



MEREWETHER SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Annual Report 2025-2026



“Creating Safer Waters For All”

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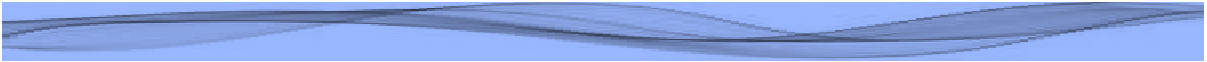
Compiled and edited by Anthony Tietze



Our Focus

Merewether Surf Life Saving Club's focus is to continue to grow our club, engage with our local community and deliver essential education and lifesaving services to all who visit our beach.

We strive to make a difference.



Annual General Meeting

The 119th MSLSC AGM will be held on Sunday 5 July 2026 at 10:00am. The agenda will include:

- Apologies
- One minute silence in respect of past members
- President, Secretary and Treasurer's Reports
- Previous Minutes from 2024-2025 season
- Presentation of the Annual Report for the 2025-2026 season
- Presentation of Club Patrons, Vice Patrons and Honorary Positions
- Election of Office Bearers for the 2026-2027 season
- Membership fee for the 2026-2027 season
- General business

Light refreshments will be served.



MSLSC Patrons for 2025-2026

Title	Representative
Patrons	John Adamson , Sue Paul, Cr Jenny Barrie (CN), Rob Dan OAM, Phil Musgrove OAM
Vice-Patrons	Evan Walton Susan Walton OAM Ross Taggart
Honorary Positions	Craig Doyle (McDonald Johnson Solicitors), Cheryl Isles, Gail Miller, Linda March
Medical Officer	Jason Hunter

MSLSC Office Bearers for 2025-2026

Position	Name
President	Nick Newton
Club Captain	Gemma McMillan
Honorary Secretary	Jamie Paras
Treasurer	Norm Rodgers
Director of Education	Anthony Tietze
Registrar	Lynelle Jenkinson/Sophie Percival
Director of Surf Sports	Trish Stallard
Board, Ski and Gear Captain	Mike Parsons
Club Vice Captain	Garry Semetka
Junior Coordinator Chairperson	Emma Dean
Bar Manager	Michael Spillane
Youth Coordinator	Makenzie Wall
Surf Sports Juniors Coach	Brendan Kiley
Rookie Coordinator	Karen Wallace
IRB Captain	Kris Wall/Nathan Bird
Surf Boat Captain	Craig Doherty
WH&S Officer	Nathan McKelligott
Member Protection Information Officer	Tom Lyons
IT Coordinator	Evan Jobling
Publicity Officer	Dave Hoar
Radio Officer	David Tietze
Merchandise Officer	Cheryl Isles
Function Room Manager	Margaret Newton

Membership Fees for 2025-2026

Membership Type	Fee
Senior Active & Cadets (registered on or before 31st October)	\$105.00
Senior Associates (not patrolling)	\$140.00
Over 65's Associates	\$70.00
Junior Active member (1 st child)	\$100.00
Additional junior active members	\$80.00
Junior Associate (parent)	\$105.00

Family Membership (1 adult, 1 child)	\$205.00
Ski storage fee	\$30
Board storage fee	\$20
LATE membership fee (after 31 st October)	\$35.00

These fees are included in the report as a historical record. Fees for the 2026-2027 season will be decided at the upcoming Annual General Meeting proposed for 5 July, 2026.

MSLSC Life Members

E.A. Merewether [†]	Albert Peel [†]	William R. Adamson [†]
A. Watt [†]	Jim McKenzie [†]	Frank Long [†]
Colonel Ranclaud [†]	Jeff Agland	Keith Swan [†]
Edgar Hinchcliff [†]	Ron Webster [†]	Brad March
Vic Lovell [†]	Gary Miller [†]	Robert Dan OAM
Albert (Bert) Caldwell [†]	Greg Nelmes	Nick Newton
Jim Wiebe [†]	Graham Walton	Mark Woodcock
Keith D.McDonald [†]	Robert J.Balks	Gregory Struck
E.(Ted) Pritchard [†]	Stewart Hetherington [†]	Noel Long
Phil M Evans [†]	Robert Richards	Neville Henshaw OAM [†]
Jack Wiebe [†]	Evan Walton	Steve Stallard
Norm Wiebe [†]	Cliff Ireland [†]	Ross Taggart
R.(Bob) Morton [†]	Peter Alcock	Charlie Bugbird
R.F.(Frank) Mahony [†]	Phillip Watt	Grahame Lott*
R.(Dick) Tressider [†]	Laurie March [†] OAM	Max Ebrill*
Harry Norton [†]	Laurie Graham [†] OAM	John Lyddiard*
R.(Bob) Hughes [†]	Jack Cavanagh [†]	W.G. Lyddiard*
Alf Hiland [†]	John Adamson	David Pratt*
A.J.(Albert) Edwards [†]	Peter Hogg	Terry Carroll*
W.(Bill) Read [†]	Sue Paul	Barry Harris*
Jack Blackett [†]	Iain Kelso	Kaye Lott*
Sid Bignall [†]	Phil Mosgrove OAM	Noel McFayden* [†]
Jim Hiland [†]	Ross Purvis	John Brown*
Doug Read [†]	Michael Rees	Elaine Brown*
W (Bill) Morgan	Anthony Robinson	June Ebrill*
Cliff Brown [†]	Patricia Stallard	Graham (Tamba) Adam
Norm Rodgers	Dave Hoar	

* For Service to Merewether Junior SLSC

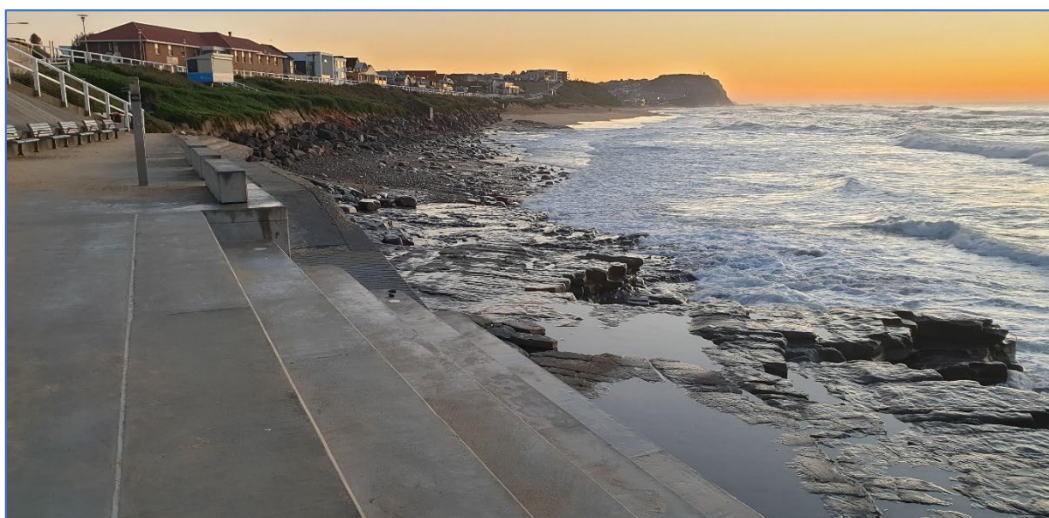
Thank you to our Life Members

MSLSC Child Safety Policy

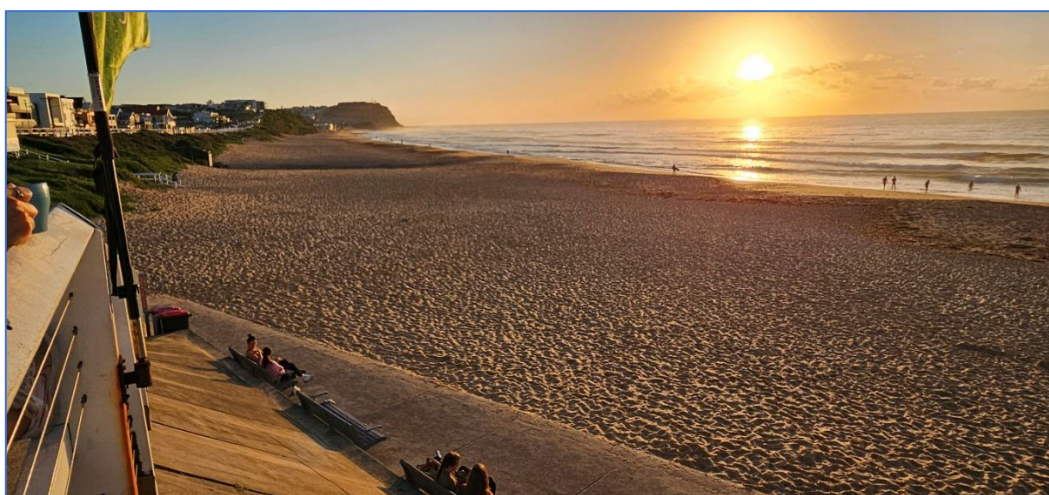
MSLSC is committed to keeping our children safe. We work to create an environment where every child feels valued, protected, safe, supported and heard. Our team follows strict child-safety procedures, completes ongoing training and acts immediately on any concerns.

What a Difference Some Swell Can Make

By Anthony Tietze



Merewether Beach August 2021



Merewether Beach March 2026

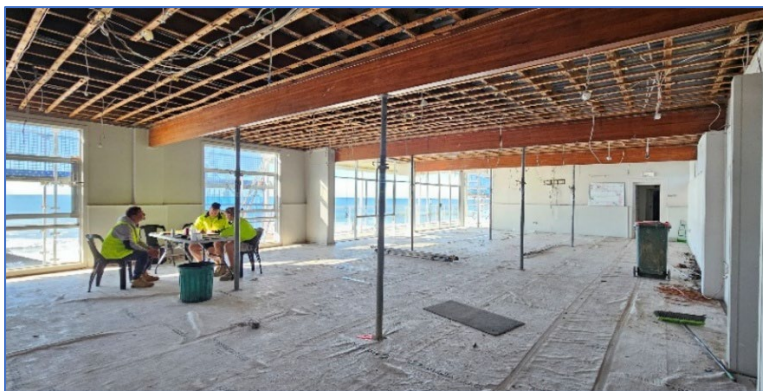
MSLSC had some concerning times a few seasons ago with severe sand erosion from our beach. Patrol operations and beach access were challenging for some weeks for obvious reasons. Nature came to the rescue, however, restoring some 300,000 tonnes of sand along the length of our beach over a relatively short period of time. Erosion of our beach and the consequent effect on amenity is obviously an ongoing concern.

A New Roof and Ceilings for MSLSC

By Anthony Tietze

The MSLSC clubhouse had a new roof and ceilings installed in the latter part of 2025. Work commenced a little later than first anticipated, which meant that we were without access to the upper floor of MSLSC until November. This was a challenge for the start of our season, but Dixon Park SLSC was helpful and generous in allowing us to run course sessions at their clubhouse until MSLSC was back in action. Operationally we were able to run patrols using the downstairs areas of MSLSC, albeit after manoeuvring of equipment and methodologies.

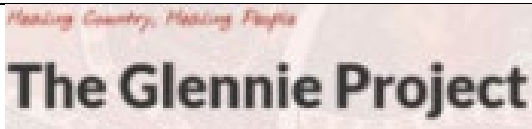
The budget for the works was in the order of \$500,000, largely funded by a NSW Government Office of Sport grant. Partial funding came from CN along with funding in kind from MSLSC.



Roof Works at MSLSC – July to November 2025

Report on Sponsors

By Adrian Harte

LOGO	Sponsor	Category
	The Beach Hotel	Major
	The Glennie Project	Major
	Salt Property	Major
	Symal Group Pty Ltd	Major
	Modus Brewery	Gold
	Virtuous Wealth	Gold
	PKF Newcastle	Silver
	Grill'd Healthy Burgers	Silver
	Jezweb	Silver
	Money Saver Home Loans	Bronze
	Hunter Signs	Bronze
	Merewether Mechanical	Bronze

	Sellers Quality Meats	Supporter
	Susan Walton Optometrist	Supporter
	McGregor and McGregor	Supporter

Cash contributions and valuable in-kind support of materials and specialist services has again contributed significantly towards the club's critical activities during the 2025-2026 season. This generous support keeps us on the beach and provides a good foundation for the Club's future.

The Club for the past year welcomes two additional Major Sponsors (Salt Property and Symal Pty Ltd, - now 4 Major Sponsors in total), supporting our existing Gold (2), Silver (3) and a range of Bronze Sponsors and a growing list of individuals and business sponsorships. Negotiations with one additional Major Sponsor is continuing. The Club also appreciates the regular support of a range of historical contributors who either make in-kind contributions or simply "stump up" cash unobtrusively.

MAJOR	\$10,000 plus
GOLD	\$5,000 plus
SILVER	\$2,500 plus
BRONZE	\$1,000 plus

Our Sponsorship with the Beach Hotel is again worthy of specific mention as it continues to mature, featuring the weekly raffle which is proving to be a significant cash earner for the Club's future business aspirations and goals. The raffles run all year, from around 5:30pm to 7:00pm every Thursday. The support of members and friends who help with the running of the raffles or just show up at the Thursday night for a drink and fellowship is well appreciated!

This Beach Hotel sponsorship package also includes an annual cash contribution to the Club, prize opportunities for members (notably the Juniors weekly prizes during the season), a cash rebate to the club on all purchase transactions by Club members and friends at the hotel.

MSLSC once again thanks all sponsors and supporters for their valuable contributions over the past year. We trust that the Club can continue to promote and assist your businesses into the future. The sponsorship team also welcomes any discussions from new businesses and individuals during the coming year.

***Thank you to all Sponsors of
Merewether Surf Life Saving Club***

President's Report

By Nick Newton



Let me thank all members for the excellent way the situation and difficulties were managed with the start of season building repairs and the associated access and operational restrictions.

While the new roof, ceilings, electrics and overall tidy up inside of the club house have been well received it did all come at a cost, both financially and as a significant inconvenience to our members. I need to congratulate everyone for the way they adapted to the changes along with the way our patrols were undertaken, as member safety was paramount throughout the construction process. Happily the work was completed without incident.

I also need to thank all those members who assisted with the disassembly and removal of all the club equipment that allowed the work to proceed and, additionally, those members who helped replace it all upon completion. It was quite a task and as always, we are fortunate to be in the enviable position of having members that are willing to get in and help when needed. As always it was and is very much appreciated.

Our patrols were run to a high degree of professionalism even with the difficulties and construction inconvenience, all while maintaining a close interaction with the public to ensure good and consistent safe management of our beach. Statistics show we are performing more roving patrols and public interactions than ever, given the changing demographic and usage of our beach. There is a high reliance on us by the council lifeguards to cover “out of flag areas” with our remote patrols, with our IRBs covering the unpatrolled Burwood Beach areas to the south. Our assistance is much appreciated by the council lifeguards and we continue to maintain a friendly and good working relationship with them, ensuring smooth operation of our patrols.

During the season there were some notable incidents that required our patrol teams to perform some exceptional first aid and beach management. They all resulted in positive and successful outcomes for the patients involved. It was a clear demonstration of how well our patrol members react and how effective our skills and training are.

Our education teams have once again put in huge efforts. Anthony Tietze and all the training officers worked hard to run multiple courses and attained some great outcomes. Of note was the 32 Bronze and SRC candidates who successfully completed their respective courses. The education team ran numerous proficiency sessions, **resulting in us achieving the highest ever recorded number of active proficient members (182). This comes on the back of our highest ever membership of over 880, all confirming our club's encouraging and strong future.** It not only highlights the effort given and the high standard of training being delivered by all of

our education team, but also confirms the comfortable and happy club environment felt by our members.

There was a focus on IRB training by Nathan Bird and Gemma McMillan, necessary to support our increasing numbers. This effort resulted in an additional 16 proficient IRB crew and drivers. In addition Nathan Bird, Gemma McMillan and Kev Buckley gained their RWC endorsements and have been putting our club jet ski to good use by undertaking Branch support work. Chris Warren continued with Swiftwater training, Emergency Service scenarios and call out support.

Kev Buckley ran a full Emergency Call Out Training (ECOT) scenario. This was a significant training event, being the first of this type since our club ran one 10 years ago. The exercise resulted in some very good information and direction for all the Branch call out teams.

Our juniors, at around 380 strong, were very active with their training for both surf education and the competition teams. With the juniors' numbers again growing it's a credit to Emma Dean, her support team and all the age managers and helpers to operate so efficiently within the restrictions of our building, producing such great results through the development of our future members and champions. Mention must be given to the popular juniors' BBQ and the ever present support team helping make additional income, always serving with a smile.

This season our club returned to surfboat competition with Craig Doherty joining us and taking on the position of Club Boat Captain. Craig has put together an A and B women's crew with the A crew achieving early success against the local competition and are now looking forward to next season.

Trish Stallard once again led the way in her Masters beach events, feigning off injury to bring home a hand full of medals from both the State and Aussie titles. Our Juniors also had a great season, coached by Brendan Kylie and family and assisted by the Fox family. Our young competitors ended up with some good results while having loads of fun along the way.

Financially we continue to operate well, although we still have some way to go in meeting our building fund requirement. Our challenge is always balancing the spending against the savings. We do recognise that maintaining a high standard of equipment and resources for club operations is a necessary expenditure. Compounding this we had our building closed for a four month period with no club associated income and various costs associated with the building work incurred by the club.

Many thanks to our sponsors team, Kris Wall and Adrian Harte. We have had very good sponsorship this season with financial support and generosity that has greatly helped us achieve a positive result while meeting our financial and sponsor commitments.

Our Beach Hotel raffles team stepped up and have done and continue to do an excellent job in gaining us valuable income, particularly through the critical building shutdown period as this was our only source of regular income during that time.

Patrons have been impressed with the freshening up of the Function Room. Regular room hire for functions and wellness classes have continued since we reopened.

An important outcome of our last AGM was the acceptance and adoption of our new Constitution document. This had been a work-in-progress for some time and has been an enormous task for all involved. We need to thank Cheryl Isles and Jamie Paras for their persistence in getting it completed.

Behind the scenes we continue working with City of Newcastle on a new building with the second round of the MSLSC/CN steering committee scheduled to meet in June for building design reviews.

Club Community and Engagement Events

- We continue to support and run the Healthy Change Challenge group with another successful season completed.
- We successfully ran our biannual St Vincents Christmas and Winter food appeals.
- Our 16th community Easter egg hunt was also another successful event. Thank you to Noah Sander for assisting.
- Norm Rodgers and I, joined by Juniors Mason and Logan Overton attended the local ANZAC service.
- We hosted another round of the World Surf League, this year was part of the 40th anniversary of Surfest and is another event very much entrenched into our surf club with future rounds already locked into Merewether Beach.
- We again hosted the annual Newcastle University Law by the Sea advisory group sessions, another community event we have supported for a very long time.
- We had our Christmas Santa visit, thanks to Geoff Kelly and helpers.
- Our away patrol team members continued to provide much needed patrol assistance to Tea Gardens Hawks Nest club.

Many Thanks

- To our local lifeguards
- To our UAV team members, Emma Gale, Chris Warren, Kev Buckley, Oscar Wright
- To Rachel Soars always flying the flag as a senior MSLSC official
- To our Healthy Challenge Change group volunteers
- Kris Wall and Adrian Harte for seeking and managing club sponsorships and support
- To all the education team members
- To our raffle team volunteers
- IRB training team

Committee

Thank you to all our committee members and executive - you are invaluable for the running and management of our club and we are fortunate to have such a great and enthusiastic team.

Executive Committee Members

Nick Newton	Jamie Paras	Emma Dean
Gemma McMillan	Norm Rodgers	

Committee Members

Anthony Tietze	Sophie Percival	Lynelle Jenkinson
Mike Parsons	Kevin Buckley	Makenzie Wall
David Tietze	Michael Spillane	Garry Semetka
Cheryl Isles	Karen Wallace	Margaret Newton
Craig Doherty	Grahame Lott	Nathan Bird
Nathan McKelligott	Tim Smith	Evan Jobling

We need to say a huge thank you to all our sponsors for their continued support and assistance. You are all critical in allowing us to operate successfully in the way we do and we encourage all our members to support your businesses.

Finally, thank you to Branch and SLSNSW for their assistance and support over the season.



Nick Newton with our Lord Mayor Gavin Morris

Nick Newton
President of MSLSC

Annual MSLSC Presentation Awards

Award	Nominations	Winner
Club Person of the Year	Brendan Kiley Norm Rodgers Michael Spillane Mike Parsons Peter Glennie David Tietze Emma Dean Karen Wallace Stephen Callaghan	Brendan Kiley
Patrol of the Year	All patrols nominated	Patrol 4
Patrol Captain of the Year	Michael Spillane 3 Kevin Buckley 4 Garry Semetka 4 Gemma McMillan 5 Liam Benson 6 Mike Parsons 7 Anthony Duggan 10 Nick Newton 10	Garry Semetka
Patrol Person of the Year	Adam Mailes 1 Neil Adams 5 Josh Barber 5 Oscar Wright 6 Josh Swetnam 7 Jackson Yowe 7 Nathan Bird 10	Nathan Bird
Laurie March Award - Most Outstanding Volunteer	Jamie Paras 1 Kevin Buckley 4 Mike Parsons 7 David Tietze 10 Nathan Bird 10 Nick Newton 10	Jamie Paras
President's Shield Award		Elyce Freeman
Youth Co-ordinators Award		Mia Chappelow Olivia Bondzie-Dunn
Encouragement Awards		Mia Kelly Banjo Kirton Joshua Barber
Appreciation Awards		Amelia Fox Noah Sander Harrison Kiley HyoMin Yang HyoMin Yang Jackson Yowe
Most Improved IRB Driver		Neil Adams
Costa Concordia IRB		Neil Adams Noel Simmons

Congratulations to all of our nominees for their hard work and dedication and, in particular, to our winners.



Club Person of the Year –
Brendan Kiley



Most Outstanding Volunteer –
Jamie Paras



Patrol Captain of the Year –
Garry Semetka

2025 Hunter Branch Awards of Excellence Nominations

Title	Representative
Trainer of the Year	Anthony Tietze
Assessor of the Year	Gemma McMillan
Administrator of the Year	Norm Rodgers
Master Athlete of the Year	Trish Stallard
Coach of the Year	Brendan Kiley
Official of the Year	Rachael Soars
Community Education Program of the Year	Karen Wallace (Healthy Change Challenge)

Hunter Branch Awards of Excellence Nominations



100% Patrol Attendance

The following patrol members achieved 100% attendance during the course of the 2025-2026 season. Congratulations to all and thank you for your dedication.

Patrol 1	Patrol 2	Patrol 3	Patrol 4	Patrol 5
Adam Mailes Patricia Stallard Jackie Arnold Sarah Bugbird Ryan Clifton-Smith Todd Mcdermid Paulo Macchia Jamie Paras Terry Flynn	Geoff Murray Jackie Sterling Karen Wilgar Thomas Lyons David Rees Nathan McKelligott	Greg Graham Kat Cowie John Lehman Penny Britz Kieren Stevens Robert Dan Rosemary Dan Bernie Sabine Michael Spillane	Bruce Rummins Zachary Rummins Marcus Napper Simon Hill Olivia Bondzie-Dunn Garry Semetka Mia Chappelow Rooster Bradley Steve Baines Kaz Wallace Nicholas Dunn Amy Nosike Kevin Buckley	Chris Wilson Janet Burley Stephen Callaghan Noel Simmonds Will Warren Ian Wilson Emma Dean Neil Adams Josh Barber Mia Kelly Paul Nelson Chris Warren Gemma McMillan
Patrol 6	Patrol 7	Patrol 8	Patrol 10	Active Reserve
Liam Benson Jennifer Martin Zara Bentlin Scott McFarlane Brendan McNabb Annika James HyoMin Yang Hyeoun Yang Norm Rodgers Makenzie Wall Stuart James Breanna James Jae-Hun Yang	Jenny Bissett Hugh Jobling Banjo Kirtton Cheryl Isles Neil McMaster Phillip Jobling Jan Roche Joshua Swetnam Oliver Olds Michael Parsons	Samuel Kinkade Anderson Campbell Iain Kelso Craig Doyle Duncan Handley Mike Campbell Noah Sander Jason Hunter Amelia Fox Matt Fox Phoebe Fox Brendan Kiley Kayla Kiley Jesse Hunter Harrison Kiley Anthony Tietze	Nicole Barden David Wood Tony Kiernan Michael Palmer Craig Doherty Taylor Parkes Anthony Duggan Peter Glennie Nick Newton Nathan Bird Sarah Gray David Tietze	Dave Hoar Lauren Soars Ralph Foster Kate Flint

Past Years 100% Patrol Attendance

2020-2021 season	127
2021-2022 season	93
2022-2023 season	87
2023-2024 season	92
2024-2025 season	93
This Season	105

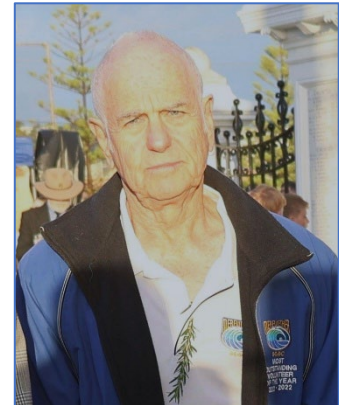
We have had a steady improvement in 100% Patrol Attendance numbers, but we are still down on pre-COVID numbers - a challenge for the club to work on next season!

Treasurer Report

By Norm Rodgers

I want to thank McGregor and McGregor Chartered Accountants for their diligence and assistance during the year, especially with our accounting package Xero and for completing the Audit on time. This job would be very stressful without that help.

Mike Parsons, Nick and I have spent time ensuring the Club's asset register is up to date. This ensures that we are properly covered by insurance for the equipment owned by the Club. Mike has also been instrumental in keeping the Club's rescue boards in good order.



The Club's financial position improved overall in the year ending 31 March 2026 with a net profit exceeding \$100,000. An additional \$150,000 will be added to our Term Deposits as a consequence. This is despite the premises being closed for approximately 5 months whilst the new roof was fitted which impacted revenues raised from the hire of the function room and bar takings. Further increases in expenses such as electricity, bar wages, insurances and refurbishing the premises following the re-roofing also impacted our bottom line.

Donations, sponsorship and grant Income were all up substantially. This is largely due to the work of our Sponsorship Committee, Kris Wall and Adrian Harte, who have worked tirelessly on retaining and gaining new sponsors.

Increase in memberships (largely from our Juniors) also helps with our revenue raising and again many thanks to Emma Dean for the amazing work she does with the Nippers.

The Bar has continued to be profitable. My thanks to Michael Spillane, our Bar Manager and the members of his team for their ongoing efforts.

Our association with the Beach Hotel is valuable both from the direct sponsorship given to us and through their support for the raffle. The Glennie Project, Modus Brewery, Salt Property, Symbal Construction and Virtuous Wealth also contribute significantly to the Club. A big thank you to all the Club's sponsors and donors.

A special mention to the raffle team. They do a great job in voluntary fundraising and Thursday evenings at the pub with them is a lot of fun. Everyone is welcome to join them.

All in all, the Club is well on track to be in a position to finance the internal outfitting of the premises when the new clubhouse is built.

In closing I would like to advise that, if re-elected, it will definitely be my last year in this role so please have a think about stepping up.

Norm Rodgers
Honorary Treasurer for MSLSC

Secretary Report

By Jamie Paras

As Club Secretary for the 2025-2026 season this year has been defined by a deliberate and sustained focus on effective governance and transparency in decision-making at every level.

These efforts have strengthened our Club's operations, reinforced member confidence and ensured full compliance with Surf Life Saving New South Wales (SLSNSW) guidelines and standards, while meeting all obligations to regulatory authorities.



The Executive Committee and sub-committees have operated under a clear, documented governance framework that prioritises openness, accountability, and member inclusion.

Key Achievements

- **Regular meeting processes:** All Executive and committee meetings were held monthly (with additional extraordinary meetings as required). Full minutes, including agendas, decisions and action items were circulated to committee members and made available via the Club's Board PRO. This practice eliminated any perception of closed-door decision-making and allowed members to track how their feedback influenced outcomes.
- **Compliance and regulatory excellence:** The Club maintained 100% compliance with SLSNSW constitutional, financial, child-protection, and risk-management requirements. All mandatory returns, including the Annual Club Compliance Declaration and audited financial statements, were submitted on time and without qualification.
- We met all obligations under the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and NSW Fair Trading regulations, with zero audit findings. These outcomes were achieved through the implementation of an internal compliance checklist reviewed at every Executive Meeting.

Special Acknowledgements

I wish to place on record my sincere gratitude to two outstanding leaders whose commitment has been instrumental to the Club's governance success this year.

To President Nick Newton: Your unwavering leadership, vision and personal devotion to the betterment of Merewether Surf Life Saving Club has been inspirational. Your open-door approach, calm guidance during complex decisions and constant reinforcement of our core surf lifesaving mission has set the tone for the entire Executive. The Club is stronger, more unified, and better positioned for the future because of your service. Thank you for leading by example.

To Treasurer Norm Rodgers: Your diligence in elevating our financial reporting, BAS compliance, profit-and-loss statements and overall financial governance to meet the highest auditing standards has been exceptional.

The clarity and professionalism you have brought to our financial operations have given the Executive and membership complete confidence in the Club's fiscal health. Your work has been a cornerstone of our compliance achievements this year.

I also extend appreciation to every member of the Executive, Club Captain Gemma McMillan and Junior Activities Coordinator Emma Dean and to the committee members for their dedication to transparent and ethical decision-making throughout the season.

Thank you for your tireless effort and expertise in making us a successful Surf Club in the Hunter.

Personal Reflection and Transition

After ten years of service as Club Secretary I have decided not to seek re-election for the 2026-2027 season.

It has been an honour and a privilege to serve as Secretary of MSLSC and to play a vital role on the Club's Executive.

I am proud of what we have achieved together, particularly in strengthening governance and transparency. I believe it is now the right time to allow a fresh perspective and new innovation to drive the Secretary's role forward.

I look forward to supporting the incoming Secretary and continuing to contribute to the Club in other capacities.

The governance foundations laid in 2025-2026 position Merewether Surf Life Saving Club to continue delivering excellence in surf lifesaving while maintaining the highest standards of accountability.

We remain committed to continuous improvement and will build on this year's successes in the seasons ahead.

Jamie Paras JP
MSLSC Secretary

Life Saving Report

By Gemma McMillan



The 2025-26 patrol season at Merewether was defined not just by the surf or the weather, but by the people who turned up... early, often, and with a shared commitment to keeping our beach safe. Against the backdrop of construction works, weather events, board riding competitions (including Surfest) and the usual unpredictability of the coastline, our patrol teams brought consistency, capability and heart to every weekend. What follows is a reflection of the season we built together: the preparation, the challenges, the rescues and the many moments of teamwork that shaped the summer.

Patrol Statistics

Performance by patrol teams:

- 186 registered patrolling members
- 105 members achieved 100% patrol attendance
- 6,003 patrol hours by members
- 1,414 preventions
- 23 first aids
- 6 rescues

Top Patrolling Members (By Hours)

Male	Hours	Female	Hours
Josh Barber	163.27	Gemma McMillan	165.75
Michael Parsons	129.75	Karen Wallace	69
Kevin Buckley	121.66	Amelia Fox	52.5
Nick Newton	113.75	Hyoenun Yang	50.78
David Tietze	106.5	Emma Dean	49.25
Terence Flynn	99	HyoMin Yang	48.74
Oliver Olds	91.08	Taylor Parkes	45
Anthony Tietze	83	Mia Chappelow	43.5
Jae-Hun Yang	70.91	Sarah Gray	42
Peter Glennie	68	Rosemary Dan	42

Season Preparations

The pre-season was significantly impacted by an east coast low, which delayed the roof replacement project and restricted access to key operational areas of the club. This created challenges in preparing the equipment and patrol spaces from both a rescue-readiness and WHS perspective.

Despite these constraints, the lifesaving team delivered an exceptional preseason effort to ensure all assets were operational and compliant from day one.

Preparations included:

- Full inspections of boards, rescue equipment, SSVs, and ancillary gear
- Comprehensive checks of first aid kits, defibrillators, oxygen equipment, and medical supplies
- Emergency Call-Out Team equipment checks including Search and Rescue kits, radios, PPE, and torches
- Radio equipment testing and communications readiness
- IRB pre-season checks, including trailers
- WHS compliance across storage and operational areas
- Competition equipment checks including the surfboats and competition boards
- Establishing a temporary patrol room to ensure a safe, functional base during construction



Former Ski Storage Area Converted to Temporary Patrol Room

A Patrol Captain and Vice-Captain meeting was held on 20 September 2025 to discuss:

- Reinforcing SLSNSW protocols (proficiencies, lifesaving CPR, incident reporting)
- Preparing for the season under restricted access and scaffolding
- Adjusting operating standards to maintain safety

On 12 April 2026, we held our end-of-season meeting to review key issues, learnings, and opportunities for improvement. Immediately afterwards a SAREX (Search & Rescue Exercise) training drill gave patrol captains and vice-captains the chance to experience an incident escalation scenario, offering practical insight into major rescue management and highlighting areas for operational enhancement.

Patrol Operations

The season was well represented across all patrols, including strong representation from patrol members, many extending their shift for the whole day. Each team demonstrated impressive vigilance, responsiveness, and professionalism.



Extended periods of favourable weather also allowed teams to focus on training, community engagement and proactive prevention, with many patrols running their own exercises and making excellent use of equipment. The IRBs were also particularly active this season, reflecting a renewed energy and commitment to building operational capability.

Several periods of large swell and elevated surf conditions required patrol teams to adapt operations, increase roving patrols, and maintain heightened vigilance, particularly around the baths and rocky outcrops. These conditions tested operational capability and prompted proactive preventative actions.



Significant Rescues

- **Patrol 6** completed a major rescue early in the season involving a badly dislocated knee. Special thanks to Scott McFarlane, Brendan McNabb, and Zara Bentlin for their swift action and leadership and to the rest of the patrol who helped.
- **Patrol 7** completed two notable rescues, one involving a possible stroke and another providing critical support to an elderly member of the public. Special thanks to all of Patrol 7 for their efforts - it really was a display of excellent team-work.

The timely and effective management of these incidents are a credit to the teams and individuals involved for their calm, decisive responses and commitment to the public.

Closing Remarks

Despite early challenges this season has been one of growth, innovation and operational excellence. I'd like to thank Garry Semetka for his generous handover, steady support and ongoing commitment to the patrol groups this season.

My sincere thanks also go to the of the MSLSC Executive for their leadership and support of the Lifesaving and Club Captain portfolios.

Thank you also to all patrol captains, vice captains, trainers, assessors, committee members, patrolling members, competitors, volunteers and sponsors who contributed to another successful season at Merewether. Through your dedication our club remains strong and optimistic for a positive future.

Gemma McMillan
Director of Lifesaving / Club Captain

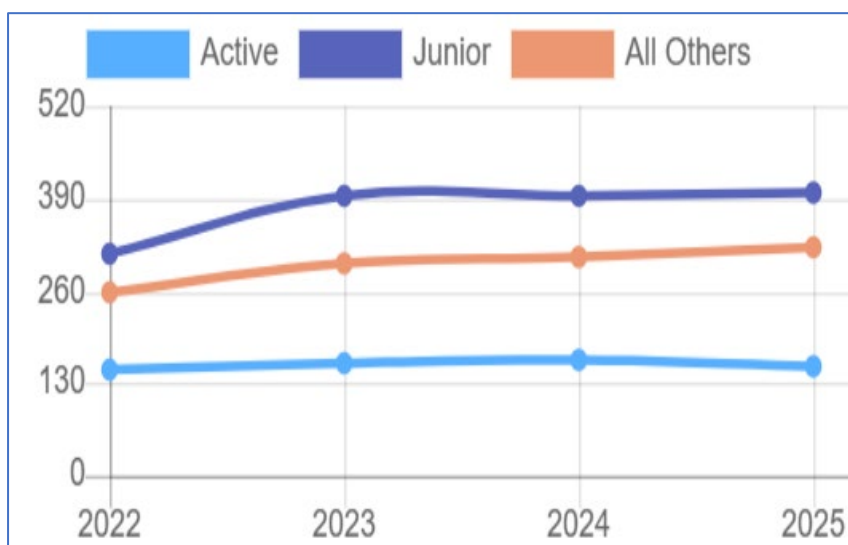
Registrar's Report

By Lynelle Jenkinson & Sophie Percival

In my role as Registrar during the 2025 season the club has continued to demonstrate strong membership stability, positive growth and consistent engagement across all membership categories. Overall membership trends reflect a healthy and well-balanced club, supported by strong retention and ongoing community participation.

Membership Overview

Membership numbers for the 2025 season show a solid distribution across Active, Junior, and other membership categories.



Current Memberships

151

Active Members

391

Junior Members

316

All Others

**Other members include general members, nipper parents, award holders, community, probationary, reserve, and reserve active members.*

This equates to **858 current members**.

Historical Membership Trend

Historical membership data indicates steady and consistent participation over recent seasons, with gradual growth evident particularly in Junior and "All Other" membership categories. Active membership numbers have remained stable, reflecting sustained commitment from patrolling and award-holding members.

These trends highlight the club's continued appeal across age groups and membership types, as well as the effectiveness of recruitment and engagement strategies.

Retention and Growth

Member retention remains a key strength for the club during the 2025 season with growth of 58 members from previous season.

Awards and Qualifications

The club continues to benefit from a strong base of qualified members, supporting safe and effective patrol operations throughout the 2025 season.

Current award numbers are as follows:

- Bronze Medallion: 187
- IRB Crew: 85
- IRB Driver: 54
- Advanced Resuscitation Techniques (ART): 91
- Silver Medallion: 52

These qualifications reflect the ongoing commitment of members to training, skill development, and operational readiness.

Patrol Hours & Engagement

Full attendance for the season represents 32 patrol hours, calculated across eight four-hour patrols, with members achieving 100% attendance acknowledged at the end-of-season presentation. This level of commitment to beach safety is greatly appreciated. We extend our thanks to 167 members who contributed between 10 and 50 patrol hours, and to 17 members who dedicated in excess of 50 patrol hours this season.

Membership Administration

All membership registrations and payments continue to be managed through the SLS Membership Portal.

Key administrative reminders include:

- All new member applications are reviewed by the Executive prior to acceptance.
- Working With Children (WWC) checks must remain current and accurately recorded on member profiles.
- Membership categories and fees will continue to be reviewed to ensure alignment with updates to the Membership Portal ahead of future seasons.

Looking Ahead

As the club prepares for the next season, maintaining strong retention, supporting junior pathways and continuing to engage active and volunteer members will remain key priorities. Clear communication around renewals and membership requirements will support continued success.

Lynelle Jenkinson & Sophie Percival
Juniors and Seniors Registrar for MSLSC



Education and Training Report

By Anthony Tietze

MSLSC recently ran a First Aid course for a team of our sponsors – a reciprocal arrangement. We had eight participants, with only two having done a First Aid course in the past. It soon became apparent that they had little idea what to do if someone was presented to them in an unconscious state, possibly not breathing.

This drove home to me the fact this that MSLSC members are indeed very well trained, far better than the community as a whole (as you would expect in a SLS environment). Our members know what to do in a medical emergency, at least to the point where they could change an outcome in a positive way and possibly save a life.

Training Achievements

MSLSC had 21 candidates gain their Bronze Medallion and 11 gain their SRC over the course of the 2025-2026 season. This amounts to a total squad of 32 participants, making our Sunday morning sessions in the water both busy and fun. These squads have become valuable patrolling members of MSLSC.

The Education Team worked especially hard running our proficiency sessions, with 182 proficient SRC, Bronze and Award members. This is certainly more than MSLSC has had in the recent past, possibly **the highest number in the history of MSLSC**.

Season	Proficient Bronze & SRCs
2025-2026	182
2024-2025	171
2023-2024	157
2022-2023	157
2021-2022	148
2020-2021	158
2019-2020	135

Proficiency Statistics

MSLSC incorporates the First Aid modules into the Bronze course, giving our candidates an enhanced knowledge base upon completion. SLSC have refined the way resuscitation is delivered, now called Lifesaving CPR. This is an evidence-based, standardised, and simplified approach designed to improve survival rates from cardiac arrest, both on and off the beach.

We also run the full Resuscitation course for our SRCs, giving them an additional Unit of Competency at completion of their SRC.



Bronze and SRC Training at Merewether Beach



CVA at Stockton Beach on 13 December 2025

Milla	Becker	Ottavio	Macchia
Phoebe	Fox	Lachlan	McNabb
Elyce	Freeman	Thomas	Pandermann
Zac	Kelly	Jonah	Smith
Zali	Kiernan	Florence	Stollznaw
Oscar	Kirton		

SRC Participants for the 2025-2026 Season

Nicole	Barden	Paulo	Macchia
Leo	Branson	Mia	Matthews
Ryan	Clifton-Smith	Oliver	Olds
Joshua	Chappelow	Isla	Priest
Kelana	Chappelow	Taylor	Richards
Joel	Crakanthorp	Noah	Sander
Amelia	Fox	Grant	Schofield
Marcus	Freeman	Sarah	Smith
Harrison	Kiley	William	Warren
Banjo	Kirton	Reilly	Wilson
Rachael	Leonard		

**Bronze Medallion Participants
for the 2025-2026 Season**

The Start of the Season Challenge

The MSLS clubhouse had a new roof and ceilings installed in the latter part of 2025. Work commenced a little later than first anticipated, which meant that we were without access to the upper floor of MSLSC until November. This was a challenge for the start of our courses, but Dixon Park SLSC was extremely helpful and generous in allowing us to run many sessions at their clubhouse until MSLSC was back in action.



SRC and Bronze Theory at Dixon Park SLSC



First Aid Course Run at Dixon Park SLSC – an Anecdote from Steve Baines

Proficiency Sessions

The Education Team runs Proficiency sessions for all patrolling members throughout the first half of the season. Thank you to our trainers and assessors for their time, skill and dedication and thank you to all those patrolling members who completed their Bronze and SRC proficiencies on time. A special mention to Dave Hoar for his help in running sessions.

A change was made to the “wet” component of the Bronze and SRC proficiency. The run-swim-run has been replaced by a 100m run following by a 100m tube swim to a patient 100m from shore, to be completed to 3 ½ minutes. This is a good change, the exercise more closely resembling a real life rescue scenario.



Proficiency Session on Merewether Beach

Courses at MSLSC

In addition to the Bronze Medallion and the Surf Rescue Certificate the following courses are run throughout the year:

- Silver Medallion Patrol Captain (SMPC)
- Silver Medallion Aquatic Rescue (SMAR)
- First Aid
- Radio Operations
- IRB Crew
- IRB Driver
- Advance Resuscitation Techniques
- Flood Rescue
- Train the Trainer



Advanced Resuscitation Course – Use of Tourniquets to Manage Life Threatening Bleeding

Our club has continued to nurture and maintain good relationships with both Dixon Park and Cooks Hill SLSCs and we work hard to integrate the delivery of our club's training and assessment programs.

Your Education Team

Anthony	Tietze
Jan	Roche
Emma	Dean
Gemma	McMillan (IRB)
Oscar	Wright (IRB)
Nathan	Bird (IRB)
Karen	Wallace
Duncan	Handley
Breanna	James



Anthony Tietze



Jan Roche



Karen Wallace

New Trainers

MSLSC is always looking for new trainers. The SLSNSW runs Training Officer Certificate courses on a regular basis and participants who complete this course would gain recognition in TAEDL301 Provide Work Skill Instruction and BSBCMM410 Make a Presentation.

The knowledge and skills learnt on the course are highly transferable to areas outside of Surf Life Saving and it wouldn't be the first time that a decision to help out with training has led to a more rewarding career. To date the cost of the course has been borne by SLSNSW. It would cost you dear to do it commercially, making it exceptionally good value for our members.

CTO Forum

A forum for the state's Chief Training Officers was run out of the Pullman Hotel in Sydney on Saturday 2 May 2026. It was the first such seminar in 10 years and was attended by some 160 CTOs from all around NSW. It was a well run and informative seminar, focussing on the new Assessing App and ways to ease the workload of CTOs in general.



Hunter Branch CTOs

Water Safety

We are always looking for volunteers to help with water safety. Sunday mornings are busy when the Bronze and SRC courses are in progress and the nippers are always looking for water safety volunteers. If you have your SRC or Bronze and can spare an hour or two to keep an eye on our people out in the water on Sunday mornings your help is always appreciated.

And Lastly...

Thank you to the MSLSC Education Team for their ongoing efforts and thank you to the MSLSC Committee for their continued support of the Education Team. Thank you also to Hunter Branch for their guidance, support and assistance. Your contributions make MSLSC a club for us to be proud of and a club for others to envy.



SRCs Sam Kinkade and
Jessie Hunter on Patrol

Anthony Tietze

Director of Education and Chief Training Officer for MSLSC

Juniors' Report

by Emma Dean

The 2025-2026 season was another strong one with 360 nippers participating across the U6/7 to U13 age groups - this was **our biggest year yet!** The success of our Nipper Program is critical to the long-term success of our club and it is great to see that we are maintaining numbers through the age groups. We enjoyed reasonably good weather throughout the season and it was so rewarding to watch the kids improve each week, especially the older groups who spent lots of time in the ocean honing their skills.

A special congratulations to the eleven U14s who successfully completed their Surf Rescue Certificate and have now joined our patrols, keeping Merewether Beach safe.

Thank you to the many people who made the season possible, especially our Age Managers and the Water Safety team. We had over 50 Age Managers and a team of water safety, including many past nippers which was so great to see. Special shout out to Sellers Meat Co. who donated sausages each week. Our BBQ is our biggest fundraiser and their support helped enormously.



Committee Members	Age Managers
Emma Dean (JAC), Lynelle Jenkinson & Sophie Percival (Registrar), Brendan Kiley (Competition Coach), Gemma Ryan (BBQ Co-ordinator), Valerie Fox, Matt Fox, Cas Gosling & Kayla Kiley (Social Media), Tim Smith (Treasurer), Karen Wallace (Water Safety Supervisor).	Sheridan Pitto, Kate Edwards, Kath Elliott, Suzi Mason, Nadine Purdy, Diana Bowden, Zac Robinson, Charlotte Stafford, Chad Jefferson, Jason Hunter, Kegan Daly, Todd McDermid, Danielle Fallins, Amy Nosike, Luke Roberts, Michelle Dickson, Matthew Banks, Wendy Carseldine, Hugh Bosman, Kate Curtin, Briony Mitchell, Karenn Andrews, Vanessa Stollznaw, Justin Welbourne, Tony Kiernan, Jess Moulder, Tim Schenider, Heidi Poole, Emma Bentley, Nathan Ormerod, Mike Cowan, Mairead Stephens, Adam Curtis, Ryan Clifton-Smith, Paulo Macchia, Mia Kelly, Amelia Fox, Louise McKenzie, Amy Brungies, Sarah Smith, Nadine Jones, Mike Campbell, Andy Campbell, James Becker, Rooster Bradley, Nathan Bird, Cas Gosling, Matt Fox, Brendan Kiley, Nicholas Dunn, Roge Kempe.

Camp was again a highlight for many families and a lovely way to finish the season. Our end-of-season camp was our biggest yet, with 68 families attending, an outstanding reflection of the strength of our junior community.

Merewether Competition Team

Merewether continues to strongly represent our club at Branch carnivals. Big congratulations to Tom Stenhouse who achieved a Bronze medal in the beach sprint at the Hunter Branch and went on to compete at State. Some of our relay teams were unlucky on the day at Branch not to walk away with a medal. The season saw some big improvements in and out of the

water and we look forward to seeing what the team can do next season. We farewell Brendan Kiley this season as our Competition Coach as his kids have aged out of nippers. A big thank you to Brendan for his time over the past few years in supporting our comp kids!



**Tom Stenhouse –
Bronze Medal Winner
in the Beach Sprint at
Hunter Branch**

Annual Award Winners

We recently celebrated the end of the season with all U6/7s receiving a medal and an encouragement and achievement award was given out in the older ages groups.

Big congratulations to our annual award winners.

Award	Winner
<i>Nipper of the Year</i> Based on competition results	Tom Stenhouse
<i>Most Consistent in Competitions</i>	Evie Poole
<i>Most Improved in Competitions</i>	Sophie Poole
<i>Presidents Shield</i>	Elyce Freeman
<i>Jnr Chair Person of the Year</i>	Jonah Smith
<i>Juniors Club Person of the Year</i> Awarded to Brendan in recognition for his coaching of the Merewether competition kids and Age Manager commitments over numerous years.	Brendan Kiley

Junior Lifesaver of the Year

Congratulations to Jonah Smith and Elyce Freeman who represented Merewether with pride as our Junior Lifesavers of the Year nominees.

The 2026-2027 season will be my last as Junior Activity Coordinator. The role is a rewarding one and I would welcome someone to assist next season with the aim of taking over from 2027-2028.



Jonah Smith and Elyce Freeman

**Nippers
Training
Session**



Emma Dean
Junior Activities Co-ordinator

IT Report

By Evan Jobling

Considerable effort was required to prepare for the roof replacement which commenced in August 2025. This involved a full decommissioning of the existing IT system and the implementation of an interim internet setup after the works were completed.

Future work identified includes upgrading the clubhouse access control system, expanded to include additional doors.

Unfortunately our popular surfcam site had to be disbanded as part of the works. Options for its replacement are being explored.

I am located in remote central Queensland for the foreseeable future, but am continuing to manage the business email systems as required.

Evan Jobling

IT Coordinator

Surf Sports Report (Seniors)

By Trish Stallard

Merewether was once again represented in the Hunter Branch, the NSW Masters and the Australian Surf Lifesaving Championships with Trish Stallard in the Masters and Tom Stenhouse in the Juniors walking away with medals. Congratulations to all our representatives who made the effort and made MSLSC proud.

Hunter Branch Championships

Trish Stallard

- 1st - Beach Flags
 - 1st - Beach Sprint
 - 2nd - 1km Beach Run
- Tom Stenhouse
- 3rd - U10 Beach Sprint

NSW Masters Championships

Trish Stallard

- 2nd 1km Beach Run
- 3rd Beach Flags
- 4th Beach Sprint.

Australian Surf Lifesaving Championships

Trish Stallard

- 4th 1km Beach Run



Congratulations to Trish Stallard

Surf Sports Report (Juniors)

By **Brendan Kiley**

The 2025-2026 season saw a total of 21 juniors compete in events ranging from the Newcastle Permanent Building Society Series, and Branch Championships.

Of the 21 competitors 5 competed in their first carnival

Notable Results

Hunter Branch Championships

Tom Stenhouse (U10)

6th 250m Beach Run

3rd Beach Sprint



Evie Poole

4th 250m Beach Run

4th Beach Sprint

8th Surf Race



Joshua Nosike (U11)

4th Beach Sprint

5th Beach Flags

Archer Stenhouse (U12)

5th Beach Sprint

Ben Collins (U12)

6th Beach Sprint

U9 Mixed 2 x 250m Relay

4th Place

U9 Mixed Cameron Relay

7th Place

U10 Male 2 x 250m Relay

5th Place

U11 Mixed 2 x 500m Relay

4th Place



Merewether had an all age beach relay team for the first time in 3 years, but unfortunately they were disqualified in the heats after qualifying for the final.

Brendan Kiley

Juniors Surf Sports Coach

IRB Report

By Gemma McMillan

Nathan Bird has positively embraced the role of IRB Captain, demonstrating a proactive and solutions focused approach to strengthening IRB capability. This season he prepared the IRB Catamaran hull for sale, organised motor servicing and ensured all auxiliary equipment was maintained and operational and implemented a structured and consistent approach to IRB proficiencies.



Nathan's leadership has been a major contributor to the uplift in training quality, equipment readiness, and operational confidence across the team.

A special acknowledgement also goes to Oscar Wright, whose contribution to IRB training has been outstanding. Oscar is an exceptional surf lifesaver whose skill, professionalism and commitment to developing others has been invaluable. His involvement has strengthened the capability of the IRB team and supported the growth and confidence of new drivers and crew.

This season saw a significant uplift in IRB operations and training including:

- Comprehensive IRB and SSV proficiencies rolled out early and efficiently.
- Three IRB Crew and Driver courses delivered by Oscar Wright, Nathan Bird, and Gemma McMillan.
- Two IRB assessments conducted at Merewether Beach, the first held at the beach in many years, with a third scheduled.
- A combined IRB training course delivered in collaboration with Dixon Park SLSC, thanks to Nathan Bird and Gemma McMillan.

Neil	Adams	Driver	Harrison	Kiley	Crew
Taylor	Parkes	Driver	Banjo	Kirton	Crew
Paulo	Macchia	Driver	Paulo	Macchia	Crew
Nicholas	Dunn	Driver	Oliver	Olds	Crew
Nicole	Barden	Crew	Christopher	Pointer	Crew
Nicholas	Dunn	Crew	Noah	Sander	Crew
Amelia	Fox	Crew	Noel	Simmonds	Crew
Jason	Hunter	Crew	Reilly	Wilson	Crew

IRB Awards for the 2025-2026 Season

Gemma McMillan
IRB Trainer and Assessor

MSLSC Surf Boat Team

By Craig Doherty

History was made with the resurgence of MSLSC surf boats in the 2025-2026 season after a long hiatus. This has been possible through the help of the committee and the warm welcome the club members have given the new boat rowing members.

The club started off with a couple of females and master's males jumping in the boat at the beginning of the season, but finished the season with two competing female crews and the forming of a masters male crew.

Both female crews, open females and reserve, competed in the local Stevens Group boat series, which combined both Hunter and Central Coast branch surf clubs. **Our open female crew pick up 1st place in this competition**, with reserve females just missing out on a podium finish. We had a reserve female crew head to the NSW State Titles held at Swansea Belmont but unfortunately we did not make it past the elimination rounds.

I would like to thank all of the rowers this season who jumped in the boat, whether it was just for training and/or competition. Your love and dedication to the sport and the surf club has made my job so much easier.

Thank you to; Bridie Watson, Nicole Barden, Taylor Parkes, Mia Matthews, Madeline Shadforth, Layne Holloway and Alice Binns. Also, a big thanks to the master's men Anthony Duggan, Nick Dunn and Ian Wilson.



Craig Doherty, Alice Binns, Mia Matthews, Bridie Watson, Madeline Shadforth, Jess McDonald, Taylor Parkes and Layne Holloway



Craig Doherty
Surf Boat Captain

Member Protection Information Officer

By Tom Lyons

As I commence my third year serving as the Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) for Merewether SLSC, I have reflected on how effectively our club continues to operate as a welcoming, respectful, and inclusive community organisation. It is a credit to all members that the MPIO role, designed to support the safety and wellbeing of every member and to protect against abuse, bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination, inappropriate behaviour, victimisation, and vilification, has remained quiet throughout the season.



Although the number of matters requiring MPIO involvement has been very low, I remind all members that concerns, complaints, or simply a need for guidance can always be raised with me. The MPIO's role is to ensure members understand their rights, provide impartial guidance and support members in navigating the appropriate processes. The overarching objective is to ensure that the Club remains a fair, safe and inclusive environment for everyone.

The MPIO provides confidential and unbiased advice regarding member protection policies, procedures and available options. This support is available both to members who have a concern and to those who may be the subject of an allegation. It is important to note that the MPIO does not mediate, investigate, or make determinations regarding complaints; however, I can discuss issues, clarify processes, and outline potential next steps.

Merewether SLSC continues to demonstrate a strong culture of inclusiveness, tolerance and positive engagement across all sectors of the community. The limited need for my involvement this season reflects the good character, respect, and sense of fair play consistently shown by our members.

I encourage all members to continue fostering an inclusive and supportive environment. Simple but effective strategies include:

- Using inclusive language that empowers everyone to participate
- Calling out behaviour that crosses boundaries
- Checking in on your mates

I remain available to all members and can be contacted at MPIO@mslsc.com.au. You are welcome to speak with me in person around the Club or on the beach.

Tom Lyons
Member Protection Information Officer

Radio Report

By David Tietze

Radios are an integral part of our patrol operations. We currently have 10 operational radios, made up of:

- 5 x Hyteras – older units with chargers
- 1 x Kenwood – older model
- 4 x Kenwoods – purchased at the start of the season by way of a grant from Newcastle Coal Infrastructure Group (NCIG)
- 1 x 6 gang charger
- 2 x single chargers



Note the following:

- No. 1 Kenwood has a separate speaker/mic which is good for land based operations, but can be water damaged if used in the IRBs.
- We also have 2 x Icom older analogue radios. These radios can be used for Channel 2 line-of-sight beach operations and Channel 66 training. However they should not be used for patrol operations as they cannot be used on the digital network to contact SurfCom.

Some points to remember regarding radio operations:

- Surf Life Saving radio communications now operate on a digital system.
- Remember the emergency calls:
 - “Rescue, Rescue, Rescue – SurfCom, SurfCom – This is Merewether Surf Life Saving Club – Are you receiving – Over” extended to;
 - “Rescue, Rescue, Rescue – **CPR in Progress** - SurfCom, SurfCom – This is Merewether Surf Life Saving Club – Are you receiving – Over” if CPR is indeed in progress.
- Patrol captains must ensure all radios are returned and put on charge after patrols. It works well to allocate this task to a specific person early in the afternoon shift so that they can keep track of the radios in use on the beach.
- If radios are removed leave a note in the radio cupboard with name, date, time and reason for removal.
- Don’t take radios near the water without putting it in a water proof pouch
- If a radio is water affected remove the battery and aerial, rinse with fresh water and gently dry.

Our Radio Channels

- Channel 2 – Line-of-sight. Use for patrol and beach communications
- Channel 3 – SurfCom (Remember that all SurfCom interactions are recorded)
- Channel 4 – Scan (Remember to change to Channel 2 if you are talking within your patrol)

David Tietze
MSLSC Radio Officer

MSLSC Patrol Games

By Sarah Rawlinson & David Tietze

The end-of-year Patrol Games for 2026 were a great success, bringing together members for a fun and competitive conclusion to the season on Monday 27 April (Anzac weekend). Expertly hosted by Patrol 10, the event featured a range of activities including beach sprints, flags, swim races, tug of war and the ever-entertaining flipper throwing. The day showcased strong teamwork and patrol spirit.

Thank you to everyone involved in making it such an enjoyable and memorable event.



Sarah Rawlinson & David Tietze
Patrol 10 Members



The Glennie Project

By Anthony Tietze

In 2025 the Glennie Project commissioned Hawks Nest artist Tyson Jolly to paint a rescue board in aboriginal themes and this was donated to Hawks Nest SLSC.

The Glennie Project then commissioned local Awabakal artist Jodie Reynolds to paint an interpretation of her vision which captures the essence of Merewether Beach. This painting was donated to MSLSC and now hangs proudly in our Patrol Room. Parts of this artwork were reproduced onto a rescue board and this too was donated to MSLSC.

The presentation ceremony was conducted at the MSLSC Christmas function on 14 December 2025.

Peter Glennie, by way of the Glennie Project, has generously supported MSLSC in many ways. This included a recent donation of 160 resuscitation masks which have been distributed amongst our patrolling members to carry while on patrol.

The Glennie Project is dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal children and their communities. The Glennie Project has been a powerful force for change since its inception in 2008, providing over \$1,000,000 in grants to more than 100 projects across Australia. The charity's initiatives have included funding for school meal programs, the creation of bush-tucker gardens, cultural reconnection projects with local Elders and creative arts programs. The Glennie Project operates with a core commitment to Reconciliation in Action and offers support to businesses and organizations in the development of their Reconciliation Action Plans.



Nick Newton and Peter Glennie – Rescue Board Presentation



Louise and Peter Glennie

Club Bar & Function Room Report

By Margaret Newton

This year Function Room operations were interrupted with restricted access during a four month period with the club roof replacement project, but resulting in the Function Room receiving a much needed face lift just in time for the Christmas and end of year events.

Our permanent hirers have returned since reopening and we are also seeing regular weekend function room use along with some good future bookings.



We have supported several fundraising events; Red Nose Charity, Beach Business Breakfast, and the 20th anniversary National Surfing Reserve as well as making the room available for Newcastle University use.

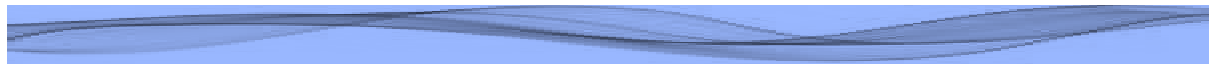
Once again we hosted the Surfest/World Surfing League in March and again it was spectacular. Thank you to Warren Smith for always making this an exciting and easy event to host. We appreciate the continuing support and will host the Surf League again in 2027.

Last but not least, we ended the year with MSLSC hosting the Newcastle Food Festival for a successful series of Sunday pop ups during the month of April.



Familiar Faces Michael Spillane and Isabelle Huber Working the Bar

Margaret Newton
Function Room Manager



WHS Report

By Nathan McKelligott

Merewether Surf Life Saving Club (MSLSC) continues to manage risks to the health and safety of members, guests and the beach-going public as far as reasonably practicable, in accordance with Surf Life Saving NSW policies, procedures, and guidance. MSLSC also adheres to relevant NSW legislation, including the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. Health and safety remain paramount and are at the forefront of everything we do.

The 2025–26 season commenced with the clubhouse still undergoing roof repairs during the pre-season period. This required additional effort from members to safely reinstate equipment and restore operational readiness as the season began. While this created some initial challenges, members worked collaboratively to ensure a safe and functional environment was established.

During the season, we experienced several periods of extreme heat. Pleasingly, our members demonstrated strong situational awareness and proactive management, ensuring both themselves and the public were appropriately prepared and supported to minimise risks associated with these conditions.

Surfest 2026 was conducted successfully, with patrol operations running smoothly throughout the event. The only notable incident involved a lost child; however, through the prompt actions of our patrol members and assistance from the public, the child was quickly and safely reunited with its parent.

Throughout the season, our patrols responded to the usual range of rescues and first aid incidents. Of particular note was the rescue of two Irish tourists who were in imminent danger. This successful outcome was made possible due to the swift and decisive actions of off-duty members who identified the risk and intervened early.

Encouragingly, the club recorded no major injuries or significant incidents during the season, reflecting the strong safety culture and adherence to procedures by our members.

Restricted clubhouse storage space and equipment placement continues to present an ongoing challenge. Managing these risks remains a priority, with all members encouraged to remain mindful of their surroundings, take a structured approach to tasks and prioritise safe practices when interacting with equipment within and around the clubhouse.

Members are reminded to always rely on their training when entering the water or operating equipment such as watercraft, IRBs or SSVs. Risk assessments should be undertaken prior to any activity, with adjustments made as required. If in doubt, members should contact their Patrol Captain, with additional support available from the Duty Officer and SurfCom.

Merewether Surf Life Saving Club members are thanked for their continued commitment to maintaining high standards of health and safety, adhering to compliance requirements, and

following SLS operating procedures to ensure safe and effective operations throughout the season.

Nathan McKelligott
WHS Officer for MSLSC



Beach Hotel Raffles

By David Tietze and Karen Wallace

The Thursday night Beach Hotel raffles have been a great success for MSLSC and the Beach Hotel this year. The Beach Hotel management has generously continued to provide all the prizes – ten Sellers meat trays, two bottles of wine and two pizza vouchers. The hotel also provides staff to promote and run the draw. A big thank you to all the members who have helped to organise and run this program - Kaz, Steve, Peter and Louise, Jamie, Veena, Heather, Iain, Ian, Penny, Rachel, Stephen, Steve and Vicki and Mick P.

We have a Whatsapp group with an informal roster and anyone is welcome to come along on Thursday night and help out from 5.30pm until 7.00pm when the draw starts.



It's important to keep the momentum going for this program. The MSLSC brand is important to the Beach Hotel and they appreciate the effort we put into their Thursday night promotion.

All members can download The Beach Hotel App and get discounts on food and drinks.

If we can keep this professional relationship going it will help our club and Merewether's famous hotel.



Healthy Change Challenge

By David Tietze and Karen Wallace

MSLSC has continued its association for the 10th year with the NDIS funded Healthy Change Challenge (HCC). HCC is a fun, empowering, social and community engaging holistic health program for people with a disability and/or mental illness.

The 2025 to 2026 season was a great success with many groups enjoying the beach, Merewether Baths and the clubhouse facilities. Many club members volunteered their time for these sessions and there was nothing but positive experiences for everyone involved. It was great to see members of the community being able to participate in the beach activities with help of the HCC team and MSLSC. Most club members who help say they get more out of the experience than they put in and it was wonderful to see so many people able to enjoy these days at the beach. Our activities have included:

- Patrol days where people with a disability can join in patrols and learn a number of skills including radio operation. A number of participants are now joining MSLSC patrols on a regular basis as volunteers which is an amazing example of social and community integration.
- Hosting Lifeguard for a Day events teaching essential lifesaving skills to people of all abilities in a fun, safe and inclusive environment. This includes board, rescue and flag exercises.
- Inclusive boot camp sessions at Merewether beach and clubhouse followed by barbecues and presentations.
- Hosting Lifeguard for a Day events teaching essential lifesaving skills to people of all abilities in a fun, safe and inclusive environment.

A big thank you to Karen Wallace, Penny Britz, Ian Wilson, Rachael Soars, Peter Bernasconi, Dave Hoar, Josh Barbar and all the other MSLSC volunteers for their time and dedication.



Healthy Change Challenge at Merewether Ocean Baths

ANZAC Day

By Anthony Tietze

MSLSC was well represented at the ANZAC day service at Mitchell Park, Merewether. It was a very well run service, simple and dignified. Nick Newton, Norm Rodgers and Rob Dan laid the wreath for our seniors and Mason and Logan Overton laid the wreath for our juniors.



Mason and Logan Overton



Rob Dan, Norm Rodgers, Logan Overton, Mason Overton and Nick Newton

Emergency Call Out Team (ECOT)

By Kevin Buckley & Gemma McMillan

MSLSC has an active and trained Emergency Call Out Team (ECOT) who can respond to emergency situations. The ECOT responded to two local events this season, one involving a rescue at Glenrock and another in connection with a vessel in distress on the water. As a test to our state of readiness an ECOT team exercise was held on Sunday 12 April 2026.

The Scenario

At 09:47 hours Merewether SLSC Patrol reported a missing patrol member. This required activation of the ECOT. The State Operations Centre (SOC) was contacted by phone prior to the exercise and the Merewether ECOT was activated via the normal emergency text messaging service on 0400 717 042. This text initiated the exercise. A coordinated multi-asset search was initiated involving IRBs, SMAR swimmers, rescue board paddlers, and UAV aerial surveillance. The missing person was located and recovered by IRB Alpha at 10:45 hours and transferred to patrol for treatment at 10:58 hours.



The Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX) demonstrated strong operational capability, effective multi-asset coordination and high professionalism across all responding teams. Identified improvement areas will strengthen operational readiness, communication discipline and search-pattern efficiency. The exercise highlighted the Stages of a SAREX as well as the escalation points from the Patrol Captain and patrol (who conducted an initial search) to the ECOT activation via the text. The operation was managed on site by the Forward Commander, with escalation to the Branch Duty Officers, then to State Duty Officers and the NSW Police Marine Area Command (MAC) if deemed necessary. One valuable takeaway from the exercise was to “go in early, go in big”.

Neil	Adams	Michael	Ovenstone
Nathan	Bird	Mark	Owen
Steven	Bradley	Jamie	Paras
Penelope	Britz	Janiece	Roche
Kevin	Buckley	Garry	Semetka
Sarah	Bugbird	Noel	Simmonds
Joshua	Chappelow	Kieren	Stevens
Robert	Dan	Anthony	Tietze
Emma	Gale	David	Tietze
Jennifer	Martin	Karen	Wallace
Nathan	McKelligott	Christopher	Warren
Gemma	McMillan	Jae-Hun	Yang
Nick	Newton		

MSLSC Emergency Call Out Team Members



Kevin Buckley
Emergency Services Co-ordinator (0409 272 364)

Samaritans Collection

By Dave Hoar

The Annual Samaritans Collections for the 2025-2026 season was held in December and June.

The IRBs were overflowing with donations of non-perishable food as well as cleaning items, toiletries and personal care items. All of the items collected go to people in need.

The team from the Samaritans expressed their gratitude for the continued support from Merewether Surf Club and the local community.



Easter Egg Hunt

By Anthony Tietze

The Easter Bunny returned to our beach on Sunday 5 April 20 for our 16th Annual Easter Egg Hunt. A great crowd of kids and parents were in attendance to find the 350 eggs that the Easter Bunny and his helpers placed in the sand. It's an increasingly popular event, looked forward to by kids and adults alike.

Thank you to Noah Sander for volunteering to be the Easter Bunny this year!



Beach Business Breakfast

By Dave Hoar

The Beach Business Breakfast commenced in May 2015 and continues to meet on the 1st Friday of the month at Merewether Surf Club. The event connects local businesses, many of whom have gone on to sponsor the Club.

Beach Business Breakfast Member and long-time MSLSC sponsor Alex Jenkins from Virtuous Wealth Financial Planning said it was a great way to meet new small business people. “We all face similar challenges and it’s great to have such a supportive network to shares ideas with” Alex said.



Alex Jenkins
Director - Financial Planner

Dip FP, Adv Dip FP,
Masters FP



MSLSC NRL Footy Tipping Comp Fundraiser

By Dave Hoar and Glenis Powell

After 10 great years the 2026 NRL Tipping Competition sees Dave and Glenis pass the ball to Norm Rodgers and Alex Jenkins to manage what has been described by some as the world's most prestigious Tipping Competition. Previous, past and current participants and winners are held in exulted status internationally.

The tipping Competition has been so enjoyed by many of our club members over the past 10 years. We are sure that in the capable hands of Norm and Alex that the tipping competition will continue to be a fun and successful fundraiser for the club.



A Little Ray of Sunshine

“Surf Life Saving exists to save lives, create great Australians and build better communities.”

