make the organisation stronger. Alyssa and Georgia participated in more challenging sessions such as Boat Building and a Radio Challenge activities, which further improved their communication and leadership skills.

Highlight sessions involved a visit from the Westpac Rescue helicopter team and a mental health session from Gotcha4Life team. The mental health session discussed the importance of mental health and mental fitness. The session was engaging, intense and at times a bit emotional, however the session finished with an ice bath challenge which brought both YOM and JLOTY teams together and really showed the power of mental strength.



## Lifesaving Development Program

Georgia Gaddes (South West Rocks SLSC) and Thomas Collins (Port Macquarie SLSC) attended the inaugural NSW Lifesaving Development Program held at Warriewood SLSC.

The live in week long program aimed at 16-21 year old Lifesavers attracted 24 participants from across the State. The main focus aim was developing and enhancing the knowledge and skills of younger lifesavers and prepare them to take on more responsibility in their patrol teams, their Clubs, Branches and wider communities.

The importance of teamwork was evident when they participated in fast paced simulated lifesaving scenarios, both on and off the water. They too engaged with the Westpac Rescue Helicopter crew and were explained pathways and their roles within the movement.

Both Georgia and Thomas benefitted from this program, showing maturity, leadership, energy, knowledge and skill level which will prove beneficial to their futures within Surf Lifesaving.

I thank SLSNSW for the opportunity given for our MNC Branch Lifesavers to attend these Development Programs and look forward to the participants sharing their knowledge and experiences with fellow members for future participation.



Yours in surf lifesaving,

*Gary Hawkins*

Director of Member Services  
Surf Life Saving Mid North Coast

# SURF SPORTS NEWS

## SLNSW STATE - SWANSEA-BELMONT

More than 800 of the state's fittest and fastest Masters competitors braved both scorching sun and squalls of rain to show they've still got what it takes after a big two days at the NSW Masters Surf Life Saving Championships.

Local club Tacking Point was the surprise package of the carnival coming in overall 10th out of 56 Clubs. With only 9 competitors the Club excelled with some great results from all team members to round out the top 10 Clubs from across the State. With only 3 points between 7th and 10th position the Club are extremely proud of their result.

Team Manager Richard Hewens said "there was great camaraderie and team spirit with all members working together to achieve such a wonderful placing overall for the Club. We have trained hard over the past few months and it is really exciting to see reward for the effort. More than that it is a great group of like-minded people enjoying the opportunities that come with being involved in SLS."



State Opens 2021 was attended by three MNC clubs - WBHSLSC, PMSLSC and TPSLSC. A tough day for some but they had fun and to top it off they all hung out together!

Our MNC Clubs were also well attended at the State Age Championships with 3 nippers from Wauchope Bonny Hills, 2 Tacking Point nippers and impressive 24 Port Macquarie Nippers competing over the 4 days

It was unfortunate that the SLNSW State Surf Boats Carnival was called off as multiple crews from Mid North Coast clubs were entered into this competition.

## AUSSIES 2021 - Sunshine Coast

Aussie 2021 was held on The Sunshine Coast, Queensland. The Sunny Coast did not disappoint. The weather was perfect and the ocean was just right for racing.

The MNC Branch was well represented by six clubs - Macksville-Scotts Head, South West Rocks, Kempsey-Crescent Head, Port Macquarie, Tacking Point and Wauchope-Bonny Hills.



PMSLSC had a small team of six competitors that did their club proud with some amazing results against the best in the country from 315 clubs. Competing for the first time at this level, U/15s Andi McGrath, Chloe Caldwell and Ben Hamel held their own with some impressive results.

Ben Hamel - did an absolutely outstanding job making the U/15 Male Board Final and coming in 16th position. Andie and Chloe were brilliant, just narrowly missing out to proceed to the next level. The girls then teamed up for the Board Rescue and again just missed out on the next round but came out of the water with huge smiles! The feedback from these young guns was "an excellent carnival with a fantastic atmosphere" and "exhausting but so much fun".

U/19 Jack Caldwell put himself up for the endurance event - the 2k Ocean Swim finishing in an impressive time of 27.25 minutes.

Larry Brook and Carolyn Turnham represented PMSLSC Masters and did an amazing job. Larry and Carolyn both finished 3rd in the 2k Ocean Swim in their respective age groups. Then backed it up with Larry finishing 1st in the Surf Race and Carolyn finishing in 3rd place in her Surf Race! Well done to you both - you are amazing ambassadors for PMSLSC.



The Surf Boat Arena saw crews from MSH, SWR, KCH and WBH competing across many divisions. The South West Rocks 180's Mens Crew, after a first and a second in the heats, were knocked out in the semi-finals. The MSH 220's male crew rowed hard but were eliminated in their semi-final.

WBHSLSC sent three boat crews to Aussies last week at the Sunshine Coast. The U/23 Female crew 'The Boatettes', the U/23 Male crew 'The Kockatoos' and the Mens Open crew 'The Cassowaries'. Conditions were very flat making for some very tight finishes with crews having to work hard all the way back to the beach. The Boatettes rowed well and made it into the quarter finals and narrowly missed out on a spot in the semis. The Kockatoos rowed exceptionally well in the heats placing 1st or 2nd in all their races and progressed all the way to the semi-finals. It came down to a photo finish with 3 crews all crossing the line at once, but unfortunately the Kockatoos missed out on a place in the final. The Cassowaries also rowed well but did not progress past the heats.



TPSLSC President, Mick Lang was the Area Referee for the Masters Surf Boats.

Thank-you to those who represented their club through Team Managers, Coaches, Officials and Support Crews!

The word legend is often thrown around in sporting circles, but Tacking Point SLSC's member, Peter Hennessey is one identity who fits the bill.

Pete has returned from Maroochydore with an Australian masters Ironman championship success with the latest gold medal taking his Australian title numbers into the twenties. He also achieved silver medals in the 75-79 years individual board and ski races.

It comes on the back of gold medals at the state surf life saving championships earlier this month where he claimed wins in the ironman, ski and board divisions.

Incredibly, in a surf life saving career spanning half a century, he's registered just as many second-place finishes as he has wins.

Pete is a very modest and unassuming person who when asked why he competes, simply says, "If I didn't do it (surf life saving) I'd probably be dead!"

"I only do it because I enjoy training and if you enjoy training and exercise you might as well do an event."

"It's been good doing it with Tacking Point surf club ... they've been good and are one of the best little clubs in the country."

He advocates keeping fit is important for elderly people and to keep active as much as possible.

"For old people it's good to do some sort of exercise and everyone should do a little bit of it whether it's walking or whatever," he said.

"I don't know if I'll do any more racing, but I'll paddle and swim until I can't."

The 75-year-old admitted his ability to still train with the younger members of the club allowed him to keep fresh in the mind.

Despite a lifelong association with the ocean and competing at masters level for nearly three decades, Hennessey said he still has respect for the sea. "It doesn't matter how long you've been doing it, the surf can always get you."



## OFF SEASON INTERBRANCH TRAINING

This off season, our Branch Coaches, Adam Smith and Mick Lang will be holding coaching clinics once per month for the selected 2021 Interbranch Team. The first of these will be held at Lighthouse Beach on Sunday 9 May, 2021. The aim of these clinics is to hone the skills of all athletes in the Team. The goal is for all the squad to enhance their surf skills and to improve their board, ski and surf race skills. The hope is to have some guest coaches attend the clinics to impart their knowledge to our young Squad. Our Interbranch Surf Boat crews will not be left out and again the hope is to have some guest sweeps/coaches attend to show them some new skills and drills to assist with their off season training programs and have them ready and firing for next season.

The aim is to have a session once per month from May to September, leading up to the commencement of next season. More information will be forthcoming via surfguard and normal branch media.

# LONG SERVICE AWARDS



Three of our SLSMNC Branch Officials were recognised at the Aussies on the Sunshine Coast in a special ceremony for their decades of officiating at all levels of surf sports.

A 50 years Long Service Officiating Award was given to Chalkie Bob Smith OAM from Wauchope-Bonny Hills Surf Life Saving Club, 50 Years Long Service Officiating Award for Bruce Caldwell and 30 Years Long Service Officiating Award for Rod McDonagh both from South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club. Thank-you gentleman for all you have done and continue to do for surf life saving

All three men officiated in varying capacities at the Aussies this year and are well respected in Surf Life Saving circles in regards to officiating and surf sports.

## UPCOMING EDUCATION COURSES

### First Aid Course

10th & 11th May 6pm - 9pm  
SLSNSW Operations Centre  
Central Rd  
Port Macquarie

### ARTC

25th & 27th May 6pm - 9pm  
SLSNSW Operations Centre  
Central Rd  
Port Macquarie

### \*Silver Medallion Advanced First Aid

1st & 3rd June 6pm - 9pm  
SLSNSW Operations Centre  
Central Rd  
Port Macquarie

### Silver Medallion Beach Management

8th & 10th June 6pm - 9pm  
SLSNSW Operations Centre  
Central Rd  
Port Macquarie

\*Pre-requisites for this course are First Aid and ARTC which can be completed in May

Check out the SLSMNC Education and Training Facebook page for flyers with more information.

# Save the Date

South West Rocks SLSC will be hosting a 50 year reunion for the Country Branches.  
Friday 16th, Saturday 17th + Sunday 18th July 2021

For more information contact Bruce Caldwell [brucenosceoptusnet.com.au](mailto:brucenosceoptusnet.com.au)  
or see SLSNSW Club Mail

## Keep in the Know

SLSMNC has Facebook pages to enable members and the public to keep up to date for events and activities happening within our Branch.

The SLSMNC Branch 'Like Page' is a platform to promote information to the general public.

The SLSMNC 'Closed Groups' - Member Services Team, Education and Training, Surf Sports - are for members to join for information specific to that portfolio. Make sure you join these groups for all current information.



Surf Life Saving Mid North Coast Branch



SLSMNC Member Services Team



SLSMNC Surf Sports



SLSMNC Education and Training

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