

NEWSLETTER

January 2026

**Kirra Surf Club
Past & Long Serving
Members Association**

[Established 29th November 1978]

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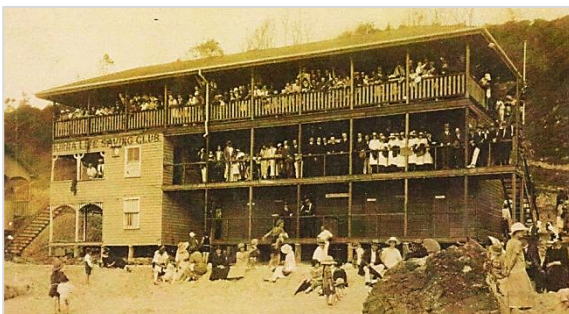
Web: www.kirrasurfclub.com.au

"An Association for all past active and long serving male and female members of the Kirra Surf Life Saving Club"

ONCE A KIRRA MEMBER – ALWAYS A KIRRA MEMBER

Kirra SLSC 'Clubhouse' buildings through 110 years – 1916 to 2026

In year 1918, the first Kirra Surf Lifesaving clubhouse was a small shed; Opening by the Governor of Queensland of Kirra Surf Life Saving Club's second clubhouse in year 1922.... This clubhouse building was extended to three levels in the late 1920s; The second and third Kirra SLSC clubhouse buildings standing proud in year 1935; Kirra SLSC's third clubhouse, project coordinated and built by the Surf Club (with Coolangatta Town Council) is the Kirra Beach Pavilion.... The western annex to the Kirra Beach Pavilion was built and financed by the Kirra Surf Club in 1975/76.



"The Kirra Surf Life Saving Club was established on the 7th January 1916 and is the second oldest surf lifesaving club in Queensland, and one of the longest continuously operating surf lifesaving clubs in Australia"

'It was a Day to Remember!'

16TH ANNUAL KIRRA (BUMPO/ELKE) REMEMBRANCE DAY

“Celebrating the lives of dear friends, surf lifesavers, family members, and supporters of the Kirra Surf Life Saving Club who sadly are no longer with us”

FIRST HELD – YEAR 2010:

First held in year 2010 when several Kirra Surf Club long serving and past members, Life Members, and former Valley Diehards Rugby League players, came together between Christmas and New Year at the licensed Kirra Supporters Club to celebrate the life of Kirra SLSC member Graham (Bumpo) Freeman. Graham was a long-time and popular Kirra SLSC member, Club Captain, competitor, surf boat rower, Kirra Old Boy, and Rugby League player who sadly died too early in life after a long battle with cancer.

Originally organised by long-time Kirra member Ian (Elke) Sommer, the ‘*Bumpo Remembrance Day*’ continued as an annual event of the Surf Club. With the Kirra Surf Club Old Boys Association taking on the role to coordinate the event, it grew to become a day when we ‘*remembered and celebrated*’ the lives of not just Graham (Bumpo) but all Kirra Surf Club members, family and supporters who sadly were no longer with us. Following Ian (Elke) Sommers sudden passing in year 2020, the Kirra Surf Club Old Boys Association at its AGM held in November 2020 determined that this special annual event would forever be known as the ‘*Kirra (Bumpo/Elke) Remembrance Day*’.... ***‘SO THE TRADITION ESTABLISHED IN YEAR 2010 CONTINUES!’***

The Kirra (Bumpo/Elke) Remembrance Day is a special occasion when all Kirra members, family and supporters can come together annually in fellowship to celebrate the lives of those who sadly are no longer with us, and to remember their service to the Kirra Surf Life Saving Club.

HONOUR ROLE – Those associated with their Kirra Surf Life Saving Club who sadly passed in year 2025, include:

- **Milton Rogers:** Bronze Medallion in year 1954 and an active member through the 1950s.
- **Ross (Bundy) Edmonds:** Bronze Medallion in year 1962 and a very popular Kirra member associated with his club for over 60 years.
- **Cameron Leigh-Murray:** Bronze Medallion in the early 1960's and an outstanding clubman, ocean swimmer, surf sports competitor and Australian Champion.
- **Roger Wickham:** Bronze Medallion in year 1958 and one of Kirra's great surf sports ocean swimmer and competitor; Achieved the unique double with Ken Wiles of winning the Australian Junior and Senior Surf Belt Race Championships at Mooloolaba (Belt is showcased with the Club's trophy cabinet); Father of Commonwealth and World 400m and 1500m champion pool swimmer Tracy Wickham.
- **Trevor McHardy:** Bronze Medallion in year 1964 and an excellent ocean swimmer and athletic. Very popular and active member through the 1960s who was also a football player and club administrator for Aussie Rules in Brisbane.
- **Grace Byrnes:** Wife of Kirra legend Graham (Life Member) and mother to son Scott (Life Member); An outstanding supporter of her Kirra Surf Club for almost seventy years along with other long term Kirra member's wives and girlfriends of Grace's era... *'This group of women were known as the Kirra Golden Girls'*.
- **Garth Gear:** Bronze Medallion in year 1975 and who was associated with his surf club for his entire life – Hon Life Member #68/2013; Outstanding junior surf sports competitor and Australian Champion; Garth with his wife Rose (Kirra SLSC Hon Life Governor Member) and their families have made significant contributions to advancing the ideals and performance of their Kirra Surf Club.
- **Kevin Brasch AM:** Bronze Medallion in year 1954; A popular member of the 1950s. Rugby League player for a time with the mighty Valley Diehards; Major contributions to Rugby League in Australia and globally as the chairman of Queensland and Australian Rugby League Boards; Life member of the QRL, ARL, and Norths Devils RLFC.
- **Phillip John Wright:** (known as John), brother of our current surf club Deputy President Ian Wright.
- **Bernie Leary:** Bronze Medallion in year 1976; A popular and active member through the 1970s/80s era; Committee member (Boat Captain) and competitor; Known as *'Water Rat'* who along with his brother Danny (Musk Rat) were outstanding members.
- **Robert (Bob) Beare:** Popular Surf Club supporter and part of the Kirra Family group throughout the 1970s to 1990s era.
- **Rod Sellers:** Whilst not a member of Kirra, he was a good supporter of our Kirra Surf Club. Former Wests Rugby League player who established the Brisbane League Old Boys (BLOBS) on the Gold Coast offering support for past Rugby League players and ex-officials who meet regularly at surf clubs including Kirra on the southern Gold Coast. Rod was a good advocate for the Kirra Old Boys.

ALWAYS REMEMBERED – LEST WE FORGET

“ONCE A KIRRA MEMBER – ALWAYS A KIRRA MEMBER”

Photo Album – 2025 Kirra (Bumpo/Elke) Remembrance Day (28th December 2025)



"Left – The Belt: Kirra SLSC Honorary Life Member (#36/1971) Ken Wiles with Roger Wickham standing together with the belt they used at the Australian Surf Life Saving Championship held at Mooloolaba. Ken won the Open Belt Race and Roger won the Junior Belt Race – The belt is today showcased with the Trophy/Display Cabinet located in the Kirra Supporters Club. Sadly both Ken and Roger are no longer with us, yet their outstanding achievements will be remembered always"

'The annual Kirra (Bumpo/Elke) Remembrance Day is coordinated by the Kirra Surf Club Past & Long Serving Members Association on behalf of all associated with their Kirra Surf Life Saving Club'

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT

The Association has been fortunate to receive the financial backing from *'very generous yet silent sponsors'* who have assisted in offsetting the costs associated with the Remembrance Day. Their generosity has ensured the success of this special annual event of the Association and our Kirra Surf Life Saving Club.



From the inaugural event held in year 2010 up until his unexpected passing in year 2020, long serving Kirra Surf Club member, past Valley Diehards Rugby League Club player, and friend to many, Ian Sommer, generously contributed to the Bumpo Remembrance Day

"Left: Ian (Elke) Sommer in the centre with Kirra mates Jeff Callaghan and Lance English at the year 2019 Bumpo Remembrance Day"

Following 'Elke's' sad passing, Peter (Kel) O'Callaghan, another mighty 'Diehard' who played rugby league with Ian, a valued supporter of our Association, and a regular attendee of the annual Remembrance Day, took up the baton as our *'silent sponsor'*. Peter's son Ben also provided his time to assist in delivering donated kegs to the Supporters Club, ensuring that these were available and chilled for the enjoyment of those attending the event.



Few were aware of this assistance so generously provided initially by Ian and then continued by Peter. Their generosity contributed significantly towards the success and fellowship shared at our annual Kirra (Bumpo/Elke) Remembrance Day. *'A major event of the Kirra Surf Club'*

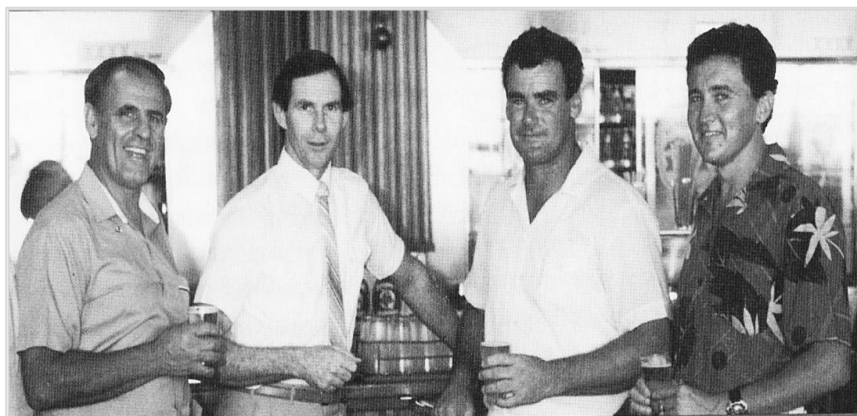
"Left: Peter O'Callaghan with Kirra/Valley Diehards good mates Ron Gurnett and Alan Beauchamp at a Kirra Sports Lunch held at the Pineapple Hotel in Brisbane"

'Words seem never enough!' I know that you join with the Association's committee in acknowledging and thanking our *'silent sponsors'* for their generosity and wonderful support of the Kirra Surf Club Past & Long Serving Members Association and our Kirra Surf Club. *"Peter, thanks for your, Ben and the family support. Wishing you and family the best of health, success and happiness for the years ahead"*.

It is special to have our good mates and long-time Kirra supporters from the Valley Diehards Rugby League Football Club who regularly join us on the Remembrance Day. *'Several Kirra SLSC members/supporters played for the mighty Diehards through the 1970s/1980s era with premierships success in the Brisbane Rugby League competition (pre-NRL era)'*



THANK YOU also to our Kirra SLSC Honorary Life Governor (#4/2012) *'Bob Singleton'* of the Pineapple Hotel for his generous support towards the fellowship enjoyed at the Kirra (Bumpo/Elke) Remembrance Day. Well known and highly regarded within the hospitality industry, Bob has been a long-time supporter of his Kirra Surf Club and a good mate to many who wear the mighty *'Royal Blue and Gold'*.



'A blast from the past!'

"As the then Manager of the Acacia Ridge Hotel, Bob catches up with Kirra mates on a raffle night for the Surf Club at the hotel (mid 1970s era). L-R: Bob Gear; Bob Singleton; Barrie Thorne; and Peter Beauchamp"

SCHOOL AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS – YEAR 2026

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS – YEAR 2026	PUBLIC HOLIDAYS – YEAR 2026
<p><u>Queensland</u></p> <p>Back to school – 27th January 4th April to 20th April 27th June to 12th July 19th September to 4th October End of school year – 18th December 2026</p> <p><u>New South Wales</u></p> <p>Back to school – 27th January 7th April to 17th April 6th July to 17th July 28th September to 9th October End of school year – 18th December 2026</p>	<p><u>Queensland</u></p> <p>Australia Day – Monday 26th January Easter – 3rd/4th/5th/6th April Anzac Day – Saturday 25th April Labour Day – Monday 4th May Royal (Qld) Show – Wednesday 12th August Kings Birthday – Monday 5th October Christmas Day – Friday 25th December Boxing Day – Saturday 26th December Boxing Day (Public Holiday) – Monday 28th December</p>

NOTE THESE DATES – CONFIRMED EVENTS FOR THE ASSOCIATION : YEAR 2026

Annual Kirra Golf Classic	<p>Friday, 29th May 2026 Coolangatta & Tweed Heads Golf Club TEE OFF AT 10:30 Presentations at the Kirra Supporters Club <i>'See advertisement in this Newsletter – Player positions are still available – All welcome'</i></p>
Annual Christmas Reunion of the Association	<p>Friday, 27th November 2026 Pineapple Hotel, Brisbane Commencing from 5:30pm <i>'All welcome – bring a friend'</i></p>
Annual Kirra (Bumpo/Elke) Remembrance Day	<p>Sunday, 27th December 2026 Kirra Supporters Club Commencing from 2:30pm <i>'All welcome – bring a fellow current or past Kirra Surf Club member'</i></p>

Your Association Committee – Who/what are they?

They came together in year 2017 at the Bumpo Remembrance Day, and continue as the 'small Committee' coordinating the activities for the Kirra Surf Club Past & Long Serving Members Association.

At the annual Christmas Reunion of the Association held at the Pineapple Hotel (28th November 2025), those present endorsed the current Committee in their roles for a 'ninth consecutive year'...

- **President:** Peter Beauchamp (Kirra SLSC Hon Life Member #49/1986)
- **Secretary:** Adam Day (Kirra SLSC Hon Life Member #58/1998)
- **Member:** Paul Cameron (Long Serving Honorary Member)

Mark Rogers joined the small Committee for four years during this period and his valued contributions to the Association were very much appreciated.

Staying connected – With over three hundred members currently registered with the Association, staying connected is considered a vital role for the Committee, sharing information on the Surf Club's history and organised events; Association activities; and to seek input and support for the continuing growth of the Kirra Surf Club Past & Long Serving Members Association. *"Keeping the members informed is crucial!"*



Recruiting for the future - A focus on membership recruitment of those past and long serving Surf Club members from the '1990 to 2020 era' is critical to complement our existing membership, and to ensure the Association's sustainability as our older members from earlier eras become less involved.....

"Time is the one constant that catches up with all of us!"

*"A Recruitment Officer for the Association's Committee is a positive step forward.....
any volunteers?"*

Planned Association events – Planning, coordinating, and supporting Association activities and fellowship events such as the Kirra (Bumpo/Elke) Remembrance Day; the annual Kirra Golf Classic (with Peter Kelly and John 'Brashie' Bell); and the Christmas Reunion at the Pineapple Hotel; whilst time consuming the events do produce excellent results in bringing the Association membership together. A Sports Lunch at the Pineapple Hotel could be a possibility for year 2026... *'Any volunteers to coordinate this event?'*

Return to Kirra event/s – This theme provides past Surf Club members an opportunity to remain connected with their Kirra Surf Life Saving Club.... The Association endeavours to support events held throughout the season by the Surf Club at Kirra Beach. Volunteers are always welcome and the support is appreciated by your Surf Club.

Club history – The Association is the 'Guardian of the Surf Club's History'..... Over the past several years a number of new Honour Boards, Trophy/Display Cabinet, and Photographic Displays have been coordinated, financed, and erected by the Association.... *"There are still plenty more Honour Boards and Photo Galleries to be completed!"*

Committee size – The size of the small Association Committee does not need to remain at three members. There is always opportunity for change and growth that can support organisational improvement through renewed input and enthusiasm on the Committee. *"Volunteers to assist with the Association activities are always most welcome."*



"Above Left: The mighty 'Royal Blue and Gold' is showcased at the Association's 47th Christmas Reunion at the Pineapple Hotel; Above Right: Kirra SLSC Honorary Life Members join together in October 2019 for the official unveiling of the Kirra Life Member Honour Board"

ONCE A KIRRA MEMBER - ALWAYS A KIRRA MEMBER



2026 KIRRA GOLF CLASSIC

Supported by the Kirra Surf Club Past & Long Serving Members Association

FRIDAY 29TH MAY 2026

**COOLANGATTA & TWEED HEADS GOLF CLUB
WEST COURSE - TEE TIME FROM 10:32AM
PRESENTATIONS AT KIRRA SUPPORTERS CLUB
FROM 4:30PM (ALL WELCOME)**

'Player positions open to current/past members, family and supporters of the Kirra Surf Club and the Association'

'Book now!! There is plenty of accommodation available for Friday 29th May 2026 in Kirra/Coolangatta area and just walking distance to your Kirra Surf Club'



- # Forty (40) player positions....and nineteen (19) carts have been booked
- # Presentations and fellowship to be held at the Kirra Supporters Club
- # TROPHIES for 'Best Pair' and the 'Longest Drive' and 'Nearest to the Pin'
- # The famous 'ELKE' trophy to be presented to the Best Pairs
- # Additional awards to be presented for exceptional performances!!
- # Friday evenings at the Kirra Supporters Club is a 'Market Raffles Night'
- # Surf Club 'dormitory' available for Life Members and past Kirra Members
- # Depart early if travelling from Brisbane or the Sunshine Coast (the M1 can be busy)

Thinking of attending, than email supporterssecretary@kirraslsc.com to confirm your interest

What is on at the popular Kirra Supporters Club?

BREAKFAST
New menu
www.kirrabeachsurfclub.com

Kirra Beach
Open from 8am
Saturday & Sunday

Kirra Beach
SURF CLUB - EST 1916

FRIENDS

LUNCH PARTY

GOOD TIMES

Surf Club Raffles
Saturday & Sunday From 12:30pm

Kirra Beach
SURF CLUB - EST 1916

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FRIENDS

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GOOD TIMES

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GOOD TIMES

'Kirra SLSC – Our History and Traditions are important!'

'History and Traditions' are important to any institution or voluntary organisation because they provide a sense of identity and helps those in such organisations to understand the past through connecting to their roots. They foster social cohesion, preserves cultural heritage, and offer emotional connections to those who came before us. By valuing and acknowledging our 'History and Traditions' and honouring those who came before us, we have the opportunity to ensure the continuity of our Surf Club's core cultural values whilst its social identity is shared with those who follow into the future.

Our 'History and Traditions' provide a sense of purpose and belonging, and helps to guide us in making decisions about the future. Whilst the original and fundamental purpose of our origin continues to evolve and change, valuing our 'History and Traditions' assist in laying the framework for making decisions that reflect our values, beliefs and customs, and those constantly evolving practices relevant to providing surf lifesaving community frontline operations and member services.

Acknowledging our 'History and Traditions' assists us in remaining true to who and why we are blessed to be a part of this unique organisation, the Kirra Surf Life Saving Club. They remind us of the importance as to why we commit to preserving our culture that is to be shared with current and future generations of Surf Club members, administrators, and decision makers.

Those who came before us, who are here with us today, and the many who will follow into the future, are the 'Custodians of our Kirra Surf Lifesaving Club'. During our brief moment of time, however short it may be, we have an obligation to preserve the 'History and Traditions' of the past, whilst ensuring a sustainable and successful pathway forward for our Surf Club through an ever changing future.

Our 'History and Traditions' play a significant role in shaping our future cultural identity, values, beliefs and practices. It is the means by which we accept our responsibility to pass on the organisation's knowledge, customs, and rituals from one generation to the next.

In today's rapidly changing world, it is so important to understand the significance of our 'History and Traditions' and why they are crucial in preserving our heritage, thereby guaranteeing forever that we remain connected to our origins. ***'This ensures that we will always remember who we are, where we came from, and why we are here!'*** We are of the Kirra Surf Life Saving Club that was established on the 7th January 1916, the second oldest surf lifesaving club in Queensland, and one of the longest continuously operating surf lifesaving clubs in this great country of Australia.



"Above: Kirra Krocs gather together for Christmas cheer at their favourite 'Coffee Shop – Saltys'. A group of Kirra/Coolangatta locals and Surf Club members who regularly enjoy their early morning ocean swims together throughout the year off Kirra Beach, followed by a hot coffee and chat with mates at Saltys.... Community spirit and friendships showcased at Kirra Beach!"

STOP THE PRESS!! STOP THE PRESS!!

Australia Day 'Return to Kirra' major event for past and current members, family and supporters of the Kirra Surf Club to be held at Kirra Beach. The Surf Club will host a 'Fun Day' including jumping castle, beach activities, BBQ, and much more from 9am – and from 12pm the Kirra Supporters Club will keep the action going through an afternoon of activities, food specials, and live music.

'SURE IS THE FUN PLACE TO BE ON AUSTRALIA DAY!'

KIRRA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

(Established 1916)

Life Members (Inaugural) Reunion Dinner held Sunday, 1st May 1994 in the Club Old Boys Lounge



LIFE MEMBERS

STANDING (left to right): Bob Littler, Trevor Klingner, Peter Beauchamp, Scott Byrnes, Ron Gurnett, Trevor Wardrobe, Ralph Ford-Johnson, Keith Hamilton, Clive Jones, Ken Meehan, Ken Wiles, Arch Nicholson, Barry Mullins, Steve Barry, John Pidgeon, Bob Gear, Stan Hilton, Ron Halpin, Barry Cameron.
SITTING (left to right): Barrie Thorne, Max Klingner, Rick Sellwood, Dot Kopittke, Doug Brockhurst, Peter Wippell.
ABSENT: Ged Moore, Lil Ryan, Les Sellwood, Joe Doniger, Earle Smith.

“Above: The inaugural reunion of Kirra SLSC Honorary Life Members held in the ‘Blue Room – Kirra Old Boys Lounge’ on the 1st May 1994. Of the twenty-five Life Members who attended plus the five who were absent on the day some thirty-two years ago, only eleven are still with us today in year 2026..... We will always remember their friendship and service!”

Thank you for your continuing support of the Kirra Surf Club Past & Long Serving Members Association and our Kirra Surf Life Saving Club – Wishing you and yours a healthy, successful and happy Year 2026.

Committee: Peter Beauchamp (President); Adam Day (Secretary); Paul Cameron (Member)