

AVALON BEACH S.L.S.C.

SUMMARY OF CLUB HISTORY

It has been generally accepted that the Club was formed in 1930 but, after a good deal of research, it has been found that the inaugural meeting actually took place some time in 1925. The first squad consisting of 5 Bronze Medallions, viz. Geoff Small, Bert Paddon, Vincent Fox, Cyril Holmes and Hal Medcalfe and one Qualifying Certificate, Alan Rowe, passed on 31st January, 1926.

The man behind the formation of the Club was Mr. A. J. Small who donated the first reel to the Club while two box line outfits were donated by the Council. The Club colours were then royal blue with a large red band across the chest.

Through internal strife the Club was nearly disbanded in 1929-30 season but Foundation Members, A. J. Small, W. Simmons, A. G. Hansen and E. Hock reformed and the first Executive, as far as can be traced, was that of the 1930-31 season. These were E. L. Sanders, M.L.A., President; H. Bliss, Secretary; C. Spooner, Treasurer and W. T. Simmons, Captain.

W. G. "Wally" Simmons, already a Life Member of Queenscliff S.L.S.C. was instrumental in obtaining our first surfboat in the early '30's through his old Club. This boat was called "Akurba".

From the early days until the present time the Club has always been blessed with an active Ladies' Auxiliary. During 1935-36 season the Ladies raised sufficient monies to purchase our second boat, which was called "Avalon".

Mr. A. J. Small built our first Club House and was responsible for the building of the rock pool on the Southern end of the beach.

When World War II broke out, all members enlisted. Wally Simmons was rejected because he was a Munitions purchasing officer and, with a handful of Vice-Presidents, endeavoured to patrol the beach. They found this impossible and applied to the Association for help.

A member of the Board of Examiners, Russ Crook (then Police Constable and now Inspector) suggested contacting Police Boys' Clubs for recruits. This was done with the full support of the then Commissioner of Police, W. J. Mackay, who arranged Russ Crook's roster to enable him to train 25 members in 1939-40 season. Although some had to be taught to swim, all passed their Medallions in early 1940. Russ joined the Army in 1941 and Roth Bassingwaite took over the coaching. Gradually the Club found its feet and has been going forward ever since.