



# Armadale Masters Swimming Club

## NEWSLETTER

### January 2024

#### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Many membership fees are overdue. Owing to insurance requirements you are required to be a member should you desire to swim at the Club's training sessions.

**The Swimming Membership fee for 12 months is \$150.39.** This amount has 3 components-

- our Armadale Masters Swimming Club membership,
- Masters Swimming WA,
- Masters Swimming Australia.

Social membership (non-swimming) is also available for \$26.27, which includes Armadale Masters Club and Masters Swimming affiliation (insurance).

You can access Swim Central at [swimcentral.swimming.org.au](http://swimcentral.swimming.org.au)

Log in with the details you previously created. Memberships can be added from the shopping cart (if searching, please make sure you pick Armadale Masters, and not the Armadale Kelmscott Club)

#### A Report from our Club Captain and Head Coach

Hi Swimmers,

We've completed two more Masters Open Water Swims since the last newsletter. Just before Christmas was the Christmas 10 km swim at Coogee. Other distances were 3.4km and 1.6km. I didn't go to this swim as I had to rough it at a wedding at Eagle Bay that weekend. Apparently the weather was perfect. We had two swimmers representing Armadale – Colin in the 1600m and Tanya Andrews in the 3.4km.

Next up on the Masters OWS calendar was Swim Thru Perth - in the dreaded river. Charles and I had to get to the event at around 5.45am as we took our boat to help put the buoys out along the course. It was lovely weather when we were putting the buoys out and it didn't seem too far to swim. Once 8.30am came around, the sea breeze had picked up and the tide was coming in which wasn't good news as tide coming in equals swimming against the current for the whole 3.5km. Vicky, Charles and myself tackled the 3.5km course with Vicky and I just trying to survive. Colin was much more sensible and stuck to the 1600m. Charles seemed unfazed by the headwind and current and won his age group.

The next Masters OWS is the Mullaloo Mile on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, then Coogee Jetty to Jetty on 10<sup>th</sup> March.

The next interclub swim is at Newman Churchlands College long course. Rowie will send out the flyer for this event, but I will be pestering everyone at training to try and get a big team going. There has been solid interest so far so let's hope I can get a few more to go.

See you at the pool.

Heather Croft

Club Captain and Head Coach

## **A plea from the committee.**

Please be in the pool at exactly 6.30 pm Tuesdays and Thursdays and 8.30 am Saturdays. Valuable training time is being eroded away. Coaches especially would like to finish on time.

**Please read on: - important news about Betty Brussel follows shortly:**



**This is Betty.**

**Armadale Masters Swimming Club**  
**2023 Award Winners**

2023		
<b>Club Championships</b>		
1 <sup>st</sup>	Yvonne Hunt - 59 points	Hans Vosbergen - 44 points
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Megan Webster - 47 points	Graham Hicks - 36 points
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Sarah Carr 44 points	Fettes Falconer - 32 points
2023		
<b>Club Endurance 1000</b>		
1 <sup>st</sup>	Sarah Carr 1005 points	Marcel Weijers - 308 points
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Nicole Badani - 750 points	Graham Hicks - 100 points
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Megan Webster - 62 points	Anthony Mudge - 26 points
2023		
<b>Open Water Swimming</b>		
1 <sup>st</sup>	Vicki Kelly - 22 points	Colin Gibson - 17 points
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Heather Croft - 21 points	Graham Hicks - 1 points
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Gillian Caruso - 6 points	
2023		
<b>Pool Competition Swimming</b>		
1 <sup>st</sup>	Sarah Carr 78 points	Wayne Sams-Hayes - 26 points
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Megan Webster - 44 points	Charles Croft - 19 points
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Tara Le Flohic - 8 points	Fettes Falconer = Colin Gibson 13 points
2023		
<b>Club Swimmer of the Year</b>		
1 <sup>st</sup>	Sarah Carr 73 points	Colin Gibson - 89 points
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Megan Webster - 71 points	Graham Hicks - 72 points
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Tara Le Flohic - 65 points	Hans Vosbergen - 65 points
2023		
<b>Training</b>		
2023		
<b>Dave Green</b>		
2023		
<b>Year Badges</b>		
2023		
	<b>5 Years</b>	
	Vicki Kelly	
	<b>10 Years</b>	
	Hans Vosbergen	
	<b>15 Years</b>	
	Jeffrey Sanders	
	<b>20 Years</b>	

**A fun night at the 2023 Club Presentation was had by all. Thanks to Chas and Heb and Lexie and others for organising.**

**Many walked off with raffle prizes.**

**Your Newsletter Editor did not!**

Here are some photos taken at the 2023 end of year Club Presentation:



Megan collects from our President for Sara Carr the 2023 Pool Swimming Champ (missing), and for herself, for coming second.



Col collects. He has his arm around the missing Graham Hicks who came second. That is Mary's walking stick leaning on the wall.



Our open water Champs: You know who, and Vicki



Drum roll: Our club champs – Yvonne H and Hans. Well done to you two!

## Swimmer, 99, broke three world records in 100-plus age group

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## The Washington Post

Betty Brussel took up competitive swimming at in her mid-sixties. Now 99, she's won hundreds of medals - and just broke three world records in her age group.

"When I swim, I feel so happy," said Brussel, who lives in British Columbia. "It's the most relaxing feeling to just glide through the water."

Last weekend, she broke the world record in her age group for the 400-meter freestyle - she swam it in 12 minutes and 50 seconds- beating the previous record-holder by nearly four minutes. Brussel competes in the 100-to-104 age category, as categories are determined by birth year.

She also set a new record for the 50-meter breaststroke, which she did in one minute and 52 seconds, and the 50-meter backstroke, which took her one minute and 24 seconds.

"I felt so good," she said from her apartment, where she lives with her rescue cat, Mika.

Growing up in the Netherlands, Brussel - the second eldest of 12 children - wasn't able to pursue activities she enjoyed such as swimming, skating and gymnastics. She was in her teens during World War II, and she spent her time looking after her younger siblings.

Her parents pulled her out of school at age 14, and the family lived without electricity for more than three years.



Betty Brussel holds gold medals she won last year. Credit: Hannah Walsh

"It was quite a challenge during the war," she said.

Brussel immigrated to Canada with her husband in 1959. In addition to raising their three children - now 70, 72 and 74 - Brussel cleaned houses for a living, and later became a seamstress.

In 1982, Brussel retired, and with her newfound free time, she gradually got into swimming. She entered her first competition in 1991.

"I swam one-lane breaststroke, and I did not even do it right," she recalled. "I started from the ground up."

Soon, she was hooked on the sport, and started competing at the Canadian Masters level - which is a class of competitive swimming for people over 18. For the past six years she has been a member of the White Rock Wave Swim Team in South Surrey, B.C.

For more than 30 years, Brussel has competed in scores of contests in Canada and elsewhere - including the Huntsman World Senior Games in St. George, Utah. She enjoys the thrill of competing.

"The pool is my happy place," she said.

She drives herself to swim practice twice a week, about 20 minutes from her apartment.



Brussel at a swim meet last fall. Credit: Linda Stanley Wilson

"I am a very independent person," said Brussel, whose family - including her granddaughter, great-granddaughter and four step-grandchildren - often attend her swim meets to cheer her on. Her husband died 11 years ago.

When she doesn't feel like swimming, she pushes herself to get in the pool anyway.

"I always feel better when I go out of the pool than when I go in," she said.

Brussel - who is turning 100 in July - believes that maintaining an active lifestyle has contributed to her longevity. On days when she doesn't swim, she goes on a 45-minute walk.

"I live on the bottom of a hill. I go up slowly, and I go down fast," she said, adding that apart from wearing a hearing aid, "I take no medicine, no pills."

Brussel spends her spare time knitting and making cross stitch art. She is also a voracious reader and follows current events.

"I'm very fortunate that I'm able to do all this stuff, and I have good health," Brussel said.

Linda Stanley Wilson, 65, president of White Rock Wave and Brussel's swim coach, said she has to work to keep up with Brussel.

"She walks with purpose very quickly," said Stanley Wilson, noting that Brussel also insists on lugging her large bag of swim equipment without help. "Betty doesn't act like a 99-year-old. She is just full of life, and you forget that's how old she is."

Brussel isn't sure how many world records she has set at this point, as she doesn't keep track. Plus, her coach said, it's difficult to determine the number, as many of the records Brussel set in previous years have since been broken by others.

"World records are not that important to Betty," Stanley Wilson said.

Brussel - whose story was recently chronicled in *The Globe and Mail* - is a source of motivation for her White Rock Wave teammates, Stanley Wilson said.

There are 80 people on the team who range from 23 to 99.



*Brussel racing in a freestyle relay. Credit: Hannah Walsh*

"We have several swimmers on our team in their eighties who actively compete with us, but Betty is the only one in her 90s still competing," said Stanley Wilson. "Betty is our superstar."

Stanley Wilson has a PhD in kinesiology and emphasized the importance of staying fit while aging. Swimming is especially beneficial for those who struggle with other kinds of exercise.

"Swimming provides a medium where people with a lot of different challenges physically can be successful," she said.

At the start of each race, Brussel plunges into the pool from a diving block. She usually holds onto Stanley Wilson's hand to steady herself before diving.

"That's basically the only help she needs," said Stanley Wilson, adding that Brussel is so far performing better this season than last. In the 100 to 104 age category, there are usually about five competitors.

"There's only a handful of other people in that age group that have ever made a mark," Stanley Wilson said.

"I always say I'm her biggest cheerleader, but everybody is. People are always clapping and cheering for her," she added.

Brussel appreciates the praise, she said, especially when she learns that others are inspired by her.

"Almost every meet, someone will come up to me and say, 'I was ready to quit' or 'I thought I was too old to start and now I see you and I think I can do it,'" said Brussel. "It's a wonderful feeling."

About a year ago, Brussel caught the attention of filmmaker Hannah Walsh, who swam competitively in college. Walsh, 27, was looking at some results from a Masters swim meet, when she noticed Brussel's age. She was stunned.

"I was like, 'Wait, this is crazy,'" recalled Walsh, who is now producing a documentary film about Brussel with her partner, Emma Puchniak.

"There needs to be more stories about people like Betty," said Walsh. "She's an inspiration."

Brussel is often asked her secret to a long life.

"I am a happy person; I think that's one of the secrets," she said.

Another secret: "Keep doing stuff."

She follows her own advice, and will swim competitively for as long as she can.

"I never really felt special, but now I'm starting to get a tiny bit proud of myself," she said.

## Club Calendar

## FEBRUARY 2024

DATE	DAY	ACTIVITY /EVENT	Coach Organiser
1 <sup>ST</sup>	Thursday	Squad Training (6.30pm-7.30pm)	Fettes
3 <sup>RD</sup>	Saturday	Club Championships Round 1 (8.30am-9.30am) 200m choice, 50m choice Followed by bring a plate morning tea	Rowena
6 <sup>TH</sup>	Tuesday	Squad Training (6.30pm-7.30pm)	Peter
8 <sup>TH</sup>	Thursday	Squad Training (6.30pm-7.30pm)	Peter
10 <sup>TH</sup>	Saturday	Squad Training (8.30am-9.30am)	Fettes

<b>13<sup>th</sup></b>	Tuesday	Squad Training (6.30pm-7.30pm)	Heather	
<b>15<sup>th</sup></b>	Thursday	Endurance Swims	Hans	
<b>17<sup>th</sup></b>	Saturday	Squad Training (8.30am-9.30am)	Rowena	
<b>18<sup>th</sup></b>	Sunday	<b>NEWMAN CHURCHLANDS INTERCLUB COMPETITION –LONG COURSE</b> More information to follow	SELF	
<b>20<sup>th</sup></b>	Tuesday	Squad Training (6.30pm-7.30pm)	Sarah Moles	
<b>22<sup>nd</sup></b>	Thursday	SquadTraining(6.30pm-7.30pm)	Charles	
<b>24<sup>th</sup></b>	Saturday	<b>NO TRAINING DUE TO VIRTUAL ROTTNEST SWIM - ALTHOUGH CLUB HAS BOOKED 2 LANES IN 25M POOL</b>	SELF	
<b>27<sup>th</sup></b>	Tuesday	Squad Training (6.30pm-7.30pm)	Sarah M	
<b>29<sup>th</sup></b>	Thursday	Squad Training (6.30pm-7.30pm)	Heather	

## **Your Committee**

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