



# The Mine

Newsletter of Point Leo SLSC

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## August 2020 Edition

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## Goodbye.... and, Welcome Back!

After four years of service to our club as President, Simon Merrigan has decided to hand the reins over. On behalf of all members, thank you Simon for your contribution in bringing the club to its position of strength. During Simon’s tenure, he has set a tone of collaboration that has encouraged and enabled so many great projects, and contributed to Point Leo SLSC being a welcoming, inclusive and rewarding club to be a member of. This collaborative approach has been applied to major events and initiatives including the team that now manages the Boxing Day swim. Some of the great initiatives that have taken place over Simon’s four years include a revamped Presentation Night, an active club social media presence, support for development of young people with the Lifechanger program, linkages to the community through the School Surf Aware Program, a reinvigoration of the JSLP “nipper” program achieving record numbers and a recommencement of the dormant boat section including sponsorship of a new boat.

Over Simon’s time, Point Leo SLSC has formed and strengthened a partnership with the Balnarring and District Branch of the Bendigo Bank, working together on projects that benefit the community. With regards to our core function of protecting our beach going community,



*Michael Treadwell and Simon Merrigan donning big smiles at the successful Boxing Day Classic Swim in 2019.*

there has also been a consistent improvement in our patrol scores on audit and increased patrol sizes with full awards across the whole season.

On a personal level, Simon is part of the dedicated team on the clubhouse and facilities planning project and he has liaised with local, state and federal government resulting in what may be our biggest single fundraising amount for the building and facility upgrades. Simon will continue contributing to our club on the committee as Vice President Funding and Sponsorship and as a member of the building future projects subcommittee.

Julia O’Shaughnessy  
Incoming President

## Welcome from our President

Firstly, congratulations to all nominated for Lifesaving Victoria Awards of Excellence. Super congratulations to Matthew Callaghan, Tamara Brawn and Rhys Cole for receiving the Award of Excellence in their nominated category. An incredible personal achievement and fabulous for our club. And to Sarah-Jo Mason, Adam Lipszyc and Brittany Morgenthaler, our other beautiful finalists - to be nominated is well deserved recognition for your achievements in lifesaving. So, well done despite the outcome!

Point Leo SLSC is such an open, welcoming and inclusive club. We truly have something special. The energy, enthusiasm and commitment of club members to Lifesaving and Point Leo SLSC is extraordinary and we are doing so much more than lifesaving operations including delivering exciting and innovative programs. There is so much passion within the club, and it is this passion that inspired me to take on the role of President.

This season brings uncertainty and new challenges. But as a club, we will continue to strengthen our culture, and our values. We will continue our collective commitment to lifesaving and to our Point Leo SLSC. We will continue to connect with each other and our community. And we will continue to communicate, collaborate and support each other in this very strange and difficult time.

This season, we have implemented a new committee structure with clearly defined roles. The new committee consists of a fabulous bunch of people - driven, committed and a lot of fun. The committee is comprised of a diverse blend of experience, youth and fresh faces, and I am so excited to be collaborating with this passionate group of people in delivering in the best interests of Point Leo SLSC. The



*Our wonderful incoming President, Julia O'Shaughnessy*

Committee acknowledges that there are a number of important activities to be performed and managed across the various portfolios of the Point Leo SLSC to ensure efficient and successful operations. So, accompanying the new committee structure is a long list of club activity roles. I urge you to get involved; there are plenty of opportunities across all areas to find something that will interest and inspire you. Please contact me or any of the committee members if you feel like you would like to contribute or be involved in any way. Involvement is rewarding and can be much fun.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this season may look very different from

those in the past, but rest assured we have a dedicated Pandemic Team working with LSV dealing with Covid-19 related issues and the impact on our club and operations. Each section of the club is also developing strategies to respond to the many possible scenarios and will continue to evaluate these strategies as we draw closer to the opening of the season.

Please be kind to yourself in this incredibly tough time and let's look forward to when we can be back together on the beach again.

Stay well and stay safe.

Julia O'Shaughnessy  
Incoming President

## Point Leo and Aussie Rules Football

In the early days of the Club a year was very much broken down into two seasons – summer and lifesaving, and winter and winter sports, principally Aussie Rules footy. In summer, water polo was also played and over winter a number of members were involved with hockey and rugby. It is interesting to reflect on Leo and footy and there are certainly some interesting stories to be told.



*Mark Manning (Point Leo) wins a ruck duel in a mid-1960s surf clubs lightning premiership. Photo credit: R. Batchelor*



*With matching umbrellas, goal umpire (and current Bobbas member) Brett Hart stylishly signals a goal at the July 1966 Portsea-Leo game, held at Flinders Oval.*

*Photo credit: R. Batchelor*

Regarding the VFL (later re-named the AFL), the names Martello, Woolley, McKellar spring to mind. Alan Martello is the obvious highlight – 224 games with Hawthorn, 32 games with Richmond, five Grand Finals for three flags and a Victorian representative. Doug Woolley played six games with North Melbourne firsts and a handful with Hawthorn seconds, and Allan McKellar had 45 games with Richmond and a few with Sydney. Alf Treadwell and Phil Boyce played in a premierships winning side with Essendon u18's.

Other good footballers played with Camberwell in the VFA and locally in the Nepean League with Hastings and Crib Point, in the Victorian Amateurs, and later on with Templestowe in the Diamond Valley League.

It is particularly interesting to look back at the football games that Leo participated in as the club – primarily the Point Leo v. Portsea matches held annually, the inter club Lightning Premiership competition held for a few years at Little River and also the odd occasions that Leo played other clubs.

The Leo versus Portsea matches were played on the ovals at Sorrento, Portsea and Flinders and were treated quite seriously, and played very fiercely with

no holds barred. They were generally played on a Sunday, with many on both sides having played with their regular clubs on the day before, so there were quite a few sore people arriving at work, at school or university on Monday.

Reading the reports of the games in the Mine there are mentions of broken ribs, lacerations to the mouth, sprained ankles, strained knees and this only amongst the Leo team. No ring-ins were allowed although we reckon that this rule was bent on occasions. John Russell from Torquay claims he played for Leo in a game against Lorne – not a bad footballer either!

Whilst it was always competitive, once the games were over everyone relaxed and had a drink or two together. It was noted that in one of the latter games “it was good to see Leo get off to a good start this year. Perhaps it was because of the BAN THE BOOZE before the game rule being enforced”. There was always a good crowd watching the game, not only associated with the clubs – quite a few locals would drop by to watch the fun and games. Sadly, no VFL club talent scouts though.

Looking at the match reports in the Mine of the day it was obvious that Blab Waters, Butch Rydberg and Rick Everist

of Leo and Goofy Phelan, Terry Smith and Des Glynn of Portsea were amongst the enforcers. All good natured of course.

Point Lonsdale SLSC organized the Lightning Premiership games at the Little River oval over a period of six years. It was well supported by the clubs – in 1966 The Victorian Surfer magazine noted that 14 clubs fielded teams. It was strictly “Bronze Medallion Holders Only” but there were always ring-ins and they were ordered off the field. There were a number of VFL and VFA footballers who were legitimate – the standard was high and they were pretty rugged affairs bordering on spiteful at times.

Whilst Leo won more games against Portsea than we lost, the club's overall record in the Lightning Premiership wasn't that good. We had our priorities right, it seems.

It was the association between Leo and the Hartwell Pressys a club with two teams in the very strong Eastern Suburban Protestant Churches Association that stood out in those early days. It all began in the late fifties and in 1960 when the Pressys won the Premiership there were five Leo members in the team. This built up over the next ten to fifteen years and Geoff James has provided a list of 35 names of Leo members who played for the mighty Pressys. It is worthwhile noting that of the 35, seven have unfortunately passed away but most of the balance still remain aware of Club activities and progress through contact with the Bobbas.

In 2005 at the Leo 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration when the initial inductees to the Club Hall of Fame were announced, Peter Quinn who captained/coached the Pressys remarked to me that he thought all inductees had played footy with Hartwell Pressys. He was close, Frank Christian and Gary Tierney didn't, but Gary Richardson, Peter Francis, Damien

Flouch, Geoff Waters, Garry Rydberg and Ron Murray did. Not a bad line-up!

Unfortunately, with all of that Leo talent, and despite playing in many finals the Pressys did not win another Flag – had a lot of fun though! They were different days back then. Generally, most of us finished the life saving season of patrols and carnivals at Easter, and packed up, returned home and played with the Pressys on the following Saturday, probably not having kicked a footy up till then.

And much of this activity was pre 10 o'clock closing time – there was no club bar for after match festivities so, at the end of the game, it was quick change into civvies and down to the nearest pub for a quiet drink before closing time at 6pm. Forget the post-game cool down, warm shower, after match summaries, there was no time for these modern trivial matters. And before colour TV, internet, social media, mobile phones, laptops etc – surf lifesaving and footy kept us going!

Alan Forster, a joint co-founder of Point Leo SLSC back in 1955 was a very good VFA footballer and a wonderful entrepreneurial organizer. Through his VFL and VFA contacts and with local support we had a few games of footy at Flinders that were not taken too seriously but were great for creating the Leo club culture that has been nourished and still exists today.

After the playing days were finished the association with Aussie Rules was continued by regularly attending the Grand Finals together at the MCG. Meeting before the game with a BBQ in the carpark or at the Vacluse Hotel in Richmond and then finishing up back at the Vacluse after the game. There are some good stories there! And now, each year the Bobbas have a luncheon at Kooyong LTC on the Thursday before the Grand Final, in order to mark the occasion.

John Horwood

## Disabled Surfing Says Thanks

Disabled Surfing Australia (DSA) commenced at Point Leo in 2012 and has run every year since.

Point Leo Surf Lifesaving Club and the Point Leo Foreshore Reserve have strongly supported and resourced every DSA Event.

The DSA and Lifesaving share similar objectives of facilitating all people to enjoy our beaches in safety.

On the DSA Surfing Days, Leo members and DSA helpers arrive at 7am to set up the extensive Clubhouse facilities and beach areas necessary to support over 120 people with various and often severe disabilities to safely go out in the surf and ride waves.

It takes 400 volunteers to ensure the safety of these Disabled Surfers.

Recently the DSA made a low-key, Lockdown appropriate presentation of photo-boards recognising the contribution of the Lifesaving Club and Foreshore Committee.

Andrew Gibson

## Our Athletes During Lockdown

We asked some members of our senior competition team to reflect on their exercise and training regimes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“With the current restrictions on group exercising and closure of pools, I have taken this as an opportunity to find other ways to keep fit during this pandemic. I have been trying to get out for a surf almost every day, no matter the conditions to keep my paddling fitness and build new skills in different surf conditions. When conditions aren't really been surfable, I've been trying to get out on a ski or board for some paddles as much as I can down at Pt Leo, which I've really been enjoying. I've also found going for long walks around the peninsula with the dogs or a friend as well as the occasional run really fun and something different. Although it's not quite the type of winter training I was expecting this year, I feel I will be more motivated and excited to get back into group training/competitions in the summer and keen for a great season!”

Isabella Austin



DSA's John Bowers and Bill Hallett present Certificates of Thanks to Foreshore Reserve Manager, Tony Walkington and Lifesaver Andrew Gibson, while maintaining social distancing.

“This winter has been one of a kind with the restrictions on group exercising, however I have found this to be a great opportunity to develop my motivation and skills. I have enjoyed going for relatively long runs (approx. 45 mins) and improving in simple body weight exercises. (e.g pushups, planks, chin

ups, sit ups, weights and using resistance bands). With the suspension of many winter sports I have tried to get outdoors as much as possible as a replacement. This included going for a kick of the footy, surfing and mountain biking at Arthur's Seat, which I have thoroughly enjoyed. While it's been a difficult time for all, I believe we all benefit physically and mentally from group exercise and so I can't wait to get back to Leo for the 2020/2021 season and confident it will be even more enjoyable this summer."

Harry Atkins

"Over this period it's been pretty tricky to stay consistent with training and exercise. Despite this though, I've found it's been really beneficial in learning to improvise and get creative, and I've managed to put together a small makeshift gym at home (now that it's finished I might get lazy and stop driving to the actual gym... handy having one out your front door). In terms of scheduled group training, it has been sad to not be able to take part in this with the close knit group we have. However, it's meant I've been able to keep fit through surfing and spend a lot of time doing this, which I love. I believe during this time everyone needs to take advantage of any kind to get the exercise that they can, and just have fun and release those endorphins!"

Lachie Robinson

"During the first lockdown I continued to swim, ski and board in the ocean until it became too cold for swimming. I was really lucky to have my swimming coach making new dry land sessions every day for my squad until we were able to go back, which included different body weight exercises and running. Once the restrictions started to lift I went back to swimming in the pool 4-5 sessions a week. This was super challenging because of the limits in numbers allowed in the pool at one time - I only had morning sessions during the weekdays, these started at 4:45am. I believe this has been a real eye opener and made me a lot more resilient for the

future. With the new lockdown I have just started a new music course so I've had to try and fit exercise around that. By achieving that I've been trying to board or ski when I have enough time otherwise I try to do a dry land session that my swimming coach has set on the other days. I hope everyone else has had the motivation to go out and do something active nearly every day while keeping safe!"

Cait Robinson

"This year with all the restrictions on group exercise has been tough. However I have tried to maintain my skills and fitness. I have tried to surf as much as possible and even begun to surf properly again (on a surfboard), which has been something I haven't done in ages. I have also been trying to get out and go on long ski or board paddles. It has been a difficult time for all of us but getting outside as much as we can is the best thing we can do. I'm looking forward to returning to Leo for the 2020/21 season. It will be the best one yet."

Nat Clarke

## Youth Development – LSVj Program

Two of our emerging leaders, Nat Clarke and Madison Clark, have successfully been accepted to Life Saving Victoria's LSVj Advisory Committee, an initiative with the aim to engage youth members and provide a platform for them to discuss what they want, need and hope from being involved in lifesaving.

Madison shares her journey with our Pt Leo SLSC:

*I started nippers as an U7 (11 years ago), and have progressed through to my SRC and Bronze Medallion. As a young nipper I was petrified of the surf, I would sit on the beach and cry for some of the sessions.*

*Throughout nippers I was mentored by the older water safety and supported to*

*do my best. I completed my nipper experience and received my Surf Rescue Certificate and Sorrento Surf Lifesaving club.*

*My family and I decided that Pt Leo was a better fit for us, and have now been members here for 3 seasons.*



*Madison Clark, who represents Pt Leo SLSC along with Nat Clarke on the LSVj committee.*

*I completed my Bronze Medallion, and have taken up the role of assistant age group manager for the U/13.*

*I aspire to be a mentor for the younger generation, and to help and support them. This coming season, I will be the inaugural Vice President - Youth Development of our club, where I will educate, mentor and lead our youth members.*

We can't wait to see the leaders that Nat and Mads develop into at our club!

## Patrol from the Sky

The opportunity to join the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service was something that never crossed my mind until I saw a circular that was recruiting mid 2018.

I thought why not give it a go?



Our very own Rhys Cole (centre) with other crew members of the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service.

Photo credit: The Herald Sun, Jake Nowakowski.

The selection process included various fitness testing such as running and swimming as well as interviews. After successfully being selected to join the crew, training commenced.

A highlight throughout the training for me was HUET (Helicopter Underwater Escape Training), which is used to simulate a ditching in water. I got buckled into a helicopter cabin blindfolded and flipped upside down into the water. I then egressed to the surface safely. (Don't worry its completely safe! If I got into trouble, instructors in the pool are able to assist.)

The primary base for Lifesaver 30 (Westpac Rescue Helicopter) is Barwon Heads airport. From here we fly coastal patrols and can be called out at any time on a mission, such as a search and/or rescue.

The highly trained crew onboard the helicopter consists of a Pilot, Winch Operator and Rescue Crewman; we all work well as a team.

I get to work with a great bunch of people who are dedicated to making an impact on the community in times of need.

Next time you see us fly by, give us a wave!

Rhys Cole

## Expressions of Interest: Boaties

The Boat Section is calling for Expressions of Interest from members

Do yourself a favour and give it a go! Technique and skills tuition provided for all debutants.



This could be YOU! Have a go, and see what you think - you just might love it.

considering an opportunity to row or sweep this season. River or surf experience preferred, however not essential.

Age categories range from U19, U23, Reserve, Open and Masters (30+ years).

If you're unsure, Rowing & Sweeping 'Come & Try' sessions will be available when COVID restrictions permit.

If you want to be part of a dynamic and exciting section.....apply now!

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