

# shore break



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**NORTHERN BEACHES  
COUNCIL**



## TWO CLUBS RECEIVE NSW RESCUE AWARDS

The number of coastal drownings since Christmas doesn't make for good reading. Just over halfway through last month, the number of drownings in NSW was 30.

Fortunately, there was none on the Sydney Northern Beaches but lifesavers from both Whale Beach SLSC and North Steyne SLSC prevented three more tragedies.

SLSNSW awarded both clubs NSW Rescue of the Month for December and January respectively. The swift action of our volunteer lifesavers from Whale Beach saved two lives on December 23 at their beach, while North Steyne SLSC members Tracey Hare-Boyd and her son Trae were recognised for their efforts in the successful resuscitation of a swimmer at Shelly Beach on January 5.

It just goes to show the value of our lifesavers being so well trained in case of emergencies. And they don't have to be at the beach to put their skills to the test.

It has been somewhat of a remarkable year already for Tracey, who just happens to be Director Member Services for SLSSNB. She won an Outstanding Service Award for the Northern Beaches Council's inaugural Australia Day awards.

Tracey is an enormous asset to surf life saving, not only because of her volunteer work but also because of her lifesaving skills.

What a fabulous performance by our lifesavers in Champion Lifesaver at the NSW Championships at Blacksmiths Beach.

Sydney Northern Beaches really stole the show in this event. We won a total of 19 medals, seven gold, seven silver and five bronze.

And congratulations also to Freshwater SLSC as their open team won the prestigious State Open Patrol Competition.

Next month two of our young lifesavers, Douglas Carroll (South Curl Curl SLSC and Caoimhe Daly (Freshwater SLSC) will represent our Branch at the State Junior Lifesaver of the Year competition. We



have had such tremendous success in this NSW competition for the past two years. I am sure whatever happens our two Branch Junior Lifesaver of the Year representatives will do us proud.

Congratulations to Queenscliff SLSC and North Steyne SLSC receiving financial funding as part of the NSW Government's Surf Club Facility Grants. Our Branch Championships were a big success and ran smoothly and I would like to especially thank our sponsors Westfield Warringah Mall and Bill Buckle Subaru.

*Pictures: Top:SNB scooped the pool in the Open Female Champion Lifesaver at the State Championships. Newport's Phoebe Savage (middle) won from Freshwater pair Clare Freakley (left) and Tahlia Dearden (right), who took the bronze; SNB President Doug Menzies.*

DOUG MENZIES  
President



# MEET MATT PIPER – A REMARKABLE BLIND MAN



## RADIO OPERATOR EXTRAORDINAIRE

New Long Reef SLSC member Matt Piper is a remarkable man.

A single dad of three kids, Matt has been totally blind for the past 18 years.

A mad keen surfboard rider until he lost the sight in both eyes, Matt has returned to the beach but in a different capacity.

Matt now has his Radio Operator's Certificate and plays an important and very useful role on weekend patrol at Long Reef Beach.

Matt always has a buddy with him and usually it's his girlfriend Jo Stanton.

Matt has three children Charlie, 16, Honey, 13, and youngest daughter Willow, 9, and sadly he lost his wife Alex to breast cancer three years ago.

Jo and Matt met through mutual friends around a year ago.

"I wanted to get Willow involved in nippers and when we went to register, Jo said she wanted to do her Bronze Medallion," Matt said.

"I got tapped on the shoulder by a club member and asked if I also wanted to join. I thought it would be nice for me to be involved with Willow's nippers at Long Reef and Jo's involvement in the club enabled

us to do our bronze training together.

"If I couldn't get my bronze, then at least the Radio Operator's Certificate because there was an opportunity as a blind man.

"Why not? Yes, it was hard because I couldn't see what was going on. But my background in anatomy and physiology, well, I thought I know a lot about it anyway.

"It was like a refresher course for me.

"Having massage and physiotherapy knowledge behind me from college, I wasn't afraid of that, more afraid of the outcome, that whether I would be able to do what I can do in my situation.

"The team of volunteers at Long Reef helped get me in a pool to do laps as a blind person to get my training started. I was then supported through the whole process and am now a proud patrolling member."

Matt wears a yellow vest with the words sight impaired written on the front to distinguish himself from other volunteer patrolling members. Apart from surfing in his younger days at Freshwater, Matt was also very keen on Dirt Bike riding.

"What happened to me was one of those bad luck things," he said.

"It wasn't genetic or congenital. I was 16 when there was activity going on behind my eyes," he said.

Matt was told there was gross inflammation in the retinas and overtime the retinas were destroyed. He had no fewer than eight operations.

"As you can imagine my whole world changed when I could no longer see," he said.

"But I have learnt a lot along the way with my blindness. I am more aware of my surroundings having this other sense going on because one has been taken away.

"What I am doing now has given me another purpose in life. It gets me out of the house, a break from the washing, cleaning, cooking and the kids' books and I am doing something physical. It's also a social outlet.

"More importantly, I am giving back as a volunteer. I love the beach atmosphere and the people at Long Reef. Yes, I do have a life."

Pictures: Matt Piper on patrol, and Matt with youngest daughter Willow.



# THE DAY SUZY AND HER PATROL PREVENT TRAGEDIES

## BRANCH AND STATE RESCUE OF MONTH

Suzy Bownes hasn't been a Patrol Captain long but she's already experienced what it's like to be leading a major rescue operation at the beach. Along with Vice Patrol Captain Sophie Rothery, the part that the two captains played at Whale Beach on December 23 when two men got into difficulty in the flagged area, helped prevent a double tragedy. Suzy will never forget the incident just two days before Christmas as both her father Iain and brothers Angus and Oliver were also involved in helping to save the lives of two men from Liverpool in Sydney's west.

Whale Beach SLSC Patrol 9 received the Surf Life Saving Sydney Northern Beaches Branch Rescue of the Month and also SLNSW Rescue of the Month for December.

The previous season this same patrol group was involved in another incident which won SNB Branch Rescue of the Month.

Suzy and her brothers Angus and Oliver have been members of Whale Beach SLSC now for nine years.

"Dad joined primarily to spend more time with us after he retired," Suzy said.

Suzy, who is studying medicine, said it was pure luck on December 23 that so many other club members were still around to assist Patrol 9 when the drama unfolded.

It was later ascertained that the two men were non-swimmers.

But both were in the flags at the time of the incident. The two were swept off a sandbank into a powerful rip current.

"Angus, Iain and Jack (Bregenhøj) paddled out on their boards, while Oli and Lachie (Williams) took out tubes," Suzy said.

It was Suzy's twin brother Angus who spotted the bubbles coming from below the water. He dived under to retrieve the man, who was unconscious. He (the patient) was put on the board and the rescuers got him back to shore. "He was blue," Suzy said.

The Whale Beach lifesavers then put into practice everything they had learned throughout their training.

Suzy called for an ambulance and told her team to clear the water and close the beach.

Meanwhile, CPR treatment was commenced with four rounds being performed before the patient was successfully resuscitated. Paramedics arrived and took over, eventually helicoptering him to hospital. The second man had managed to get himself to shore but rapidly deteriorated. He showed symptoms of secondary drowning. A second ambulance was called.

The rescue and resuscitation effort was particularly impressive considering most of the lifesavers involved in the incident were under the age of 25. Suzy said: "The award is huge for the club. It really



brought home for us the importance of constantly maintaining your skills because you never know when they can be called upon.

"We have a very young team on patrol but during the rescue everyone acted with skill and professionalism. It's testament to the standard of the training provided at this club and the calibre of our youngest members.

"The incident certainly shook us all up but we were absolutely ecstatic with the outcome for the two

young men and their families."

Those involved in the incident: Suzy, Iain, Angus and Oliver Bownes, Sophie Rothery, Liam George, Jack Bregenhøj, Lachlan Williams, Sydney Robertson, Sally Collier, Tom Sanderson, Nicholas Dijohn, Lara Boyle, Alexander Burchett, Max Zagorski, Archie Elliott, Angus Kellaway, Dylan Gay, Oscar Press, Edward Harrison, William Harte, Ben Rothery, Barney Allen, Harrison Penn, Maddie Zagorski.

*Pictures: Suzy Bownes with Duty Officer Col Dagger.*





Top: Some of the club members involved in the rescue;  
Bottom: Angus Bownes (far right –top row), Oli Bownes next to Angus and Lachie Williams; Iain Bownes is far right, bottom row.







## HAMISH SELECTED FOR NZ EXCHANGE

Hamish Christie has become more involved in the surf life saving movement since he left school. Hamish originally joined Long Reef SLSC through the Shore School program eight years ago but now he's a lot more active.

"But I really sort of got more involved in 2014," he said.

"I started rowing surf boats for the club and progressively became an IRB driver and now I am on the management committee and I just became a Patrol Captain this season. I have a group of "bronzies" in my patrol which is fantastic," he said. Hamish had already been involved as a nipper before he was part of the Shore program. "Once I progressed through the school and then got involved in the boats doing patrol hours I started liking it a lot more," he said.

"I really do like being on the beach patrolling. The responsibility at times can be a bit mentally exhausting.

"There's a lot to do, but then again I like taking on the responsibility. The people at the surf club have been fantastic in supporting me as such a young Patrol Captain. They have helped me get the awards and get the experience and moving me through." Only last month Hamish was one of nine young lifesavers who were involved in SLSNSW City to Country Exchange Program.

Keelan Smith (Newport SLSC) and North Steyne SLSC members Kyra Jenkins and Ella Falzarano were also chosen to go to country clubs. Hamish patrolled at Ballina Lighthouse and Lismore SLSC and Byron Bay SLSC and was later chosen to



represent NSW at the annual Lifeguard Exchange in New Zealand this month.

He thoroughly enjoyed the experience, especially at Ballina and also seeing the facilities of the Westpac Lifesaver Helicopter at Lismore.

"We did the Albert training with the IRBs and we had a look at an example Drone rescue, using their new drones. It was pretty cool to see. I was pretty impressed by it. It's a huge drone. I didn't realise the size of it," he said.

Hamish said the Ballina lifesavers were very active the way they set up. "Each person had their own

role in setting up, not really delegated," Hamish said.

"One person went out in the rip and saw where it took him to decide where they should set the flags up. Other people set up the ducks. Rather than let the Patrol Captain decide all the things, they all had input into the decisions.

"Byron was a bit different. They worked fantastically as a team but had a different approach to patrolling."

**Pictures: Hamish Christie on patrol at Long Reef Beach. Hamish hadn't been rowing long and this is an experience he won't forget at a Warriewood carnival. Hamish was second stroke that day.**

**(Photo: PAUL LEMLIN)**





## QUEENSIE TO BENEFIT FROM FACILITY GRANT

Persistence does pay off. Just ask Queenscliff SLSC President Craig Susans.

The club will finally get a new lease of life after four failed applications for financial help.

Queensie is one of 18 surf clubs throughout NSW to receive funding through the NSW Government's Surf Club Facility Grants.

Fortunately for those clubs, the NSW Government doubled their funding from \$2m to \$4m which is a welcome relief.

Queenscliff received \$310,000 from the SLSNSW Facilities scheme.

"In addition we had received from Northern Beaches Council back in July, 2017, for the installation of a DDA compliant lift a total of \$150,000, to be spent in conjunction with the above amount," Mr Susans said.

"So that gives us \$460,000 to start works on adding a second floor to the existing Community Hall to create a new hall upstairs and space downstairs for storage and to create a space for the youth of our club.

"It is space for local 13 to 18-year-olds dedicated just for them to spend time in a safe user friendly environment.

"As a club we see the development of local youth as a vital part of our place in the community, helping to create not only better surf lifesavers of the future, but better citizens in the process.

"Upstairs the new hall will be a showcase for not only training our members in lifesaving skills, but a space for community groups to share.

"As our new local Member, James Griffin has been



very supportive of our plans and as a community we are indeed indebted to his work and ongoing support."

Mr Susans said the first step will be the negotiation of a lease in line with the NSW Government/SLS and Crown lands agreed template that would see the club take full responsibility for the overall facility.

Discussions are well in progress with council and Mr Susans is hopeful that works will commence in winter.

North Steyne SLSC also benefitted from the Surf Club Facility Grant.

The latest amount the club received (\$200,000) was

for the new stairs and disabled ramp.

The club previously received \$175,000 some 12 months ago for balconies and shutters.

James Griffin MP, said: "As our volunteer lifesavers protect us, the NSW Government continues to invest in our local surf clubs to give clubs and their members the best facilities possible."

Mr Griffin said he would continue to push the claims of the two clubs because of the tireless work they do for the community.

**Pictures: Top: The Queenscliff SLSC building as it looks now; Queenscliff SLSC President Craig Susans (left) says persistence pays off.**





## TRACEY, DAVID HONOURED

Tracey Hare-Boyd needs no introduction to the tireless work she does for surf life saving on the northern beaches.

Tracey is one of those ladies who devotes an enormous amount of time to volunteer work but doesn't like a fuss made about what she does and achieves.

Tracey, of course, was the first female president of North Steyne SLSC but much of her time now is putting in the hours as Director Member Services for Sydney Northern Beaches Branch.

Northern Beaches Council introduced the inaugural Australia Day awards this year and Tracey received an Outstanding Service Award.

It was a big occasion, too, for another North Steyne SLSC member David Cowell. He also received the same award for his outstanding contribution to the community.

North Steyne SLSC President Frank Traugott said: "This is an amazing achievement when you think about it. Northern Beaches Council now has 272,000 constituents and only 19 awards of which North Steyne gets two from those nominated.

"It is great to see our champion volunteers being recognised for their tireless unpaid contributions." In typical Tracey fashion she said she was a little embarrassed by the award. "My friends and peers all do the same things as I do, if not more," she said.



"Being nominated for the Inspirational Women's Award and also this Outstanding Service Award has all been a little surreal. Volunteering can sometimes mean you miss out on family time but my mum and dad are extremely supportive of my sister Mechelle and I and, of course Trae (my son) who is fast becoming just as if not more qualified than me." David Cowell was SNB Branch Volunteer of the Year in season 2016-17 and a State finalist for SLSNSW.

"Volunteering is undertaken by so many people for a variety of different reasons and for most, it is

not for the accolades or the money, but to make a difference and allow everyone to shine," David said.

"To be recognised by the new Northern Beaches Council with Outstanding Community Service is a great honour.

"I have an understanding family, a great board at North Steyne SLSC, fantastic members and the Branch that support my passion for volunteering."

**Pictures: Top Northern Beaches Mayor Michael Regan, Tracey Hare-Boyd, Brad Hazzard MP and Peter Wynn, ambassador; Below: Mayor Michael Regan with David Cowell, Brad Hazzard and Peter Wynn.**



# TOUGH CALL TO PICK OUR BRANCH REPRESENTATIVES



## BUT TRACEY IS DELIGHTED

Surf Life Saving Sydney Northern Beaches Director Member Services Tracey Hare-Boyd was absolutely over the moon with the standard of candidates who entered this year's Junior Lifesaver of the Year competition.

"Exceptional, really good," she said.

"Last year we had clear winners. This year it was really difficult with both the winners and highly commended. They were really close."

The two winners were Douglas Carroll (South Curl Curl SLSC) and Caoimhe Daly (Freshwater SLSC). They will now represent SNB Branch at the State competition at Collaroy next month.

SNB have provided both a NSW female and male champion in the past two years. Two members of Narrabeen SLSC Ella Cook and Elliott Prasad have won those prestigious awards.

*Pictures: Top: The finalists at the presentation at Branch Headquarters. Hard working Director Member Services Tracey Hare-Boyd. She devotes a lot of time to the JLOTY.*





# MEET OUR JUNIOR LIFESAVER OF THE YEAR WINNERS

## DOUG, CAOIMHE OFF TO STATE

Douglas Carroll, of South Curl Curl SLSC, loves riding his surfboard. But he also loves being on patrol as a volunteer lifesaver.

Like Douglas, Caoimhe Daly, a member of Freshwater SLSC, likes to give back to the community by patrolling at weekends and safeguarding beachgoers.

Douglas and Caoimhe are the Sydney Northern Beaches male and female Junior Lifesaver of the Year.

They will now go on and represent the Branch at the 2018 NSW Junior Lifesaver of the Year next month.

Sydney Northern Beaches Branch has had great success in this competition over the past two years, Emma Cook (Narrabeen Beach) winning in 2016 and her clubmate Elliott Prasad taking it out last year.

Douglas has been a member of South Curl Curl since under 6s.

"I entered the completion because I really wanted to aspire within the club," he said.

"What I really like about surf lifesaving is the beach aspect of it. Just the fact that I can help people save lives and just help save lives in general.

"I have been lucky enough to do a few patrols already and I really like it."

Douglas has set himself certain goals. First is obtaining his Bronze Medallion, then Silver Medallion IRB driver and Gold Medallion.

One of his initiatives is to introduce a buddy/mentor program. "This would involve the cadets of the club pairing with younger members of nippers," he said.

## FRIENDSHIPS

"Throughout the year the buddies (cadets) would help the younger nippers, giving them tips and developing their skills to improve the nippers' overall achievements and boost confidence.

"This would also help create friendships between the nippers and cadets."

Caoimhe also joined the surf club movement as a young nipper.

"I really like the family aspect and how close we all are at Freshwater SLSC," she said.

Caoimhe says she definitely wants to continue surf education. "There is always more to learn," she said.

She also has her heart set on becoming an IRB crew then driver.

"The main thing I'd like to see happen is more people my age carrying through to the senior club," she said.

While Caoimhe likes being on patrol, she also likes her surf sports. "I am water orientated when it comes to competition," she said.

Being a water competitor has helped her being able to read a surf and knowing that is such a valuable skill when it comes to saving a life in the water.



*Pictures: Above Our male winner Douglas Carroll (South Curl Curl SLSC) with Jason Falinski MP (Federal Member for Mackellar) and last year's winner Elliott Prasad; Below: Our female winner Caoimhe Daly (Freshwater SLSC) with Candy Bingham Northern Beaches Deputy Mayor (right) and Elliott Prasad.*





# GREAT FRIENDS ARE HIGHLY COMMENDED BY JUDGES



## THEY WANT TO IMPROVE SKILLS

Down the track Edward Shelbourne wants to achieve a medal in Champion Lifesaver.

As for Emma Worner, she wants to learn more lifesaving skills so she can impart her knowledge onto the next generation.

Both Emma and Edward have known each other for quite some time, as they both joined nippers at Manly LSC as under 6's. They knew each other even before then.

Now they are in their last year as juniors and both also like their surf sports and compete in board and swim races.

They entered the Sydney Northern Beaches Junior Lifesaver of the Year competition and both were Highly Commended.

Edward said he was absolutely stoked with the honour.

"It is such a great competition," he said.

Now that he's about to move onto the senior club Edward said: "I really would like to compete in Champion Lifesaver as it typifies surf lifesaving.

"By training for this event, I feel I will be rewarded with some good skills and knowledge." He feels that being a water competitor it has taught him a lot about understanding the surf. Edward is very aware of the high percentage

of drownings recorded in the Royal Lifesaving National Drowning Report (2017) and says signs on our beaches are so important, especially for overseas visitors. "Signs that are predominantly picture based to enable non English speaking people to get the message and understand the signs so they are directed to the safe and recommended swim areas," Edward said. Emma's main goal is to continue and help and influence younger nippers so that they can achieve their goals.

Emma feels she has become a better leader through skills learnt and feels confident to step up to any challenge that may be presented to her at Manly Beach.

Her program initiative is for Manly nippers helping the visiting children of Royal Far West (a local children's hospital for country children who have missed schooling due to illness) to learn surf and lifesaving skills.

"It would be great if they could have the same privileges as we have had at our club and have been lucky enough to experience," Emma said. "This would hopefully shorten their recovery time."

*Pictures: Emma Worner and good friend Edward Shelbourne at the SNB JLOTY presentation at the Branch Headquarters. Edward competing at the Branch Championships at Collaroy.*

## FINALISTS

### FEMALE

Caoimhe Daly (Freshwater SLSC)  
 Olivia Gillespie (Narrabeen Beach SLSC)  
 Chloe Mason (North Steyne SLSC)  
 Sari Millar (Dee Why SLSC)  
 Heather O'Sullivan (Newport SLSC)  
 Emma Rous (Warriewood SLSC)  
 Emma Spencer (Collaroy SLSC)  
 Sophia Spencer (North Curl Curl SLSC)  
 Mali Spijker (South Curl Curl SLSC)  
 Emma Worner (Manly LSC)

### MALE

Lachlan Cameron (Freshwater SLSC)  
 Samuel Capell (Newport SLSC)  
 Douglas Carroll (South Curl Curl SLSC)  
 Isaac Crews (North Curl Curl SLSC)  
 Thomas Dorahy (Warriewood SLSC)  
 Callum Fitzgibbon (Narrabeen Beach SLSC)  
 Ethan Griffin (Dee Why SLSC)  
 Pieter Marais (North Steyne SLSC)  
 Edward Shelbourne (Manly LSC)











