



ARMADALE MASTERS SWIMMING

CLUB NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2022

CLUB CONTACTS

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Secretary	Rowena Burch	0415 192 373
Treasurer	Hans Vosbergen	0439 998 564
Head Coach/Coordinator	TBC	

Presidents AGM Report 2022

Welcome everyone to our 2022 AGM.

Fortunately, we were limited with Covid interruptions over the last twelve months which allowed us to enjoy our swimming, both in the pool and open water, except for tomorrow's Jetty to Jetty, which has been cancelled, and social events including another successful and enjoyable Presentation night.

On the swimming side, we have good membership numbers which for the first time had the club go past the 50-member number, settled in the new year to around 40. While our membership numbers were up, our training attendance numbers continued to vary, especially during winter. The club has continued to offer opportunities for swimmers to train with our weeknights and Saturdays, our Emeralds for the early morning crew, Endurance swimming, special training sessions (thanks Jeff) and competitions.

We had consistent numbers for club championships and the regular OWS swimmers competing in the WOW swims. The LiveLighter Club Championship pool comp participation numbers were down, however this seems to be a common theme across a lot of Master's clubs and there some outstanding Endurance efforts.

Thank you to Fettes and Alex for the Xmas Fun Day.

We also had great representation in the Rotto swim including media coverage for both real and virtual with mixed results. Congratulations to everyone on having a go, regardless of the result.

On the financial side, the club continues to remain in a financially sound position. The major financial expenditure for the year included design costs and subsidising our new club bathers and trophy cabinet. We continued our fundraising efforts with a successful sausage sizzle and funding opportunities through MSWA, MSA and local government initiatives. Most recently we have applied for \$1000 grant through MSA Club Grants program.

MSWA run a monthly council of clubs' meeting that keeps us up to date, thank you to Rowena for being our delegate.

The club is also continues to be well represented in the officiating ranks with Row, Gill, and Heather Jeps.

We continue our good working relationship with the Armadale Fitness and Aquatic Centre, thank you to our Liaison Officer Hans.

This year we started to work with the Armadale Kelmscott Swimming Club which resulted is us being able to share the trophy cabinet and the use, at no cost, of the lane dividers. Thank you to Patti and the AKSC committee.

Club communication continues via our various social media channels including the website, Facebook page, Newsletter and Pow Wow messenger. Thank you to Alex and Yvonne for their efforts in getting the monthly Newsletter out.

A big thank to the Backroom Boys, Graham H and Jeff, for all the work they do behind the scenes, thank you Gents.

Thank you to the committee for your help and support over the last twelve months.

Looking forward to another year of fun, fitness and friendship.

Keep swimming!

Cheers,

Colin.

CAPTAINS REPORT

2021 Club Captain's Report

2021 commenced, as always, halfway through the open water swimming season. Congratulations to all who took part, and special congratulations to Gillian Caruso on her age group series win. Gillian joined Charles Croft as winners of the Armadale Open Water Swimming Trophy.

We were fortunate in WA to be relatively unaffected by Covid and enjoyed pool competitions throughout the year. Whilst attendance at carnivals by Armadale members has declined sharply, we still had some excellent performances, particularly from Sarah Carr who notched up several state records. Entry to carnivals is now entirely online by individual swimmers, rather than collation by the Captain. Congratulations to Charles Croft and Sarah Carr on winning the Pool Competition Swimmer trophy.

Our Club Championships were keenly contested by a regular group of swimmers. The women's competition was particularly tight with the lead changing several times throughout the year, whilst the men had an early leader. Congratulations to Gillian Caruso and Graham Hicks on winning the competition for 2021.

2021 saw Armadale have one of our best performances in the national Vorgee Endurance 1000 competition. We came 7th in the nation and 2nd in the state! Well done to every one who competed, especially those who racked up all 62 swims (Sarah Carr and Alex Holt). Congratulations to our Armadale Endurance Trophy winners – Sarah and Alex as joint first place, and Charles in first for the men.

The Club Swimmer of the Year combines all four of the above with Charles and Gillian taking home the top prizes.

The coming year promises to be interesting with Covid finally impacting our state. At this stage, most events are able to continue, although some such as the Jetty to Jetty have unfortunately been cancelled. The postponed Australian Masters Games are set to go ahead at the end of April, and swimmers from WA will at last be able to attend the National Championships.

It would be wonderful to see more swimmers having a go at various club activities this year. Talk to your club captain or coaches if you are interested!

Fremantle Live Lighter Club Challenge

Looking up the challenge after club champs and pit yourself against swimmers from other clubs?

When: 27 March 2022

What: 50m in each stroke plus relays.

Where: Fremantle Leisure Centre

Perks: Freo Fins are known for putting on an end of carnival meal like no other, COVID restrictions depending of course.

Competition: Armadale Pool Competition Swimmer trophy at the end of year function, club, state or national records if you are so inclined (but totally okay if you're not!)

Entries and more information: <https://mswa.asn.au/2022/02/16/fremantle-livelighter-club-challenge/>

Masters Swimming WA State Championships

An event for everyone - whether you are ready to leave the competition chasing your pelican dust, or just starting out.

When: 2 and 3 April 2022

What: Long Course (50m pool) events in 50m, 100m, and 200m for each stroke, 200 individual medley, plus relays.

Where: HBF Stadium, Mount Claremont

Perks: Feel like an Olympian!

Competition: Armadale Pool Competition Swimmer trophy at the end of year function, club, state or national records if you are so inclined (but totally okay if you're not!)

Entries and more information: <https://mswa.asn.au/2022/03/10/masters-swimming-wa-state-long-course-championships/>

If you are interested in swimming any of these events, but aren't sure about entry times, or if your stroke is a little suspect, please speak to one of your coaches. We also have Gillian, Heather Jeps, and Rowie who are all experienced technical officials and can help you out too.

Happy Swimming!

Captain Rowie

CONGRATULATIONS TO JENNIFER FOR THIS VERY SPECIAL AWARD

The Club welcomed its newest Life Member on Saturday at the Annual General Meeting. Jennifer met all the criteria required which included 30 years of active service to the club including being a swimmer, committee member and volunteering, general attitude reflecting a dedication to the club and being an outstanding role model.



ROTTNEST SWIM Team name "Old with Attitude" Liz, Linda, Fettes, Graham, Paddler Paul, Boat skipper Mike.

A Soggy Saga ----- About: Being so near and yet so far.

'If you have not reached the 18 km by 2.30 pm you must head straight for Rottnest with all swimmers on board.

Repeat: the race will be abandoned for you if you have not reached....

The Race is Abandoned for all swimmers who have not reached the 17 km by' came the dreaded call over the radio.

Quick calculations showed we could do it.

We put in our fastest swimmer; ex **Senior** State Swimming Champion, Graham Cragg, **now** all of 67 years of age.

Another call over the radio. 'Here is an upgrade of our previous announcement. The distance and time is changed. If you have not reached the 17 kilometre mark by 2 pm your race is over!'

'Oh no! We are only 300 **metres** from the marker. Please allow us. We want to hold the record for the oldest mixed team to have swum to Rottnest! We have an average age of 70! Let us old codgers through' I shouted into the wind and waves.

But the wind did not listen to me. We were swimming as hard as we could during each of our ten minute legs, but the current, waves and wind had slowed us. We were moving forward, but at half our original pace.

'Look! There! I can see a house on the hill above Kingston Barracks! I know it well. There over the top of flat Phillip Rock.... the big ro-rock (rocking boat caused this stutter) blasted flat by the Army during the Second World war so that Rottnest search lights could pick up enemy ships in the dark.'

Our courageous 52 year old paddler, Paul – from –Wyalkatchem, had, this time, obeyed our instructions and paddled alongside our boat to tie up. He was as sick as a dog. He had been sea sick as early as the 2 K mark!

I dived in for my leg. 'Maybe Paul would recover with a small spell of rest and recuperation to then paddle next to us over the line?'

I swam without a paddler alongside.

Disorientation set in. Where is Rottnest? Where is my boat?!

Crikey!

There it is above me!

Bang!

With my feet I thumped myself away from the prow of our boat with no name, but with the race number 797.

It was sort of drifting in the heavy nearly two metre swells capped with furry white streamers.

Our boat skipper, Mike, was having problems controlling his boat. He had to reduce the boat's speed to nearly 0, for now we had our kayak tied alongside. Paddler Paul was sitting limp in it retching out his stomach lining. Lizzie was feeding the fishes over the other side.

What a fool I am! Why did I inform would be donators to donate to the Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group if and when we successfully reached Rottnest Island?

It is just there!

The next swimmer tagged off me. 'Go Lizzie,' I shouted. Or was it Linda?

The official big yellow race - control boat came up behind us, and through a loud – hailer pointed at us, came the instructions:

‘The conditions are too dangerous. We are abandoning the race. Sorry! No ifs or buts. Collect your swimmer, and head straight for Thompson Bay.’

We did as we were told. 4 of us are ex-teachers. We know all about obeying instructions.

Around Phillip Rock we went and headed straight for the big, oh so beautiful, beach.

Paul the Paddler could not wait. He dived in to swim the last 15 metres and hauled himself on to dry sand. Paul collapsed.... exhausted.

We were gutted.



THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING AN EXPERIENCED PADDLER AND SKIPPER FOR SWIMMERS DOING THE ROTTNEST SWIM

Being an experienced swimmer, Gillian knew that by the time she had reached the 4K mark of the Rottnest swim that something was not right with her health, she swam over to her Paddler Daniel. Daniel, in the meantime, knew that something was wrong because Gillian's stroke had changed.

When Gillian swam to his kayak, Daniel knew that if he told her to hold on to the kayak that she would be disqualified from the race, but he was experienced enough to see the signs of distress and that the only option to him was to make sure she would be safe. Daniel signaled for the boat to come over. Daniel at this stage said Gillian had become incoherent. As Gillian was holding on to the kayak, she lost consciousness and as a result the kayak tipped over pulling them both into the water. Daniel held onto Gillian as a rope was tossed to Gillian by Colin from the support boat. Gillian was in and out of consciousness but, with the help of Daniel, managed to grab the rope and was dragged towards the boat. The support crew on the boat managed to get Gillian on the boat. At this stage Gillian was still going in and out of consciousness and hypothermia had set in. Colin did his best to keep Gillian warm until Sea Rescue arrived. Gillian was taken to Fiona Stanley Hospital to be checked out and later that day she was discharged and was able to go home.

The main message of this report is to enforce that swimming to Rottnest Island is a huge team effort and the importance of how the support team work together, the paddler needs to always keep an eye on the swimmer and be able to do what is needed for the safety of that swimmer. Daniel, having done many training sessions and open water swims with Gillian was well tuned in to her swimming style and being a good paddler was being very observant of how she was swimming. Daniel has proved without a doubt that being a paddler for a swimmer in the ocean is more than just being able to paddle a kayak. Daniel, without a doubt you saved the life of Gillian.



GILLIAN AND DANIEL BEFORE THE START OF THE ROTTNEST CHANNEL SWIM

VIRTUAL ROTTNEST SWIM Team name Electric Turtles, Swimmers Alex and Gerry, Timekeeper Hans.

On 26th February 2022, thousands of swimmers descended upon the cold sand of Cottlesloe Beach, a beautiful spot that played a large role in my teenage years. I would drive there in my 1964 VW Beetle, fancy refurbished seats, terrible seat belts, and that confusing motor placement which embarrassed many a man offering to have a look at it for me if only I'd pop the bonnet first.

The swimmers looked with steely, determined eyes toward the island in the distance. That island was Rottnest, an idyllic tourist destination juxtaposed with being the ugly death place of many Aboriginal men and boys. It's the largest deaths in custody site in Australia. It is also the largest known burial ground of Aboriginal people. Many skilled people swimming toward it for fun while Aboriginal people are about 1.7 times more likely to drown in Australia compared to non-Aboriginal people - feels like the modern version of this juxtaposition. History and social politics aside, swimming across to the island is an impressive, admirable feat. The Rottnest Channel Swim has become a respected endurance event, attracting athletes from around the globe and showcasing our talented local athletes, many of them rising stars of Open Water Swimming. Apart from the elite athletes, the event has inspired many swimmers of all levels to test themselves with attempting the feat of the channel crossing. Our club, Armadale Masters, had such swimmers.

On 26th February, I - this story's heroine- wake to my alarm. My room is dark. My children are asleep. I check my swimming gear and put my food into a white picnic basket. A look of focus defines my face. Today, I think to myself, my training comes together. I shall swim my heart out and I will arrive.... right where I started.

But I *will* swim 400 laps of the pool with Gerry. Ah, it isn't Rottnest, admittedly, but there will be a medal. And many, many tumble turns.

We arrive to the pool. We strip down to our bathers and run our fingers over our luxurious, silky racing caps. These aren't those cheap ones that rip out your hair! These are the thick ones that rip out your hair. Louise herds us all toward the stands for a photo. We stare miserably into the sun, squinting and blinking, confused and blinded. Is this a microcosm for what is to come? Suddenly, it is time to start. "Put your hats on boys!" I say to my youngest sons, although as the words leave my mouth I already know that the more spontaneous of the two will finish the day with a pink face. I just hope they don't nick any of my vegan gummy lollies. Those are expensive!

It is time to go. Hans is there, in a chair. He has the most snazzy time sheet at the entire event. It is custom designed, to suit the race plan that Gerry and I have. We are to swim five hundred metres at a time, twenty times each, to complete twenty kilometres. He also has three stop watches which will be started simultaneously. Nothing can go wrong on Hans' watch! (Except maybe the theft of vegan gummies, but in fairness this crime is very hard to police).

Minoli is there, too. She is impressed before we even start. It feels like loving support. Nothing can go wrong on Minoli's watch either.

Gerry starts off the Electric Turtles. This is our team name. It is a name that Gerry's eight year old child came up with. He is speedy, and he is smashing the rest of the field. It is a shame there is no commentator because Gerry is flying. His bathers are also notable. When I start to swim, I'm not as fast as Gerry but I do swim well. Damon from Swim School gets to his first kilometre ahead of us so it feels like we aren't off to a great start. We try not to let it get us down and we continue on with our repetitive five hundreds. As time wears on, Gerry and I start to regret our decisions. We are committed to our event however at times it is painful. But the Electric Turtles are not quitters. No, we are anything but! Gerry is no Minimum Effort and neither am I!

By the time we reach the twelve kilometre mark, things are starting to feel like that stage where all the leftover jelly cups begin melting at summer birthday parties. We have found some small comforts, though. One of these comforts is found in the time sheets. As Hans or Minoli keep track of us, they mark a tick per one hundred metres so that when it gets to the fifth it has been recorded that this was five hundred metres. Sometimes, Gerry and I get it wrong when we guess at how many ticks may be marked against our Duo Partner's name. Sometimes, we rush to Lane Five expecting to see four ticks. And just occasionally, like the Golden Tickets from Willy Wonka, we will hit the jackpot. We will see only

three ticks. Or even better, two! Oh, this small thing spurs on Gerry and I. This almost makes up for that changeover where someone is having a shower in the outdoor toilets while I wait desperately, only to eventually give up and return to the pool with a full bladder.

Suddenly, we have arrived at eighteen kilometres. I'm beginning to understand why Wilson was grieved so much after the solitude of island life. We have fallen into a pit of misery and only the twenty kilometre mark can pull us out. It feels that it will never end. Is it 4pm? Midnight? Winter? Time for school? We don't know any more.

All of a sudden, we are at nineteen kilometres. Can it be? My arms are so heavy that the thought of a final five hundred is no reward, just another cruel punishment for our gluttonous entrance into this event. How many times do I need to lift each arm up and down for that last five hundred? The thought is scary. Maybe it will be better if I think of it in percentage terms instead...

I tell Hans, "Tell Gerry he can swim with me for the final hundred so we can finish together". But like the hats, as I speak I know the truth. I near four hundred metres. I look up. Gerry isn't there. He has left the pool, not to return again... that day. I turn and finish my final one hundred. There is applause as I high-five Gerry.

In this moment, I am so proud of the Electric Turtles.



Fettes saw this sentence on the Home Page of the Rottnest Channel Swim South 32 web site: *'Want to swim for a cause for the next event? You can raise money by tackling the South32 Rottnest Channel Swim and help raise much needed funds for a charity of your choice.'*

Through the linked Grassrootz page Fettes nominated the volunteer group to which he is a member for life:

The Potoroo Action Group



Above banner photo: Ken Bushell

The Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group (GPAG) is a not-for-profit, volunteer community group, trying to help save Gilbert's Potoroo from extinction. There are only about 100 left!
GPAG has three key objectives:



Raise funds to assist in the recovery of Gilbert's Potoroo.



Raise awareness of the plight of Gilbert's Potoroo.



Encourage volunteer involvement in saving Gilbert's Potoroo.

So what if this small rabbit-sized marsupial becomes extinct? Fettes would like the world to know:

A study led by Murdoch University found that digging mammals /marsupials, like the Bettongs, Bandicoots, Bilbies and Potoroos, play a key role in increasing soil aeration, nutrient turnover and water infiltration, as well as dispersing seeds. Thus, they provide vital ecosystem services.

Without them the ecosystem goes into decline. Since European colonisation several native mammal species have suffered sharp declines. Australia holds the unenviable status of being one of the world's worst countries for mammal extinctions world's worst countries for mammal extinctions.

The Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group is delighted with Fettes' fundraising, which is now well over \$2000. He wishes to thank publically all those who have donated.



Thank you for taking care of our wildlife Fettes

COACHING

Our club is also seeking the interest from members who would be interested in becoming a qualified masters swimming coach. If you are interested, please talk with one of our coaches for more info.

ENDURANCE SWIMS

There will now be more opportunity to get through the amount of endurance swims on offer. The extra times available are Sunday mornings from 7.30am with Hans and Mon\Wed mornings from 7.30am with Charles. Contact information will be printed on the bottom of the next Club calendar or speak with Hans or Charles.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We are very happy to welcome to our swimming club

Gerard van den Berg, Chris Kalms, Tara Le Flohic, Kayleigh Middleton, Steph Flood.

And welcome back to

Yeeda Topham, Hugh Davidson, Beverley Proudfoot.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Belated birthday wishes to members who had a birthday in February – as we didn't have a newsletter in February we hope that Daniel, Liz, Peter and Yvonne H. all enjoyed their birthdays.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Graham Hicks 3rd, Colin Gibson 4th, Adele Chapman 5th, Suzanne Sullivan 10th,
Linda Cragg 14th, Charles Croft 21st, Sarah Carr 29th

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Heather Jeps 27th, and Alex Holt 29th.

Wishing you all a very happy birthday celebration. Enjoy your day.

This is our club members newsletter and if you have anything you would like to share with us please contact the editor Yvonne Lovegrove yvonne.lowe21@gmail.com