

PAT DILLON

GARIE SLSC

Challenges of becoming one of the first female life savers

I was most likely too naïve to realize the implications of what we were doing at the time, I did my bronze with a group of friends, all female, in 83-84 season. Poor Frank Ridley from North Cronulla, the man was a saint to put up with us, I still don't know how he managed to get us to stop the shenanigans for a minute or two to listen to him, anyway, he did! He also trained us on the belt and reel, and managed to get us through the course. If you're doing your bronze today be thankful that it is no longer part of the curriculum.

Sure, in the early years there were a few old stalwarts who were horrified that females would be walking through their hallowed halls as full members, and on occasions yes, could be very vocal about their dislike of the situation, but time stops for no one, and the true champions of females coming up through the movement were also old stalwarts, who happened to be forward thinking and strongly supported the change, as they saw it for what it was, forward movement.

I moved to Garie in the 90's, I felt little resistance because I was a female. At a small club, no one really cared if you wore a skirt, as long as you could roll your sleeves up and work as part of a team. I have held the positions of Patrol Captain, Treasurer, Carnival organiser, Deputy President, and at the moment am Director of Administration. Garie is a great little club, and I'm really very proud of the calibre of the women in our club, and despite some male preconceptions, we agree on practically everything. (even sneaking new furniture in) I see their involvement into the future as fundamental to our sustainability.

Highlights

Winning SLS Sydney Club of the year, and watching our club captain Jessika Hay win SLS Sydney Lifesaver of the year. I have watched Jess come up through nippers, yet again a young female making her mark.

As a carnival organiser, every novice sweeps event at the Garie Dash, always the best part of the day, and I'm sure a lot of people who were present would agree. If I remember correctly one year we stood on the beach and watched Rebecca Hamilton have her very first go at the sweep oar in a competition, hilarious! She's obviously improved out of stratosphere since that day and has gone on to be a tough competitor, champion and ambassador for females in the sport. I just wish we had filmed it for her.

How can Lifesaving improve to include women?

I think that we are pretty much there now, there is a wide chasm between lifesaving 40 years ago and now, and if anything, my advice to younger females in the movement would be that the glass ceiling has been smashed and the sky is now the limit, so go for it girls! If you want to change policy, you have to be where policies are made, and you can be.



RECORD OF PATRICIA DILLON'S SERVICE AT GARIE SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Patricia joined Garie SLSC on 2-10-1994 as an AWARD MEMBER. Although holding a BRONZE MEDALLION which was gained in Season 1983-1984 at Nth Cronulla SLSC, was not available to be in a Beach Patrol because of having small children to care for. However she stepped in when the First-Aid Officer role was vacated.

In Season 1995-1996 Pat became an ACTIVE SENIOR MEMBER and commenced patrols while at the same time held the office of First-Aid Officer. Pat was also a keen competitor and was runner-up in the Senior Girls Beach Sprint and the Senior Girls Flags.

In Season 1996-1997 held the First-Aid Officer position, was an Active Senior on patrol and was also on the Judiciary Committee.

In Season 1997-1998 Pat was on patrol, First-Aid Officer, on the Judiciary Committee and became involved with the Bundeena Festival Committee who wished to hold a Surf Boat Carnival and showcase Nipper events on their local Horderns Beach.

In Season 1998-1999 Pat was doing patrols, was on the Appeals Committee, was First-Aid Officer for a half season then became TREASURER and was part of the original "Garie Dash" Boat & Nipper carnival to be held at Bundeena on 15-11-1998.

In Season 1999-2000 due to the workload, Pat reverted to AWARD MEMBER while organizing the next Garie Dash as the CLUB CARNIVAL ORGANIZER.

In Season 2000-2001 Pat was TREASURER, CARNIVAL ORGANIZER, and attended the Seminars along with Rita Taylor and Dave Dillon to learn about the new GST reporting that Surf Clubs had to report on.

In Season 2000-2001 became an ACTIVE SENIOR again and obtained her Patrol Efficiency whilst still being TREASURER and CARNIVAL ORGANIZER.

In Season 2001-2002 still held the same club positions and gained Patrol Efficiencies in TWO patrols as there was a shortage of patrolling members.

In Season 2002-2003 Pat was TREASURER, PATROLLING MEMBER, CARNIVAL ORGANIZER and became involved with the Social side of the club activities by starting up a popular Whale Watching event. At the Club's Presentation Night, Pat was awarded the CLUBMAN OF THE YEAR.

In Season 2003-2004 Pat was granted LONG SERVICE MEMBER status whilst still being an ACTIVE SENIOR PATROL MEMBER and TREASURER. She also gained the Patrol Efficiency.

In Season 2004-2005 Pat was an Active Senior, Treasurer. Carnival Organizer and Team Manager. She was given the BILL TAPP AWARD at Presentation Night.

In Season 2005-2006 Pat had completed 7 years as Treasurer, held the positions of Carnival Organizer, Team Manager, and Active Patrol Member. At awards time, she gained the SILVER MEDALLION PATROL CAPTAIN, the SPINAL MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATE and the OVER 100 HOURS PATROL AWARD.

In Season 2006-2007 Pat organized teams for Cricket Matches between Garie SLSC and Bundeena Fire Brigade members. At the same time she gained her Patrol Efficiency. Came 3rd in the Female Sprint, the Female Surf Race and the Female Beach Flags. Still organized the Garie Dash Carnival, acted as Race Secretary jointly with two others and gained the PATROL SERVICE AWARD (20 YEARS).

In Season 2007-2008 was still Carnival Organizer, Team Manager, Patrol Captain (Patrol No.5), gained the Patrol Efficiency, Gained the Over 100 Hours Patrol Award, was on the Membership Committee and then found time to form a tentative LADIES AUXILIARY.

In Season 2008-2009 Pat was awarded the **NATIONAL MEDAL** granted to very few members. She then was granted Distinguished Long Service Membership of Garie SLSC. Pat still managed to gain Patrol Efficiency, the First Aid Certificate, was also Patrol Captain and Carnival Organizer & Team Manager.

In Season 2009-2010 Pat was still Patrol Captain, Carnival Organizer & Team Manager. She also gained Patrol Efficiency, 3rd place in Female Sprint, Female Flags, gained the DEFIBRILLATION CERTIFICATE and became the DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF GARIE SLSC.

In Season 2010-2011 was still Carnival Organizer & Team Manager, gained Patrol Efficiency, was Patrol Captain and obtained the A.R.T.C. (Advanced Rescue Techniques Certificate). Presented with the BILL TAPP AWARD at Presentation Night.

In Season 2011-2012 Still Carnival Organizer & Team Manager, Deputy President, Patrol Captain, gained Patrol Efficiency and was made CLUBMAN OF THE YEAR at Presentation Night.

In Season 2012-2013 Still DEPUTY PRESIDENT, Carnival Organizer & Team Manager.

In Season 2013-2014 again still Deputy President and Carnival Organizer & Team Manager.

In Season 2014-2015 **(No printed records provided to me regarding Office Bearers) Not in any Annual Reports.**

In Season 2015-2016 Pat stood down as Deputy President. The last Garie Dash was discontinued due to lack of members and carnival venue facilities. Club underwent major upheaval.

In Season 2016-2017 due to Pat's determined efforts, the club rallied and Pat became the CLUB SECRETARY and has succeeded in finding members to fill most of the vacant Club Management Positions and has pulled the club back from the brink of disbanding.

In Season 2016 2017 Pat also won SLS Sydney's Administrator of the year.