

Kirra Surf Club Old Boys Association – History and Tradition:

Kirra Past and Present Members Association: (Established: 17th May 1950)

During the 1950/1951 season of the Kirra Surf Life Saving Club, it was reported that marriage and work commitments continued to deplete active membership of the surf club. In an effort to provide an opportunity for recently active members to still be associated with their surf club, the 'Kirra Past and Present Members Association' was formed on the 17th May 1951 with eighteen members. Highly respected long serving club members Stan Hilton (*KSLSC Life Membership – #32/1967*) was endorsed as President and Ralph Ford-Johnson (*KSLSC Life Membership – #31/1966*) was Secretary.

The Association continued to function and during the 1953/1954 season new Secretary Mac Jarden reported that regular bi-monthly meetings at Anzac House, Brisbane and social activities attracted good attendances. However, after a few years the Kirra Past and Present Members Association ceased owing to insufficient numbers to continue to maintain it as a viable organisation. Whilst the main purpose for this Association was to provide social interaction for its members, it may be considered as the forerunner to the future Kirra Old Boys Association.

Kirra Old Boys Association: (Established: 29th November 1978)



A meeting of over forty past and present long serving Kirra SLSC members arranged by Honorary Life Member Ron Gurnett (*KSLSC Life Membership – #38/1973*) was held on the **29th November 1978** at the International Hotel, Spring Hill in Brisbane (Licensee Bill Wright – long serving Kirra member: Club Vice-Captain 1966/67 and 1991/92). At this meeting those present unanimously endorsed and celebrated the formation of the Kirra Old Boys Association. Ron Gurnett was endorsed as the inaugural Association President, with Honorary Life Member Bob Littler (*KSLSC Life Membership – #39/1974*) as Secretary. Honorary Life Member Graham Byrnes (*KSLSC Life Membership – #29/1963*), who was a wonderful conduit for the new Association to those past Kirra Surf Club members of the 1940/1950/1960s eras, was endorsed as Treasurer.

Members who attended the inaugural Kirra Old Boys Association meeting – 29th November 1978

(Names as recorded in the Meeting Attendance Register)

Ron Gurnett; John Bowler; Steve Paul; Ross (Bundy) Edmonds; Bob Littler; Graham Byrnes; Jim Schofield; Barry Robinson; Vic Arnall; Garry Power; Cam Leagh-Murray; Mal Stockwell; Lech Gacia; Tom Laffan; Dennis Boucher; Keith Boucher; Greg Dunn; John Littler; Roger Cresswell; Colin Wright; Bob Gear; Ron Porter; Graham Booth; Carl Godwin; Barry Godwin; Peter Beauchamp; Keith Hamilton; Barrie Thorne; Stan Hilton; Col Heydt; Roger Hawkes; Graham Stephens; Jim Steel; Max Greatorix; Terry Challenger; Malcolm Jardeen; Dave Seeley; Barry Cameron; Mick Mulchay; and Jim Devlin.

The Association 'Foundation Committee' was determined in their endeavours to building and sustaining the Kirra Old Boys Association. Their focus remained on membership recruitment, building fellowship through annual social events, and coordinating successful revenue generating activities. Through their outstanding recruitment efforts, the Association quickly achieved almost three hundred past and present long serving Kirra SLSC members recorded on the Membership Register. With membership being mainly Brisbane based, the Kirra Old Boys Association held its Annual General Meetings, Old Boys Reunions, and Christmas functions at venues including the Brisbane Anzac Club, Valleys (Diehards) Rugby League Football Club, the Railway Institute Building, and the Woolloongabba Hotel. These annual events attracted good attendance numbers with all those present acknowledging the very successful initiatives of the incumbent 'Office Bearers'.

Through its many successful revenue generating activities, the Kirra Old Boys Association established itself and continues to remain a long term financial benefactor for the many operational functions of

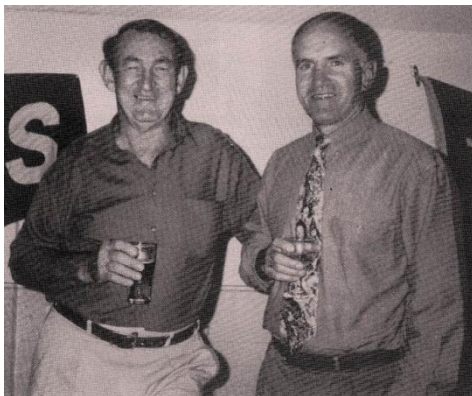
the Kirra Surf Life Saving Club. Numerous examples of the financial sponsorship and support provided to the Kirra Surf Club are highlighted in the publication: *'Kirra SLSC 100 years by Peter D Kelly'* published for the Kirra SLSC 100th Year Celebrations in January 2016.

In 1982, the Kirra Old Boys Association was called upon to provide significant financial and 'in-kind' contribution to the Kirra Surf Club through the provision of bar and refrigeration equipment, furnishings, tables and chairs, carpets, and building construction trade skills. This enabled the Kirra Surf Club's Management Committee of that time to finally establish the Old Boys Lounge in the major building extensions of the western end of the Kirra Beach Pavilion. The Old Boys Lounge also contained memorabilia that was installed through additional sponsorship provided by the Association, showcasing Kirra's significant history as the second oldest surf lifesaving club in Queensland and one of the longest continuously operating surf lifesaving clubs in Australia.

The Old Boys Lounge with its then many unique surf club historical displays evolved into what is now in 2020, the licensed Kirra Supporters Club Bar and Bistro. The Kirra Old Boys Association continued to regularly provide financial assistance through periodic donations and 'in kind' support for the maintenance and upgrade of this licensed surf club facility.

For several seasons in the early 1990s during a time when the surf club found it difficult to fill its Beach Patrol rosters, the Kirra Old Boys Association stepped into the breach and coordinated the provision of long serving and past members to perform patrols for a full weekend every month. These experienced club members would fulfil all surf lifesaving requirements to be deemed proficient to perform their Beach Patrols.

As the foundation President for the Kirra Old Boys Association, Ron Gurnett remained in this position continuously for sixteen years until 1994. He would again be endorsed as the President for a further two year term from 2001. After forty years since its foundation in 1978, Ron continues to maintain a strong interest and actively supports the Association.



With Honorary Life Member Ken Meehan (*KSLSC Life Membership – #33/1968*) return to the Kirra Surf Club in the late 1980s after several years working in south-east Asia, he took on the role of President, Kirra Old Boys Association in 1994 and held the position for seven years.

"Left (L–R): Ken Meehan and Ron Gurnett: Kirra SLSC Honorary Life Members and stalwarts of the Kirra Old Boys Association at a surf club function in the Old Boys Lounge in 1995"

Ron Gurnett's endorsement as President in 2001 for a further two year period saw Ken Meehan maintain his committee involvement as the Association Secretary. Long serving club member Jim Harrison (*KSLSC Life Membership – #59/2001*) was endorsed as the Association's Treasurer.

Ken Meehan was an organising force with the Kirra Old Boys Association through his continuing involvement in the Kirra Surf Club annual house to house collections, and support for the annual Beach to Breakers Ocean Series event. Several past Kirra Old Boys Association members also assisted with the annual Ocean Series event held at Kirra Beach through acquiring sponsorship for event winners, coordinating activities on the day of the event, and staffing the public catering facilities provided throughout the day that gained additional revenue for the surf club.

In 2003 Ken Meehan was again endorsed as the Association's President. However, with his sad passing in 2004, Honorary Life Members Bob Littler and Ron Gurnett took up the challenge and accepted endorsement as the Kirra Old Boys Association's President and Secretary respectively at the meeting held at the Pineapple Hotel on the 5th November 2004. Honorary Life Member Barrie Thorne (*KSLSC Life Membership – #42/1977*) was endorsed as the Association Treasurer.

Association President, Bob Littler reported in the 2006 Kirra SLSC Annual Report that there were two hundred and fifty-three past and present long serving Kirra members registered with the Association. He further noted that the Association had successfully raised sufficient funds by way of its activities over recent years that allowed the Kirra Old Boys Association to generously provide a donation of \$25,000.00 to the Kirra Surf Club's Management Committee.

With the Singleton Family taking over the Pineapple Hotel located just a short walking distance to the famous Gabba Cricket Ground, the Kirra Old Boys Association now had a venue in Brisbane that became a base of operations. Since the early 1970s when he managed the Acacia Ridge Hotel, Honorary Life Governor Bob Singleton (*KSLSC Life Governor Membership – 2012*) has continuously for nearly fifty years supported both the Kirra Surf Life Saving Club and the Kirra Old Boys Association through his sponsorship and support of many fund raising activities, hotel raffles and major function events.



For more than a quarter of a century, the Pineapple Hotel has been the venue for annual Kirra Old Boys Association functions including Christmas Reunions, Annual General Meetings, Life Member Dinners, and for the past several years hosting the very successful Kirra Sports Luncheons.

“Left: Past Kirra Old Boys Association Presidents attending the annual Bumpo Freeman Remembrance Day held in the Kirra Supporters Club Bar/Bistro on the 28th December 2012 – (L-R): Bob Littler; Ron Gurnett; and Keith Boucher. All have served diligently as long term Presidents of the Kirra Old Boys Association”

In 2009, a change of leadership occurred for the Kirra Old Boys Association with highly respected and long serving Kirra Surf Club members Keith Boucher (*KSLSC Life Membership – #71/2017*) and Lance English (*KSLSC Life Membership – #67/2012*) accepting the roles of President and Secretary respectively. Honorary Life Member Rick Sellwood (*KSLSC Life Membership – #45/1981*) was endorsed as Treasurer. This newly elected committee continued to advance the aims of the Association, and regularly attended and supported major events organised by the Kirra Surf Club. During their tenure on the committee they endeavoured to sustain the membership numbers, and enhanced fellowship and financial activities of the Association. Long serving Kirra Club member John Bell (*KSLSC Life Membership – #70/2015*) embraced the Association's revenue generation challenges with outstanding success. His input to the planning and coordination of the annual Sports Luncheons held at the Pineapple Hotel has ensured its continuing success on the Association's Event Calendar.

As is further detailed in 'PD Kelly's – Kirra SLSC 100 years' published in 2016, the Kirra Old Boys Association continued to regularly provide significant financial and 'in kind' support to the Kirra Surf Club. Kirra Old Boys Association's financial contributions assisted with building improvements and renovations to the Kirra SLSC clubhouse and the Kirra Supporters Club Bar/Bistro; provided Beach Patrol equipment and uniforms; supported the purchase of powered rescue craft; and so much more. During the 2013/2014 season, accommodation renovations upstairs in the Kirra clubhouse were finally completed through the very generous financial support provided by the Beavis and

Bartels families; and with a further major donation from the Kirra Old Boys Association.



“Left: Kirra SLSC legends in the Kirra Supporters Club Bar/Bistro – (L-R): Club President Michael Hill; KSLSC Life Member Lance English; Cheryl Fenton (Kirra's first female Club Captain 1996/1997 and 1998/1999); KSLSC Life Member Keith Boucher; and KSLSC Life Member Ron Gurnett (Foundation President – Kirra Old Boys Association)”

Former Association Secretary and Kirra SLSC Honorary Life Member Lance English has commented that since the formation of the Kirra Old Boys Association on the 29th November 1978, it would not be unreasonable to assume that over the subsequent forty years up to one million dollars has been provided to the Kirra Surf Life Saving Club by the Association and its membership through donations and 'in kind' support.

'In kind' support provided by Association members comes in many forms. This has been provided on numerous occasions by Kirra Old Boys Association members through the provision of professional and industry technical knowledge and skills; providing building engineering plans for renovations and extensions to the Kirra Surf Club; the provision of trades skilled staff and product that in many instances was at no cost to the surf club; volunteer staffing for surf club major events and House to House Collections; and maintaining Beach Patrols on those occasions when the surf club had insufficient members to perform such duties..... *"These are memories that have lasted a life time!"*

After eight years at the helm of the Kirra Old Boys Association, Keith Boucher and Lance English determined that it was time for a change on the committee.

At the annual 'Bumpo Freeman Remembrance Day' held in the Kirra Supporters Club Bar and Bistro on the 27th December 2017, those present endorsed Honorary Life Member Peter Beauchamp AFSM (*KSLSC Life Membership – #49/1986*) as the Association President; former Kirra SLSC President and Honorary Life Member Adam Day (*KSLSC Life Membership – #58/1998*) as Secretary; and long serving past Kirra Surf Club member Paul Cameron as Committee Member.

The Association's committee (endorsed Dec 2017) has introduced technology such as web based communications with members; a new 'Old Boys' page included on the Kirra SLSC website; production and regularly circulation of Newsletters through MailChimp management systems; established a dedicated Old Boys email address; and utilises electronic banking strategies to improve business governance. The committee has also strengthened membership recruitment strategies targeting long serving and past Kirra Surf Club members from the 1990/2000/2010 eras; established the annual Calendar of Events now available on the Kirra Surf Club website; continues to enhance revenue generating activities and events; sponsors the Kirra Historical Project with the business case for this project available on the Kirra Surf Club's website; and continued to engage with key surf lifesaving office bearers of the Kirra SLSC Management Committee and the SLSQ Point Danger Branch focusing on building good relationships for the overall benefit of the Kirra Surf Club Old Boys Association and the Kirra Surf Life Saving Club.



At the Association's forty-first AGM held 31st November 2019 at the Pineapple Hotel, the current committee were reindorsed for a third term. Long serving past Kirra Surf Club member Mark Rogers was also added as a Committee Member for Year 2020.

"So the tradition continues – Once a Kirra member, always a Kirra member"

(Reference: Kirra SLSC 100 years by Peter D Kelly: 2016; Old Boys Newsletters; Records of Meetings; Attendance Registers and Minutes; Recall by past Old Boys Association Committee Office Bearers; etc)



KIRRA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB
(ESTABLISHED 7TH JANUARY 1916)