

BRONTE

SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB • 1903

1. BACKGROUND

- Oldest surf lifesaving club in the world; established in 1903.
- Current building was opened in 1974 and is struggling to cater for our lifesaving needs.

A lot has changed in the 45 years since the current Club was built and the demands upon the surf club have changed significantly over this time both as a surf lifesaving club and how it interacts with the public. About 35 years ago women were admitted as full members of Surf Life Saving clubs for the first time. This has resulted in an essentially equal gender current membership mix. Girls then became nippers and nippers became a family affair. The popularity of nippers and junior surf lifesaving has increased to numbers now in excess of 750.

Over the last 20 years, changes have also added to the demands of our Club.

- In 2004, all water safety required a Bronze Medallion. This has resulted in training requirements increasing exponentially. The good news is this has resulted in more than 500 new parent adult bronze holders to assist on the beach, however it has added to the demands on the Club's resources.
- About ten years ago Surf Lifesaving was aligned as a registered training delivery organisation. This meant training outcomes were formally recognised outside the organisation in areas such as the work place and added to our obligations.
- The Club now trains over 200 people a year and at times, there are 3-4 courses run concurrently and crammed into one room.
- The Club's membership has grown from about 600 in 1995 to over 1,900 by 2019. Incredibly almost trebling in the last 15 years alone. All putting more pressure on the Club and its resources. It was not envisaged when the current building was built that there would be such a growth in membership and use, all adding to the strain on the current building.
- The current building was opened in 1974, the same year that the Nippers commenced. The Nipper membership has grown nearly 1,700% since 1974 and nearly 30% since 2004. With that growth has come a need for more surf education, training equipment and qualified volunteers.

- Women were first accepted into the Surf Lifesaving movement as active members in 1984. Since 1995 female membership at our Surf Club has increased by over 350% and now comprise over a third of the surf club's membership. When the Clubhouse was built, there was no consideration given for women at this type of growth.
- The sophistication of our core Lifesaving activities has continued to increase through the use of technology and equipment, levels of training and requirements of reporting. There has also been an increase in compliance requirements.

The result of all of these and other changes over the years has meant that the requirements for the building have shifted and the overall utilisation of the facilities has significantly increased.

All of this has resulted in the need to employ full time administrative staff.

- More and more people continue to visit Bronte Beach and the park. Our interaction with the public has grown significantly. Our Club performed over 20,000 voluntary hours per summer.

This does not include the many hours of the Bondi to Bronte Swim and all the hours board members and other volunteers give.

It has been stated by the Club on many occasions that the services we provide in educating the community, patrolling and surf guarding the public can **never** be underestimated.

- Over the last five years (2014 – 2019), we have averaged approximately 200 rescues per year. (This does not include the after hours rescues .)
- For the period 2004 – 2006, the average was 145 per year, highlighting that current rescues have increased by over 35% on an annual basis.
- In the last 20 years, we have performed over 5,000 rescues
- Over this same period, we have performed over 50,000 preventative actions (ie. actions that negate a rescue) and over 4,000 first aid procedures

These statistics are actually an underestimation due to how busy our lifesavers are when on duty and not being able to record all information.

2. CLUB USE AND ACTIVITIES

The Club is utilised in many and varied ways;

- As the base for storage of all our lifesaving equipment including rescue boards, all patrol equipment and first aid equipment. Our equipment has changed dramatically over the years and it will continue to do so.

- A training centre for our lifesavers including;
 - Nippers
 - Surf rescue certificate graduates (approximately 30 per year)
 - Bronze medallion holders, which become our active members
 - Education of nipper parents
 - Annual proficiencies to upkeep the lifesaving skills of all our active members
 - Other surf life education of our members including first aid courses

It is important to note that much of this training is accredited for the workplace. During the summer months the upstairs facilities are often used on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights for these training purposes.

- Use by Nippers not only for education as young surf lifesavers but it is also utilised for their registration day, presentation day and social events like an annual disco.
- The Club is open Monday – Friday all year round to service the members enquiries and we are also open to the public to answer their many queries.
- The club is open every Sunday afternoon for members and guests social drinks.
- During summer, the Club is also open on a Sunday morning to facilitate the 750 Nippers and all their parents but also serves as an information service for general public.
- Used by our various club committees including Board of Management, lifesaving, nippers and education.
- Member functions such as our Reunion Day, Presentation Day and Annual General Meeting, together with social functions that include charity orientated activities.
- By Life Members for their life member functions.
- The Club hosts an ANZAC Day Memorial service each year, for not only our members but the community.
- The club each year hosts the Bondi to Bronte Ocean swim which is the most participated 2 km swim on the east coast. The swim has raised \$250,000 through The Kids Cancer Project charity so far.

- We have a gymnasium which is not only used by our members (including importantly, our competitors) but it is also used by the Waverley Council lifeguards. The gym is also home to Bronte Youth where the Club provides fitness training and it keeps them engaged not only in surf lifesaving but also in the community to encourage a healthier lifestyle.
- The Club is utilised by the Waverley Council.
- The Club is utilised by local schools such as St Catherine's, Bronte Public and Clovelly Public Schools.
- The Club hosts community assistance days such as the Uniting Burnside Community Group and Clontarf Foundation.
- The Club is utilised for storage by the Bronte Splashers and Bronte Board Riders for some of their equipment.
- The Club is utilised by community groups such as the Bronte Ladies Swimming Club (annually for their presentation night), Clovelly Eagles Rugby Club and Bronte Amateur Swimming Club.
- We are the base where a number of fitness clubs store their equipment with us and we are used by a yoga club (almost daily).
- The Club has been an advocate for sustainability over the years and promotes community awareness.
- We are also hired out as a function area for not only weddings but birthdays, bar mitzvahs, wakes, small children's parties, business conferences and workshops and book and product launches. As a policy, we do not have 18th, 21st or 30th birthday parties, nor do we have ticketed events. We would have on hold each year over 100 functions.

The Club is committed to providing these services and facilities for the community and the existing building has accommodated all these uses since it was constructed in 1974. It is now necessary to building a new facility. The new building will provide better facilities for life saving and park users, including resolving the circulation issues between pedestrians on the coastal walk, access points to kiosk/change rooms and access to life saving equipment.

3. CURRENT BUILDING AND ROLE WE PLAY

The club has limited space and is struggling to cater for our lifesaving needs and physically cannot house our surf boats or trailers which are parked outside the perimeter of the park. The Club houses;

- Approximately 350 rescue boards, surf skis and nipper boards
- A number of inflatable rescue boats, together with outboard motors, accessories and essential equipment required to maintain these craft
- Lifesaving patrol tents and patrol equipment including rescue tubes, fins, radios and patrol accessories
- Patrol uniforms and water safety uniforms
- Lifesaving equipment including defibrillators, manikins, resuscitation equipment, spinal management equipment and first aid kits
- Dedicated first aid room
- Nipper and competition tents
- Member gymnasium
- Administration office
- Caretaker premises
- Community and education room
- Kiosk supplies, fridges and freezers as kiosk does not have sufficient storage

It is to be noted the surf club provides an integral role in the safety and well-being of all visitors to Bronte Beach and the park. There is now a requirement for improved club facilities and an increase in size to enable the surf club to keep up with the increased number of visitors and the increased demands on the role we undertake.

It may not be known by Council or the public that Bronte Surf Club is required to enter into a Life Saving Agreement with New South Wales Surf Lifesaving under which we agree to patrol Bronte Beach and partake in the Emergency Response area being from North Bondi to Clovelly. Under this agreement we commit to minimum patrol hours, maintaining minimum equipment and personnel with requisite qualifications.

The role we play in the community is vital. What price and value can be placed on saving one life let alone thousands?

The club performs the important task of educating current and future lifesavers. With the incredible increase of beachgoers, the need for qualification and education has intensified. In addition to educating Nippers each year (we average over 700 junior surf awareness awards), we on average train over 100 members per year across many awards including;

- Surf Rescue Certificate
- Advanced Resuscitation
- Bronze Medallion
- Silver Medallion (many categories)
- Gold Medallion
- IRB Awards
- Training Officers

The changing nature of how we educate our lifesavers has resulted in more training and new and different equipment being needed. All adding to the strain on the building and the Surf Club.

Our lifesavers work very closely with the Waverley Lifeguards, ever more so with the increased beach goers to Bronte Beach.

We are very proud that through our Club, not only have we educated and trained our volunteer lifesavers but many of the Waverley lifeguards have graduated from Bronte. Over recent times they have included;

- Dean Gladstone
- Bruce Hopkins
- Rod "Kerrbox" Kerr
- Anthony "Harries" Carroll
- Aaron Graham
- Troy Quinlan
- Kris Yates
- Daniel McLaughlin
- Chris Chapman
- Nicola Atherton
- Ryan Clarke
- Michael Jenkinson
- Liam Taylor
- Quinn Darrah
- Wally Eggleton

We all know the roles these lifeguards have and continue to undertake in the community.

Waverley Council's statistics show that over a million people each year do the coastal walk. On most weekends we have approximately 10,000 people just on the beach with more than double that in the park. There is an incredible amount of people in the park and beach area that come within the domain of our supervision (there are many times where we perform first aid on park goers). These numbers are on the increase adding to the pressures on the Club.

It is also to be noted that many locals are not Australian by birth. Waverley Council statistics show that over 40% are overseas born residents and are not knowledgeable about the beach conditions of Bronte, adding to the role we need to play.

In short, the current building is old and insufficient in capacity for the club to undertake its important and ever growing role of protecting the public.

It is important to note independent structural engineering reports undertaken by Council confirmed the building was no longer fit for its purpose.

The Bronte Surf Life Saving Club building is necessarily integrated with Council amenities, the coastal walkway, the proposed Lifeguard platform, the forecourt area, the beach promenade, the landscape of the park and the Sydney Water pumping station. What we

are seeking from the plan of management is the possibility of working constructively with Council to ensure the best possible outcome in each of these relationships.

The new building is out of the necessity to meet the evolving requirements of Surf lifesaving and its associated junior activities, nippers, and in so doing providing a sustainable future.

4. PURPOSE STATEMENT FOR BRONTE SURF CLUB

Located in a unique setting, Bronte Surf Club literally sits on Bronte Beach. It has important purposes;

- As the most visible building situated on the Bronte Promenade and interfacing with Bronte Park
- As a central focal point for community life in the area, accommodating a vibrant mix of cultural, community and commercial uses
- As the central place for surf lifesaving activities noting that the Bronte Surf Club supervises one of the most challenging and dangerous beaches in NSW
- A central place for the Bronte community, providing a space for community activities
- Providing services to the community and public
- Providing clean, functional and improved spaces for hire and good amenities to serve people visiting the Bronte beach and park areas

5. BRONTE SURF CLUB MISSION STATEMENT

We were born to protect the public and patrol one of New South Wales' most challenging beaches.

We are a volunteer community based organisation whose ultimate goal is to save lives.

We are a club for all ages and genders.

We are open to all people from all walks of life.

We define what it is to be Australian.

We are the Australian way of life; having fun and looking after our mates.

We are proud of what we stand for and who we are.

We are the world's first surf club.

We are Bronte.