

Safety their committment



Steve McInnes

VOLUNTEER Surf Lifesavers gave more than 230,000 hours of their time to patrol our beaches and keep them safe last season.

“I am pleased to report that no lives were lost under our watch,” Surf Life Saving Sydney Northern Beaches President Gordon Lang said.

We all know the pleasures a day at the beach can dish up, but it can be fraught with danger for those with little awareness or understanding of surf safety and survival - even strong swimmers can get into strife.

That is where the Surf Lifesavers play an important role, marking out the safest places to swim with red and yellow flags and keeping a watchful eye on swimmers throughout the day. There are 21 surf life-Saving clubs between Manly and North Palm Beach with a combined membership of more than 14,200.

“Our members come from all walks of life and from all over Sydney but the one thing they have in common is their commitment to professionalism and to providing a safe

beach environment for all beach users,” Lang said.

“Our members collectively committed over 130,000 hours last season patrolling our beaches and a further 100,000 hours of training to be proficient in all aspects of beach management, life-saving, and first-aid. They performed 1437 rescues, attended to 2539 first-aid cases, and administered more than 35,000 preventative actions.”

Last year was officially recognised as the “Year of the Lifesaver” and marked 100 years since the first surf life saving club was established in Australia. Some of the oldest Surf Life Saving clubs exist within the Sydney Northern Beaches branch, with North Steyne (1907), Freshwater (1908), Newport (1909), North Narrabeen (1910), Manly and Collaroy (1911) and Dee Why (1912) being the oldest.

During 2007, the Sydney Northern Beaches Branch saw a record growth in membership with a 12 per cent increase on the previous year.

This increase made the branch the largest in Australia.

● Steve McInnes (pictured) is chief executive officer with Surf Life Saving Sydney Northern Beaches.

■ Picture: MARTIN LANGE - PP228109

Northern beaches surf life-saving calendar at a glance

SURF Life Saving Northern Beaches - Calendar of Events

2008-2009 - (dates and locations are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances).

■ **December 2008**

Thursday

BoSS & BoE&A Meetings 6pm (Dee Why)

Friday

First Aid Competition Rd 1 (Dee Why)

Saturday

Open Carnival (Nth Cronulla)

Sunday

Oceanseries Final (20 Beaches Classic)

Monday 22 Super Surf Camo (Newport)

Tuesday 23

Super Surf Camp (Newport)

■ **January 2009**

Saturday, January 3

NSW Premiership Rd 3 (Redhead)

January 6

Board of Management Meeting 7.30pm (Warriewood)

January 9

First Aid Competition Rd 2 (Queenscliff)

January 10

Queenscliff Open Carnival

January 11

East Coast Masters (Collaroy)

Avalon Ocean Swim

January 16-18

NSW Country Championships (Tacking Point)

January 17

Intercities Carnival (Wanda)

January 18

Young Guns Boat Carnival (Collaroy)

JAC Carnival (Narrabeen Beach)

Mona Vale Ocean Swim (Mona

Vale)

January 20

Branch Executive Meeting 6.30pm (Branch Office)

January 23

First Aid Competition Rd 3 (Manly)

January 24-25

Manly Open Carnival

January 25 - 26

Australia Day Carnival (Freshwater)

January 25

Whale Beach Big Swim

January 31

Open Carnival (Coogee)

■ **February 2009**

February 1

SNB Branch Lifesaving & Boat Championships (Palm Beach)

February 3

Board of Management Meeting

7.30pm (Warriewood)

, **February 7**

SNB Branch Open Championships (Palm Beach)

February 8

SNB Branch Junior Championships (Palm Beach)

February 14 - 15

Backup weekend for Branch Championships

February 17

Branch Executive Meeting 6.30pm (Branch Office)

February 19

BoSS & BoE&A Meetings 6pm (Dee Why)

February 20 - 22

NSW Age Championships (Swansea Belmont)

February 26

NSW Masters Championships (Swansea Belmont)

February 27 - March 1

NSW Open Championships (Swansea Belmont)

■ **March 2009**

March 3

Board of Management Meeting 7.30pm (Warriewood)

March 17-18

Australian Masters Championships (Scarborough)

March 17

Branch Executive Meeting 6.30pm (Branch office)

March 19 - 22

Australian Surf Life Saving Championships (Scarborough)

March 26

BoSS & BoE&A Meetings (Dee Why)

March 29

North Steyne Ocean Swim

■ **April 2009**

April 26

South Curl Curl Ocean Swim