

## SESSION PLAN – HISTORY & HORIZONS

**You can use a combination of topics to share at each History & Horizons session.**

The key topics you could explore include:

1. Learning about local history (SLSA/Club History, Indigenous History, Local Town History)
2. Positive Psychology
3. Looking out to the horizon

### Learning about local history

You can focus on one or more of the following topics:

#### Surf Life Saving Australia and SLSC History

- a) Print and distribute one of the SLSA History Sheets in the appendix of this session plan which include key questions for participants to ponder.
  - Surf Life Saving: An Australian Icon
  - Tools and techniques
  - Competition in the surf
- b) Find some other interesting information bites on the Surf Life Saving Australia website: <https://sls.com.au/about-us/> and State/Territory websites: <https://sls.com.au/state-centres/>.
- c) Talk with your club history expert about any relevant photos, stories, fact sheets you could share with participants.

#### Indigenous History

Consider sharing photos and/or information from one of the following websites about indigenous history:

- Creative Spirits – Australian Aboriginal History: <https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/history/>
- Share our Pride: <http://www.shareourpride.org.au/>
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies: <https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/history>
- List of Australian Place Names of Aboriginal Origin: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Australian\\_place\\_names\\_of\\_Aboriginal\\_origin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Australian_place_names_of_Aboriginal_origin)
- Inquire about local indigenous communities/elders who may be interested to speak with participants.



## **Town History**

Access any interesting information from the following websites about Australian town history:

- A-Z of Australian Towns – Aussie Towns: <https://www.aussietowns.com.au/a-z-of-australian-towns>
- History of Places in Australia - <http://www.zades.com.au/ozindex/ozindex.html>
- Federation of Australian Historical Societies: <https://www.history.org.au/>
- National Museum of Australia: <https://www.nma.gov.au/>

## **Practicing Positive Psychology**

Surf Life Saving Club Leaders may like to discuss one or more of the following positive psychology strategies at each History & Horizons session. The following content is from the “Positive Psychology” Fact Sheet on Black Dog Institute website - [www.blackdoginstitute.org.au](http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au) (viewed 15/11/19). Along with practical strategies to increase psychological wellbeing, the Fact Sheet also includes an overview about Positive Psychology and where to get further information.

### **Practical strategies to increase your psychological wellbeing**

#### ***1. Enhancing pleasure***

- Savouring: the awareness of pleasure and of giving deliberate conscious attention to the experience of pleasure. Fred B. Bryant and Joseph Veroff of Loyola University have identified five techniques that promote savouring:
- Sharing with others: seek out others to share the experience and tell others how much you value the moment. This is the single strongest predictor of the level of pleasure.
- Memory building: take mental photographs, or even a physical souvenir of the event, and reminisce about it later with others.
- Self-congratulation: don't be afraid of pride; tell yourself how great you are and remember how long you have waited for this to happen.
- Sharpening perception: focus on certain elements and block out others, like closing your eyes and listening to the music.
- Absorption: allow yourself to become totally immersed and try not to think, just sense.
- Avoid forming habits: Rapidly repeated indulgence in the same pleasure does not work. Neurons are wired to respond to novel events, and not to fire if the events do not provide new information. Seek out a variety of experiences and spread out pleasurable events over time. Surprise yourself or others with small presents of pleasure.

## **2. Engagement Mindfulness**

Mindlessness pervades much of human activity. We act and interact automatically, without much thinking. Mindful attention to the present moment can be developed through meditation and mindfulness-based therapies. Through mindfulness we can focus our perspective and sharpen our experience of the present moment.

- Nurture relationships: Your income level has a surprisingly small effect on your psychological well-being. The most fundamental finding from positive psychology is that strong personal relationships have the greatest impact on your satisfaction with life. Make sure that you invest time and energy in your friends and family.
- Identify and use your strengths: Think about your personal strengths and how you might use them in your everyday life. Are you a leader, playful, fair, curious or original? Do you have a good sense of perspective? Do you love learning? Are you genuine? Are you good at teamwork? If you have internet access you can take an online test on Martin Seligman's website ([www. authentichappiness.org](http://www.authentichappiness.org)) to explore your personal strengths. Cultivate and use your strengths at work, in family life and in your leisure time.
- Seek out 'flow' experiences: Through his research, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi sought to understand how people felt when they most enjoyed themselves and why. He developed the concept of 'flow' which describes a state of joy, creativity and total involvement. Problems seem to disappear and there is a feeling of transcendence. 'Flow' is the way people describe their state of mind when they are doing something for its own sake. Some activities consistently produced 'flow' such as sport, games, art and hobbies. Csikszentmihalyi has identified the ingredients to creating these optimal experiences:
  - the task is challenging and requires skill
  - we concentrate
  - there are clear goals
  - we get immediate feedback
  - we have deep, effortless involvement
  - there is a sense of control
  - our sense of self vanishes
  - time stops

Csikszentmihalyi says work and family life can provide important opportunities for 'flow'. When people were in 'flow', either at work or in leisure, they reported a much more positive experience. When challenges and skills were both high, people felt happier, more cheerful, stronger and more active. They concentrated more, felt more creative and satisfied.

### **3. *Finding meaning***

- Keep a gratitude diary: Take the time each day to write down three things that went well and why. This causes psychological well-being levels to increase in a lasting way.
- Thank a mentor: Write a letter of thanks to someone to who you owe a debt of gratitude such as a teacher or grandparent. Then visit the person and read the letter to them. People who do this are measurably happier for more than a month.
- Learn to forgive: Let go of anger and resentment by writing a letter of forgiveness to a person who has wronged you. Inability to forgive is associated with persistent rumination.
- Weigh up your life: Take time out occasionally to consider how you are going in the major facets of your life such as family, work, finances, health and play. Reflect on the progress you are making in working towards your major life goals. Make changes in your life to match your priorities.
- Perform small acts of kindness: Performing five kind acts a week, especially all in one day, creates a measurable boost to levels of psychological well-being. Giving not only makes you feel good about yourself; it enhances your connection with others and can bring you positive feedback from others.

These and other strategies are detailed in Martin Seligman's book *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*.

### **Looking out to the Horizon**

This practice is joyful, relaxing and calming. Surf Life Saving Club Leaders might like to share the following fun facts about horizons, and ask participants about their experiences with horizons e.g. travel, camping, affirmations etc.

#### **How can you estimate the time of sunset with your hand?**

Fully extend your arm and count the number of finger widths between the sun and the horizon. Each finger is about 15 minutes, which means each hand width should be about an hour. Remember that this is just an estimate, so if you want to be conservative, make sure to give yourself a bit more time than you measure if you want to get home before dark.

Source: <https://www.lifehacker.com.au/2012/08/estimate-the-time-of-sunset-with-your-hand/>, viewed 21/11/19.



### How far away is the horizon?

The distance to the horizon is determined by different variables, including the temperature and your height. On a clear day, you can see for miles and miles and miles. The old saying turns out to be just about true. For a six-foot tall person, the horizon is a little more than 3 miles (5 km) away. Geometry tells us that the distance of the horizon – i.e. the farthest point the eye can see before Earth curves out beneath our view – depends simply on the height of the observer. For example, if you stood atop Mount Everest (which is 29,029 feet, or 8,848 meters tall), the horizon would be about 230 miles (370 km) away.

Add the effect of refraction, which bends rays of light as they pass through the atmosphere, and the horizon is even farther. Cold weather increases the amount of atmospheric refraction, so in a particularly frosty location such as Antarctica people have been able to see hundreds of miles away.

Plus, since clouds hover above ground level, they can be seen to farther distances than features on Earth's surface. But just as weather sometimes aids our view, it can also hinder it. Fog and scattered light can limit visibility to below what you could expect based on height. And of course, topography plays a role – even the best viewing conditions aren't much good if there's a big fat mountain in your way (though the view might be pleasing anyway).

Source: <https://www.livescience.com/32111-how-far-away-is-the-horizon.html>, viewed 21/11/19.

### Why do you feel better by the sea?

1. **Sea water for wellbeing.** Research shows that the sound of waves alters wave patterns in the brain lulling you into a deeply relaxed state. Relaxing in this way can help rejuvenate the mind and body. Also, floating in water means blood is diverted around from our lower limbs and pumped towards our abdominal region - the part of the body near the heart - because we are no longer standing upright. Fresh blood being pumped around the body brings more oxygen to our brain which makes us more alert and active.
2. **Fresh air for sleep.** If you've ever wondered why we always sleep more soundly after spending the day on the beach, it's because of the sea air. Sea air is charged with healthy negative ions that accelerate our ability to absorb oxygen. Negative ions also balance levels of serotonin, a body chemical linked with mood and stress. Which is why after a holiday you feel more alert, relaxed and energised.
3. **Sun for feeling good and skin conditions.** When we're lying on the beach, the heat of the sun affects our endocrine system - the part of our body which secretes endorphins - the natural chemicals in our body designed to make us feel relaxed and less stressed. And, a certain amount of sun can be good for some skin complaints such as psoriasis - a chronic skin disease where scaly pink patches form on the elbows, knees and scalp.



Ultraviolet radiation (UV light) is a common treatment for this skin complaint, says Dr Rodney O'Donnell, a doctor who is involved in studying the health effects of the Dead Sea. This is because a small amount of ultraviolet radiation from the sun's rays helps dry the skin, making it flake off and allowing healing to take place.

If you have psoriasis over a large area, your doctor may recommend phototherapy (light treatment). You'll stand under ultraviolet A light. And, to make the treatment work better, your doctor may prescribe psoralen pills to boost the action of ultraviolet A light.

And other dermatologists who report their discovery in the Oxford-based medical journal Skin Research and Technology confirm that seawater is good for cases of dermatitis (an allergic skin rash, often caused by contact with household chemicals.)

They bathed the skin in sodium lauryl sulphate - a salt compound to treat skin rashes, before bathing it in ordinary water or seawater, and found the results from seawater were far better, rapidly clearing up the dermatitis and helping the skin to heal more quickly than sodium lauryl sulphate.

The researchers then analysed the effects of the individual compounds in seawater and said that two of them - salt and potassium chloride are the main healers. They seal the damaged skin and allow it to mend.

The researchers also claimed that bathing in seawater increases the elasticity of the skin and improves its outer appearance.

Source: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-102698/Three-health-benefits-sea.html>, viewed 21/11/19

## Appendix

1. Surf Life Saving: An Australian Icon
2. Tools and techniques
3. Competition in the surf

## History & Horizons 1 - AN AUSTRALIAN ICON

Read the following information and see if you can find answers to the following questions:

1. Why did the surf lifesaver become an Australian icon even by 1920?
2. What are four notable occasions where surf lifesavers have helped sell Australia to the world?
3. In your opinion, do you think the surf lifesaver is a fitting Australian icon? Why?

### Lone Hand, 1 January 1910:

*The lifesavers represent the very highest class. They are the Samurais, the oligarchs, the elite. They strut the beaches with superiority that is insolent, yet at the same time, tolerant ... of lesser breeds — a gladiator class, envied by all the men, adored by all the women.*

### History of Bondi Surf Bathing Club, 1956:

*The surf lifesaving movement ... is truly Australian in spirit. Its character savours of sun-drenched sand and a free and boisterous surf. In it we see democracy function as it was meant to. There are no barriers of creed, class or colour. All these things are forgotten in the wonderful spirit of humanitarian mateship.*



### The surf lifesaver has become an Australian icon

In the 1920s the surf lifesaver replaced the bushman and the digger as the typical Australian. Like his predecessors, the surf lifesaver was masculine, tanned, fit, strong and selfless. He was bound by mateship and subjected to but not tamed by military discipline. He was also modern and urban, a reflection of the nation, or the nation as it wanted to be.

Surf lifesavers have featured in advertisements for a range of products. They have promoted tourism and migration and have become as identifiably Australian as kangaroos and the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

### Selling Australia

Surf lifesavers have been used to promote numerous products. Mostly, they have been used to sell Australia.

Surf lifesavers were represented in the Australian pavilions at the 1937 Paris Exposition and at the 1939 World's Fair in New York. At the closing

ceremony for the 2000 Olympics in Sydney, surf lifesavers carried Kylie Minogue and a giant surf reel into the stadium



2000 Olympics – Surf Life Savers and Kylie Minogue

They rowed up the Yarra River in the 2006 Commonwealth Games opening ceremony in Melbourne. Despite changes in Australian society and in surf

lifesaving, the lifesaver continues to represent Australia to ourselves and to the world.



Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, Kurrawa, Queensland, 2006

Source: Between the Flags: 100 Years of Surf Lifesaving, National Museum Australia, Source: Between the Flags: 100 Years of Surf Lifesaving, National Museum Australia, <https://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/between-the-flags/australian-icon>, viewed 04/10/19. The Exhibition celebrated the centenary of surf lifesaving. Developed in conjunction with Surf Life Saving Australia, this major exhibition looked at the history of surf lifesaving, the lifesaver as an Australian icon, beach culture and stories of the rescued and rescuers. The Exhibition was at the National Museum in Canberra, 6 December 2006 to 11 February 2007, before it went on national tour.



## History & Horizons 2 - TOOLS & TECHNIQUES

Read the following information and see if you can find answers to the following questions:

1. Why were surf reels and surf belts superseded by other tools and techniques?
2. What was stored in the surfboat for each rescue?
3. What was an alarming issue with using the Eve Rocker to save lives?
4. In your opinion, what has been the most amazing improvement in surf lifesaving tools and techniques over the years? Why?
5. No matter what tool or technique is used, a lifesaver's job still requires four things. What are they?



### Sydney Morning Herald, 2 January 1906:

*We cannot fence in our long stretches of ocean beaches, or even sections of them ... Lifelines with stable supports might be provided, and patrol-boats to ply off every bathing resort. They would popularise the beaches even more than at present, render the recreation of the bathers safer, and protect many valuable lives.*

A surf lifesaver needs knowledge and equipment in order to do the job.

Over the past 100 years advances in medicine and technology have changed the way lives are saved. The buoy and box line were replaced by the surf-reel and line, which were replaced by the rescue board and tube. Surfboats have been overtaken by jet skis and inflatable rescue boats.

Helicopters search for swimmers from the air. Once a five-man crew was required to perform a rescue with the reel, line and belt. Now one surf lifesaver with a rescue board can do the job. While the way a surf lifesaver does the job has changed, it still requires watching and waiting — vigilance and service.



Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, Kurrawa, Queensland, 2006

## Invention and innovation

The Royal Life Saving Society was established in England in the late 19th century and developed rescue and resuscitation techniques. It trained lifesavers using military-like movements or drills that reinforced the steps but also presented an efficient image.

Surf lifesavers adopted some of Royal Life Saving's equipment and techniques, but they weren't always appropriate for Australian surf conditions. Resourceful club members set about finding better ways to rescue swimmers in trouble and save more lives. They altered existing equipment, and they invented completely new ones. These inventions and innovations all had to pass the same test — they had to work in the surf.



Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, Kurrawa, Queensland, 2006

## Changing ways

Inventive surf lifesavers adapted technology to better suit Australian surf conditions. In turn, that technology has changed the way surf lifesavers do their job.

Five men were once required to operate the reel, line and belt. Now, one person on a rescue board or a jet ski can be just as effective.

A surfboat crew of five has been replaced by two in an Inflatable Rescue Boat. A radio operator can alert ambulance and helicopter rescue services. The old rescue techniques, no longer practical for patrol, are kept alive in competition.



Surf lifesavers, Mollymook, New South Wales, 2006

## The surf-reel

The surf-reel was one of the first pieces of equipment designed for surf lifesaving and replaced the lifebuoy and rope. Lyster Ormsby and Warrant Officer John Bond made a model using a cotton reel and two hairpins. From this, a local coachbuilder built a full-sized surf reel. It was made of a cedar drum mounted on a wooden frame with a handle to pay out or wind in the rope. A brake was added soon after. Surf-reels were replaced by rescue tubes in the 1970s.



Surf-reels, Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, Kurrawa, Queensland, 2006

## Waxing the line

Cotton or hemp lines become heavy in the water and would sometimes tangle, endangering the beltman. A waxed line is waterproof and does not tangle so easily.

This wax machine has an element to heat wax and two small wheels. The end of the line is threaded onto the wheels and pulled through the melted wax. When synthetic line was introduced, waxing was no longer necessary, although a keen beltman will still wax the line before competition today.

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## The surf belt

Surf belts connect the line from the surf-reel to the lifesaver. The first belts were made of cork but swimming in them was difficult and there was no way of removing them in an emergency. After a lifesaver drowned when his line became tangled, Steve Dowling designed a belt with a quick release pin. Yet the cork belt, now with fewer corks but with no easy release, was preferred. Following two similar deaths in 1950, the Ross safety belt, a modified version of the Dowling belt, became standard.

## The surfboat



Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, Kurrawa, Queensland, 2006

Walter Biddell of Bronte SLSC designed the first purpose-built surfboat. The Albatross was a double ender crewed by three rowers and a sweep. In 1913 Fred Notting of Manly improved the design, making it long enough for four rowers. Known as a banana boat because of its curved ends, it was equipped with a line and belt, knife, signaling flags and a shark spear.

Source: Between the Flags: 100 Years of Surf Lifesaving, National Museum Australia, <https://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/between-the-flags/tools-techniques> viewed 04/10/19. The Exhibition celebrated the centenary of surf lifesaving. Developed in conjunction with Surf Life Saving Australia, this major exhibition looked at the history of surf lifesaving, the lifesaver as an Australian icon, beach culture and stories of the rescued and rescuers. The Exhibition was at the National Museum in Canberra, 6 December 2006 to 11 February 2007, before it went on national tour.

The banana boat was replaced by tuck-stern boats in 1946. Since then, the only changes have been in materials, not design.

## The Eve Rocker

The Eve Rocker was developed by Dr Frank Eve, a British doctor, and was designed to complement the Schafer method of resuscitation. The patient was strapped to the stretcher and rocked. With the head down, the stomach pressed against the diaphragm, pushing air out of the lungs. When the patient was tipped up, air was drawn into the lungs. Unfortunately, water from the patient's stomach could also be drained into the lungs.

## Patrolling from above

Helicopters enable surf lifesavers to rescue swimmers in heavy seas and transport injured swimmers to hospital for medical attention. They make rescues quicker and safer for all involved. The surf lifesaving helicopter service began in Sydney in 1973. It expanded to the Gold and Sunshine coasts in Queensland and by the 1980s, was operating in Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia



## History & Horizons 3 - COMPETITION IN THE SURF

Read the following information and see if you can find answers to the following questions:

1. Why did surf lifesaving carnivals begin?
2. What events are still contested at carnivals, but don't get used in modern day lifesaving?
3. How many competitors usually compete at the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships?
4. Why were surf lifesaving carnivals considered suitable as an activity for Australian soldiers overseas?
5. What event and related film provided a much-needed boost to surf lifesaving?
6. What is significant about Grant Kenny's achievements?

### Surf Life Saving Association handbook, 1927:

*With the object of stimulating enthusiasm in the work of surf lifesaving, interclub surf carnivals are held regularly during the summer months ... There are hundreds of entries at a single carnival, and the training keeps the members physically fit and thoroughly efficient.*

Surf lifesaving consists of two main activities — saving lives and competition. Since the 1920s Surf Life Saving Australia has emphasised the humanitarian aspect of the organisation but the reality is that many lifesavers join for the social and sporting benefits.



Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, Kurrawa, Queensland, 2006

Competition on and off the beach is fierce, enabling surf lifesavers to practice their skills and improve their fitness. Members compete at all levels, from intra-club to regional, national and international.

The sport of surf lifesaving combines history with modern sporting practice. The surfboat race, belt race, rescue and resuscitation, and the march-past are still contested. Although no longer part of current practice, they honour the teamwork, friendship and traditions of surf lifesaving. The inclusion of individual events and the acceptance of professional athletes reflect broader cultural changes.

## **The thrill of the carnival**

Soon after surf lifesaving clubs were established, they held carnivals in which lifesavers would test their skills. Surf carnivals also reassured the public of the lifesavers' discipline and competence. Tens of thousands of people attended carnivals in the 1920s and 1930s and they were also staged to commemorate royal visits, the sesquicentenary and the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge.



Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, Kurrawa, Queensland, 2006

Early carnivals included novelty events such as pillow fights, chariot races and a tug of war but these were phased out due to concerns they would undermine the serious nature of surf lifesaving. Today the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships are surf lifesaving's premier event, attracting up to 8000 competitors.

## **One of the greats**

Bob Newbiggin was a champion swimmer, breaking the Australian Junior 110-yard record in 1937 and competing in the Empire Games the following year. But it was in the surf that he became a legend. Newbiggin dominated surf races before and after the Second World War. Always a powerful swimmer, it was his ability to pick the best wave and ride it to the beach that won him many races.



Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, Kurrawa, Queensland, 2006

## **A break from war**

Australian armed forces serving overseas often held their own surf carnivals. In places such as Gaza, Tel Aviv, the Solomon Islands, New Guinea, Vietnam and Iraq, soldiers have competed in surf races, rescue and resuscitation events and the march-past. Sport was encouraged as a leisure

activity for off-duty soldiers but surf lifesaving, with its emphasis on discipline and drill, was particularly suitable.

### **Competing with sharks**

In January 1949 Raymond Land was competing in the rescue and resuscitation event at a surf carnival. As beltman, he swam out to rescue the 'patient'. Twenty metres from the buoy, he signaled that he was in trouble. The line was caught on a rock, so the patient and the number three linesman swam to his aid. They had almost reached him when a shark attacked. Raymond was taken to shore on a surf ski but died from his injuries.



Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, Kurrawa, Queensland, 2006

### **The ultimate event**

Hayden Kenny won the first Australian Ironman title at Coolangatta in 1966. Adapted from an American event, the ironman includes a surf ski leg, board paddle and swim, with beach sprints between sections.

In the 1980s the ironman event provided a much-needed boost to surf lifesaving, attracting corporate, media and public interest. A 42-kilometre ironman event was staged for the filming of The Coolangatta Gold in 1984 and attracted over 100,000 spectators. Guy Leech won the actual event while the reigning Australian Ironman champion, Grant Kenny, starred in the film.

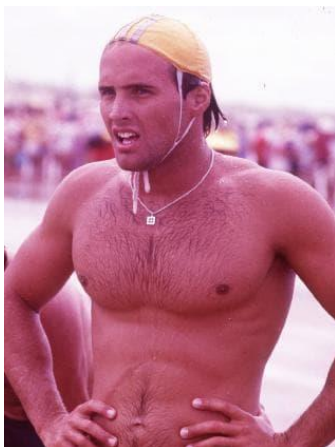
The ironwoman event was introduced in 1992 and women also compete in the recently revived Coolangatta Gold event.



Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, Kurrawa, Queensland, 2006

## Ironman Grant Kenny

Grant Kenny won his first Australian Ironman title in 1980, fourteen years after his father had achieved the same feat. Grant's win was remarkable because he won both the Junior and Open titles within an hour of each other.



Grant Kenny, Ironman – Source:  
<https://cdn.newsapi.com.au/image/v1/a4188067db4f27e22260dc4e90832edb?width=316>

Source: Between the Flags: 100 Years of Surf Lifesaving, National Museum Australia, <https://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/between-the-flags/competition-in-surf>, viewed 04/10/19. The Exhibition celebrated the centenary of surf lifesaving. Developed in conjunction with Surf Life Saving Australia, this major exhibition looked at the history of surf lifesaving, the lifesaver as an Australian icon, beach culture and stories of the rescued and rescuers. The Exhibition was at the National Museum in Canberra, 6 December 2006 to 11 February 2007, before it went on national tour

Grant won three more national ironman titles. His success sparked the resurgence of the ironman event and promoted surf lifesaving competition.

## Beyond the horizon

Allan Kennedy was one of many administrators who promoted surf lifesaving overseas. He started the first club in Cornwall, England, and helped establish the Surf Life Saving Association of Great Britain.

As part of the 1956 Olympic Games celebrations, an international surf carnival was held at Torquay, Victoria. Kennedy called a meeting of international surf lifesaving representatives and they formed the International Council of Surf Life Saving. Surf Life Saving Australia maintains a strong influence in international surf lifesaving.



