

CATHO CHRONICLE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CATHERINE HILL BAY PROGRESS ASSOCIATION
ESTABLISHED 1901



SEASONS GREETINGS!

The Progress Association wishes everyone a happy and safe holiday season. On Christmas Eve Santa will be driving through Catho on the RFS trucks. Donations are welcome.

Jetty Update

The jetty still stands! Without the successful building of a sea jetty the town of Catherine Hill Bay would never have existed. The coal that was loaded at this jetty initially went to Sydney and later to Newcastle to become part of the coal export market.

The 100-year mining lease expired in 2017 and ownership of the jetty has now returned to the State Government, who holds \$3.65m in bond for either the demolition or rehabilitation works. Which will it be?

Recently the Progress Association sought to have the jetty listed on the State Heritage Register. The aim was to allow a proper assessment to be carried out and to find an adaptive reuse for this iconic structure. Unfortunately the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage declined the application.

Nearly 80% of all local residents rated the jetty as important to them in our 2019 Community Survey.

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LANDCARE UPDATE

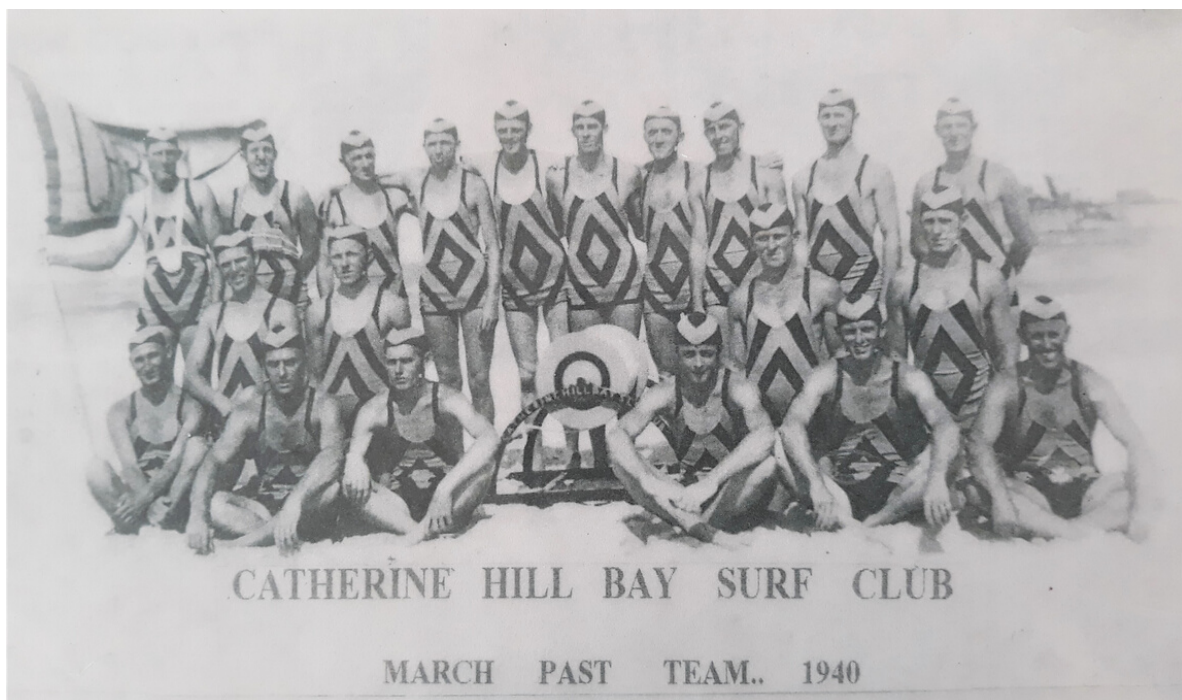
NEXT MEETING

**5pm Sat 18th Jan 2020
at Catho SLSC Club -
*All local residents are
welcome***

Focus on Catho SLSC

Catherine Hill Bay Surf Club was first established as Wallarah Surf Club in 1923. The club's name was later changed to Catherine Hill Bay, but it wasn't until March 1928 that fourteen members were awarded Catherine Hill Bay's first Surf Bronze Medallions and a clubhouse finally established on the beachfront in 1929.

This was the beginning of a long history for the surf club and it is now celebrating its 96th year. Throughout the decades the club's fortunes have generally followed that of Wallarah Colliery. The club was recessed in 1932 to 1934 due to the Great Depression and also from 1952-1955 and 1961-1964 as a result of mine retrenchments, when many members had to leave town to find work. Club President Pat Slaven, who's name adorns the Public Reserve adjacent to the present-day clubhouse, successfully reformed the club in early 1964.



Today the surf club plays an important part in the township of Catherine Hill Bay through its well-trained surf lifesavers who volunteer every weekend to keep beachgoers safe. There are currently 65 patrolling members who do lifesaving duties every Saturday and Sunday from September through to the end of April every year. In some cases there are whole families who are patrolling members at Catho, starting out as nippers, completed their Surf Rescue Certificate, then going on to be Bronze Medallion holders and, for many, moving into the inflatable rescue boat (IRB).

Nippers events – for under 6s to under 14s - start in October each year and typically run from 9-11am on Sundays. Catho nippers learn valuable surf skills that will help to keep them safe at the beach in a fun, supportive environment. They can further develop these skills and become a surf sports competitor. The club has had some hugely successful nippers, achieving medals at National and State championships.

Upon reaching the ripe old age of fifteen, nippers can complete the Surf Rescue Certificate and become a patrolling member of Catho SLSC. Achieving the Bronze Medallion is the next natural progression, becoming proficient in water rescues, first aid, CPR, use of the defib, communication skills and how to work in a team.



Even for those that decide to become a life saver at a mature age, it's never too late. Catho SLSC has a dedicated team of trainers that will spend all the time you need to prepare for the bronze medallion course.

The IRB is one of the club's most effective rescue tools. Catho is situated on a notoriously dangerous stretch of the east coast and too often Catho SLSC is called upon to assist with rescues of fisherman off rocks or others that are not aware of the dangers of our beautiful coastline. Whilst the IRB is a great rescue tool, it's also possible for members to become part of the IRB racing team. In recent years Catho SLSC has been hugely successful in IRB racing which is done during the winter months.

Anyone interested in becoming part of the Catho SLSC family is encouraged to check out the club website at cathoslsc.org.au. Everyone is welcome.

Hale St Works

Delta Electricity has begun the rehabilitation works between Hale St and the Surf Club. A large embankment was constructed there in 1975 to allow access for the rebuilding of the jetty. This embankment has now been removed.

Headland rehabilitation works are expected to be completed in 2020. It is proposed that the Bin Building, overlooking the jetty, will be made suitable for a whale watching platform or kiosk. In a related matter, Coastal Hamlets is currently seeking approval to modify the staging of their works in this area so that the already approved village shops can be built sooner at the top of Hale Street.

Demolition of Bowling Club

LMCC has received approval from the NSW Heritage Council to demolish the Bowling Club.

Invitations to quote for the job of demolition, including the safe removal of asbestos, have been sent out and Council expects to engage a specialist contractor before the end of the year. Demolition will then commence in accordance with the contractor's timetable, but is likely to be in the first half of 2020.

Swansea - Catherine Hill Bay SES Base

The Swansea SES unit, located at 5 Flowers Drive in Catherine Hill Bay, was founded in late 2018 and operates between the existing Wyong and Lake Macquarie units. It is the combat agency for floods, storms, and tsunamis in the local area, as well as providing assistance to other emergency services when requested. The Swansea-CHB SES unit does not do road crash rescue, vertical rescue, or other rescue related tasks.

Swansea SES looks after 25 suburbs (from Doyalson North to Belmont South), a total area of 84km². It currently has 17 volunteers.

They are always looking for new volunteers to join the unit, particularly from the younger generation to keep the unit running and for development of future leaders. If you're interested in volunteering with the NSW SES go to: <https://www.ses.nsw.gov.au/get-involved/volunteer/>



To request assistance during times of storms or floods the NSW SES can be contacted on: **132 500**

You can also follow the NSW SES Swansea unit on Instagram here:

www.instagram.com/nswsessswansea/

and on Facebook here:

www.facebook.com/SwanseaSES/

Landcare Update

Thanks for another great year of Landcaring! The Team will avoid the heat and ticks now and meet again on 3rd February 2020 and the first Monday of the month thereafter, from 3-5 pm at Graveyard Beach.

Currently the Team are just maintenance weeding the area alongside the cemetery, and the south side of the pathway to the beach. The north side of the path is clear of bitou bush and lantana now, and we're around on the northside dunes and the delightful gully there - in the shade!

Carmel Brown attended the recent Lake Macquarie Landcare AGM, and continues to represent Lake Macquarie Landcare on the Hunter Region Landcare Committee, Carmel was joined by Lindsey & David Goff at the annual awards.



Prepare for bushfire season

The terrible bushfires that descended on Catherine Hill Bay in October 2013 - when three houses were lost, two other houses were damaged and even the jetty caught fire - are still fresh in the minds of many locals. The Catho community will be forever grateful to the Rural Fire Service (RFS) for their heroic efforts in saving many of our homes.



Newcastle Herald, 19/10/13



It's the time of year again when we need to prepare our homes for the risks posed by the summer bushfire season. The RFS has some great information on their website here:

<https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/resources/bush-fire-survival-plan>

The recommended bushfire season checklist includes:

1. Discuss among household occupants what to do if bushfire threatens your home and make a plan
2. Trim trees and shrubs overhanging your home
3. Mow grass to keep it low and remove the clippings
4. Remove items from around the home that can burn (wood piles, mulch etc)
5. Remove leaves from gutters and install metal gutter guards
6. Install a sturdy hose that will reach around your house and ensure water tanks are full.

Improved Access to Moonee Beach

NPWS recently confirmed that they have allocated \$180,000 for improvements to the access path to Moonee Beach. Works are scheduled to start in early 2020. The new path will be bitumen with sandstone steps.

Community Noticeboard

There is a regular beginners-orientated Hatha yoga class held in the surf club on Monday mornings at 9am. Further details can be found at **Yoga on the Move** here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1601489383402359/>

Anyone interested in forming a **Catho ocean swimming social group**, meeting at 8.30am on Saturdays, is invited to contact Tracey at milly1luke@live.com.

Anyone interested in forming a **Catho beach volleyball social group** is invited to contact Paul at paul.myors@gmail.com

Bakin @ the Bay makes delicious handmade decorated sugar cookies made for all occasions. Find them on Facebook & Instagram @bakinatthebay



Membership renewals

A reminder that membership fees are due from the 1st July each year. The membership renewal form is attached to this newsletter email. Please email membership forms to: **accounts@catherinehillbay.org.au**

Catho Chronicle Mailing List

Anyone interested in receiving future editions of the Catho Chronicle by email, or would like to submit stories or photos, is welcome to email us at: **newsletter@catherinehillbay.org.au**.

For more details and PA meeting minutes, check out our website:
www.catherinehillbay.org.au

and the various Facebook pages for the latest news and great photos:
www.facebook.com/CatherineHillBayTennisCourt
www.facebook.com/CathHillBay
www.facebook.com/CathHillBayLandcare
www.facebook.com/cathoboardriders