Australian Government
Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

Australian Heritage Database

Places for Decision

Class : Indigenous

Item: 1

Identification

List: **National Heritage List**
Name of Place: Bondi Beach
Other Names:
Place ID: 106009
File No: 1/12/038/0010
Primary Nominator: 104311 Australian Heritage Council
Nomination Date: 09/07/2007
Principal Group: Recreation and Entertainment

Status

Legal Status: 09/07/2007 - Nominated place
Admin Status: 03/12/2007 - Assessment by AHC completed

Assessment

Assessor:
Recommendation: Place meets one or more NHL criteria
Assessor's Comments:
Other Assessments: :

Location

Nearest Town: Bondi Beach
Distance from town (km):
Direction from town:
Area (ha): 65
Address: Campbell Pde, Bondi Beach, NSW, 2026
LGA: Waverley Municipality NSW

Location/Boundaries:
About 65ha of land and water, comprising generally the beach, surf life saving clubs, pavilion, parks, promenades, cliffs and ocean waters between Ben Buckler and Mackenzies Point; being the areas enclosed by a line commencing at the southern end of Notts Avenue then proceeding north-westerly along the easterly edge of Notts Avenue to Campbell Parade, then northerly and easterly via the seaward edge of Campbell Parade to its intersection with Ramsgate Avenue then easterly and southerly following the southern and western edge of Ramsgate Avenue to the northern boundary of 77 Ramsgate Avenue, then westerly and southerly along that boundary and the western boundaries of 77 to 111 Ramsgate Avenue to the southern boundary of 111 Ramsgate Avenue, then via that boundary to Ramsgate Avenue, then southerly via the western side and alignment of Ramsgate to the cliff top at Ben Buckler, then easterly via that cliff top to the eastern alignment of Ramsgate Avenue, then northerly via that alignment to the southern end of the road reserve on the south side of 168 Ramsgate Avenue, then easterly via the southern side of that reserve to the eastern alignment of Brighton Boulevard, then via that alignment directly to low water market Ben

Buckler, then via low water to the most southerly point of Ben Buckler, then south westerly directly to the most easterly point at low water on Mackenzies Point, then westerly via low water mark on the southern side of Marks Park to the alignment of the eastern boundary of 25 Kenneth Street, then northerly via that alignment to the southern edge of Kenneth Street, then easterly via the southern edge of Kenneth Street to the eastern edge of Marks Lane, then north via the alignment of the eastern edge of Marks Lane to the northern side of Fletcher Street, then east via the northern edge of that road to the cliff top to the sout west boundary of Lot 1/715 DP752011, then easterly and northerly via the boundaries of Lots 1/715, 714 and 713 DP752011 so that they are excluded to the southern end of Notts Avenue.

Assessor's Summary of Significance:
Bondi Beach is an urban beach cultural landscape of waters and sands, where the natural features have been altered by development associated with beach use and consisting of promenades, parks, sea baths, the surf pavilion and pedestrian bridges. The predominant feature of the beach is the vastness of the open space within an urban setting.

Bondi Beach is significant in the course of Australia's cultural history as the site of the foundation of Australia's first recognised surf lifesaving club in 1907. From Bondi the surf lifesaving movement spread initially to NSW, then to the rest of Australia and to the world. Along with the 'digger' and the 'bushman', the lifesaver has achieved an iconic place in Australia's cultural imagery. The lifesaver grew to become an accepted feature of the beach and, as beach guardian and symbol of what was seen to be good about being Australian, became woven into Australia's popular culture. As it was at the beginning, the SLSA has remained a voluntary organisation and a significant contributor to a well-established tradition of volunteering in Australia. SLSA is now Australia's largest volunteer water safety organisation, with a national membership in 2006 of 120,000 members representing 305 clubs. Surf lifesavers have rescued more than 520,000 people in the 80 years since records have been kept, with the number of rescues each season fluctuating between 8,000 and 12,000.

Bondi Beach is one of the world's most famous beaches and is of important social value to both the Australian community and to visitors. Bondi Beach is significant because of its special associations for Australians as a central place in the development of beach culture in Australia. It embodies a powerful sense of place and way of life. It is where Australians meet nature's challenge in the surf and is strongly associated with the Bronzed Aussie myth of easygoing hedonism and endeavour balanced with relaxation. A place full of Australian spirit, synonymous with Australian beach culture, it is recognised internationally.

At the end of the 19th century, the beach emerged as an alternative cultural landscape to the mythology of the interior. The interior represented notions of toil and hardship against an often unforgiving landscape, while the coast evoked images of health and leisure in the equally unforgiving environment of the sea. During the Depression the Australian notion of beaches as egalitarian playgrounds took root and Bondi, with its strongly working-class constituency, became the epitome of that idea. The developing beach culture reinforced an already strong myth of Australian egalitarianism, of a nation where 'a fair go' was available to all. The constructed features, such as the sea baths and the surf pavilion demonstrate the development of the natural features of the beach to accord with daylight swimming, recreational beach culture, surf life saving, and associated beach sports. The Bondi Surf Pavilion building within its developed parkland setting is an important element of the site. Built in 'Inter War Mediterranean style', the Pavilion is outstanding for its place in the development of beach and leisure culture and is a famous landmark at Bondi Beach. The pool complex is significant for its strong associations with the famous 'Bondi Icebergs' winter swimming club as well as other swimming groups. The pool and clubhouse enjoy a strong nexus not usually enjoyed by other seaside pools. The site has been used continuously for organized swimming since before 1900 and has a strong social importance as a meeting place as well as a sporting and recreational facility. The Bondi Icebergs contributed strongly to this development. To many in Sydney they were seen as inheritors of the Anzac spirit – fun-loving larrikins not taking themselves too seriously, while still displaying the essential 'Aussie' characteristics of a fair-go, generosity, and mateship.

Egalitarian in nature, the beach and surfing had a profound effect in changing our way of life, and developing our sense of national identity. The central role of beaches, and Bondi Beach in particular, in Australia's self image is reflected in the use of the beach by painters, filmmakers, poets and writers in exploring this new self image and reflecting it back to Australian society. Bondi has played a central role in this process, and has come to be viewed both within Australia and internationally as the quintessential Australian beach.

Draft Values:

Criterion	*Values*	*Rating*
A Events, Processes	Bondi Beach is significant in the course of Australia's cultural history as the site of the foundation of Australia's first recognised surf lifesaving club in 1907. From Bondi the surf lifesaving movement spread initially through NSW, subsequently to the rest of Australia, and then to the world. Along with the 'digger' and the 'bushman', the lifesaver has achieved an iconic place in Australia's cultural imagery. The lifesaver grew to become an accepted feature of the beach and a symbol of what was seen to be good about being Australian. From its inception, Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) has remained a voluntary organisation and a significant contributor to a well-established tradition of volunteering in Australia. Today SLSA is Australia's largest volunteer water safety organisation, with a national membership in 2006 of 120,000 members representing 305 clubs (SLSA 2007). Surf lifesavers have rescued more than 520,000 people in the 80 years since records have been kept, with the number of rescues each season in recent years fluctuating between 8,000 and 12,000.	AT
G Social value	Bondi Beach is significant because of its special associations for Australians, having a central place in the development of beach culture in Australia. Bondi Beach is one of the world's most famous beaches. With its golden sands, parks, and blue waters framed within rocky headlands, it has come to be seen both nationally and internationally as part of the Australian way of life and leisure. It is where Australians meet nature's challenge in the surf and is strongly associated with the Bronzed Aussie myth of easygoing hedonism and endeavour balanced with relaxation. The beach and the surf lifesaving movement established at Bondi Beach facilitated a movement away from the restrictive attitudes of 19th century morality and the beach became the source of acceptable healthy pleasure. During the Depression the Australian notion of beaches as egalitarian playgrounds took root and Bondi, with its strongly working-class constituency, became the epitome of that idea. The developing beach culture reinforced an already strong myth of Australian egalitarianism, of a nation where ‘a fair go’ was available to all. The Bondi Icebergs contributed strongly to this development. To many in Sydney they were seen as inheritors of the Anzac spirit – fun-loving larrikins not taking themselves too seriously, while still displaying the essential ‘Aussie’ characteristics of a fair-go, generosity, and mateship. Egalitarian in nature, the beach and surfing had a profound effect in changing our way of life, and developing our sense of national identity. The central role of beaches, and Bondi Beach in particular, in Australia’s self image is reflected in the use of the beach by painters, filmmakers, poets and writers in exploring this new self image and reflecting it back to Australian society. Bondi has played a central role in this process, and has come to be viewed both within Australia and internationally as the quintessential Australian beach. Bondi Beach, Bondi Park and the headland reserves, the Bondi Surf Pavilion, the Bondi Surf Bathers Life Saving Club and North Bondi Surf Lifesaving clubhouse, and the Bondi Pool area and Icebergs building, together constitute an iconic place that is emblematic of the Australian beach experience.	AT

Historic Themes:

Nominator's Summary of Significance:

Description:

Bondi Beach is approximately 1.5km long and over 100m wide, the semi-circular arc of the beach is set in a flat basin

flanked by elevated ridges extending to sandstone cliffs and headlands at the north and south ends, and enclosed by commercial and residential buildings. The gentle slope of the sand has resulted in a safe swimming beach for all age groups. Public access reserves contain the beach, the Pavilion, the club houses and bathing pools, and extend up onto the headlands at either end of the beach – Ben Buckler at the north and Mackenzies Point at the south.

Analysis:
CRITERION (a) *The* place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in the course, or pattern, of Australia's natural or cultural history.
Bondi Beach is significant in the course of Australia's cultural history as the site of the foundation of Australia's first recognised formally documented surf lifesaving club in 1907. From Bondi the surf lifesaving movement spread initially through NSW and to Victoria, subsequently to the rest of Australia, and then to the world.

From its inception in 1907, the role of the surf lifesaving movement was vital in the maintenance of order in an increasingly relaxed 20th century beach environment, and protection of beach goers from the dangers inherent in the surf. Before the advent of the surf lifesaving clubs, early efforts to save those in trouble in the surf were largely individual, and erratic. The people who engaged in these endeavours were perceived as heroes (Jaggard 2007: p.3). In the early 20th century, as people began to enter the surf in increasing numbers, the need for vigilance and prompt rescue of those who got into difficulties became more urgent. The focus on individual bravery changed when the surf lifesaving movement took on the rescuer's role. Surf lifesavers formed well-trained squads who were able to tackle the surf not because of individual skill, but because they had prepared for such events. Surf lifesaving was innovatory, combining introduced established approaches to lifesaving with the knowledge of the surf developed by pioneering Australian surf bathers. It was motivated, at least in part, by a sense of public service, with clubs like Bondi often being formed as a direct response to loss of life in the surf (Jaggard 2007: p.3).

Quasi-military structures, and drills introduced in to the early life saving training by John Bond and the officers of the NSW Medical Corps in the late 1890s, with their requirement for knowledge of the Drill Manual, reinforced the view that lifesaving was a serious enterprise. Examinations for admission to beach patrols, equipment, training regimes and competitions were put in place to ensure that club members were capable lifesavers (Jaggard 2007: p.5). With surf lifesavers on duty, beaches became places of exhilarating swimming and surfing, rather than places of potential tragedy. The patrols were a reassuring and reliable presence and constituted a trusted form of moral, if informal, authority, holding at bay the beach's potential for danger (Jaggard 2007: p.6). The precision and discipline of the surf lifesaving patrols as they practised and drilled, enabled beachgoers to relax and to feel 'at home' on the beach. The surf lifesaving movement made beaches available to the public as part of a uniquely Australian cultural landscape (Jaggard 2007: p.6). While carrying on a British tradition of militarism and service, surf lifesaving developed as distinctively Australian, blending outward order with robust enjoyment of the natural environment. A century after its foundation, the impact of the surf lifesaving movement on its host society continues. Although both have changed dramatically over 100 years, the expectation of Australian society that surf lifesavers will keep the beaches safe persists (Jaggard 2007: p.20)

Along with the 'digger' and the 'bushman', the lifesaver has achieved an iconic place in Australia's cultural imagery. In addition to affecting Australians' behaviour on beaches and facilitating the growing Australian beach culture, surf lifesaving contributed to Australian culture in more symbolic ways, in particular by assisting in the creation of a new national image. As beach going increased under the watchful eye of the surf lifesavers, Australians developed a sense of themselves, and an international reputation, as people of the beach. Like his predecessors as Australian icons, the bushman and the digger, the surf lifesaver was a young male who was regarded as typically and distinctively Australian, and unlike the citizens of other nations (Jaggard 2007: pp.10-11). The rural identity personified in a strong, fit and capable bushman was adapted to city life and surf lifesavers carried on this masculine image (Jaggard 2007: p.13). The bushman and the lifesavers shared the common determination to tame nature: one the 19th century frontier of the bush; the other its 20th century equivalent, the beach. Like the diggers before them, surf lifesavers were proud volunteers. The lifesavers, tanned, muscular and well-drilled, were ever ready with strength and courage to do battle with the 'enemy', the dangerous surf. The notion that the surf lifesaver was the natural successor to earlier Australian icons is powerfully captured in a series of murals created for the Bondi Surf Bathers Life Saving Club between 1920 and 1934 by noted illustrator and artist D H Souter (Jaggard 2007: p.11). The lifesaver grew to become an accepted feature of the beach and, as beach guardian and symbol of what was seen to be good about being Australian, became

woven into Australia's popular culture. They provided a distinctive image for a still very colonial nation and a means of expressing 'Australianness' to one another and to the rest of the world. The single most powerful event in the creation of this image was the momentous events of 'Black Sunday' at Bondi in 1938, when the largest mass rescue in the history of surf bathing - both here and abroad - enshrined the place of the lifesaver in the national imagination (Brawley 2007: p.8). The lifesaver has made the beach a safer place, helped Australians to enjoy the surf, and played an iconic part in creating Australia's beach life (NMA 2007: p.1).

As well as representing the activities and values of the people, surf lifesavers were aesthetically pleasing. The colours and patterns on the costumes and caps they wore were eye-catching. This, combined with well-muscled bodies, provided an easily identifiable and attractive image for illustrated articles and advertising posters. In 1932, a surf lifesaver was portrayed on a poster promoting the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge (Jaggard 2007: p.14). The Melbourne-based Australian National Travel Association, formed in 1929 to promote Australia in Britain and the United States, used images of surf life savers to encourage visits to Australian cities in its brochure publicising the sesquicentenary. Other images, such as Gert Sellheim's 'Australia Surf Club' focused more tightly on the surf lifesaving squad, reassuring travellers that they could enjoy this country's world-famous beaches within a net of safety (Jaggard 2007: p.14). Images of lifesavers were used regularly to advertise goods, particularly those identified as masculine, like whisky. Surf lifesavers have been mobilised as an exemplar of Australian identity when the world looks at Australia: marching in Brisbane at the 1982 Commonwealth Games opening ceremony; at Expo '88; and at the closing ceremony of the 2000 Sydney Olympics; and appearing regularly in print and television tourism promotions.

Australian surf carnivals were a high point of this movement. Particularly in the inter-War years and the period immediately after World War II, these displays of discipline, strength, and skill, drew large crowds and further instilled the image of surf lifesavers in the Australian mind. The image that was cultivated by the clubs, and the one that most members of the public accepted, was that of wholesome self-sacrifice, bodily power and moral good. The carnivals brought pageantry to the beach and royal visitors, including the Duke of Gloucester in 1934 and young Queen Elizabeth 11 20 years later, were entertained by the uniquely Australian spectacle presented at surf carnivals (Jaggard 2007: p.6).

The SLSA has remained a voluntary organisation in an increasingly commercialised world, a significant contributor to a well-established tradition of volunteering in Australia. Volunteers have largely provided the organisation and training on which Australia's sporting achievements have been built. About a third of all voluntary work in Australia is associated with sporting and recreational activities (Jaggard 2007: p.18). Here the SLSA stands out as one of the earliest, largest, and most successful nationwide associations of volunteers, combining love of sport and competition with a commitment to maintaining and improving safety on the beaches and rescuing those who are put at risk by often dangerous surfing conditions. The high-profile example of surf lifesaving both inspires and provides a model for other community groups (Jaggard 2007: p.18). Lifesavers see themselves as performing an important public service, and this sense of public service engenders a camaraderie, the forging of bonds between members that generates the mateship so often extolled as a feature of Australian culture (Jaggard 2007: p.18). To the extent that surf lifesaving flourishes, it helps to counter the decline and consequent loss of 'social capital' which, it has been argued, is vital for democracy and social cohesion (Jaggard 2007: p.18).

Today SLSA is Australia's largest volunteer water safety organisation, with a national membership in 2006 of 120,000 members representing 305 clubs (SLSA 2007). Surf lifesavers have rescued more than 520,000 people in the 80 years since records have been kept, with the number of rescues each season in recent years fluctuating between 8,000 and 12,000 (SLSA 2007). During the 2006-07 season surf lifesavers performed 6,319 rescues, 188,824 preventative actions and treated 30,940 first aid cases.

An independent economic study conducted for SLSA by economists The Allen Consulting Group in 2005 concluded that if not for the presence of volunteer surf lifesavers, 485 people would drown each year and 313 would be permanently incapacitated as a result of accidents in the surf (Australian Culture and Recreation Portal 2007). The study found that the economic and social value of surf lifesaving services provided by volunteer lifesavers is worth more than $1.4 billion per year and provides many unquantifiable benefits including increased tourism (SLSA 2007).

Culturally, each and every surf club in Australia is shaped by the same forces which shape any community, including:

locality; class; ethnicity; gender (Brawley 2007: p.8). This said, all life savers are cast from the Bondi mould (Brawley 2007: p.8). So much about what the surf life saving movement was and would become, is about Bondi, as many of the core principles and practices of the surf lifesaving movement were first discussed and implemented on Bondi Beach (Brawley 2007: p.8).

Bondi Beach might have outstanding heritage value to the nation under Criterion (a).

CRITERION (b) *The* place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Australia's natural or cultural history.
While Bondi Beach is the closest surf beach to the Sydney central business district, there are thirty four surf beaches within the Sydney metropolitan area. These range from Palm Beach in the north to Garie Beach within the Royal National Park in the south. The majority of these beaches comprise a similar geological structure of a length of golden sand contained within sandstone headlands at either end and generally backed by dunes, some of which have disappeared under residential or commercial development. These beaches have been developed to facilitate bathing and recreation to a greater or lesser extent. In some cases, such as at Clovelly development has been minimal. In other cases, such as at Bondi and Manly, there has been greater development to provide a more extensive range of recreational facilities including pavilions, change facilities, sea walls and promenades, and sea bathing pools. There are over 11,000 beaches nationally and similar comments could be made in respect to surf beaches in proximity to Australia's other capital cities.

While Bondi beach might be at one end of the spectrum of the beaches developed to facilitate surf bathing, it does not represent an aspect of Australia's cultural history that is uncommon or endangered.

Bondi Beach does not have outstanding heritage value to the nation under Criterion (b).

CRITERION (c) *The* place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Australia's natural or cultural history
The history of the development of Bondi Beach is well evidenced, both in documents and photographs. While the place may have potential to yield further information, there is little evidence to suggest that this potential is of outstanding value to the nation.
Bondi Beach does not have outstanding heritage value to the nation under Criterion (c).

CRITERION (d) *The* place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of: a class of Australia's natural or cultural places; or a class of Australia's natural or cultural environments.
Bondi Beach displays the characteristics of a class of cultural landscape - the surf beach. The World Heritage definition of a cultural landscape is the "combined works of nature and man" (Operational Guidelines for the Implimentation of the World Heritage Convention 2005: paragraph 47), and this has generally been accepted as a starting definition for cultural landscape. There are thirty four beaches in the Sydney metropolitan area and over 11,000 nation-wide (NMA 2006: p.1). Many of these beaches demonstrate the combined work of nature and man, in that the natural attributes of the individual beaches have been modified through the provision of facilities to accommodate surf or pool bathing. Given the number of members in the class, we are able to say that a class of cultural landscape labelled the 'surf beach' exists in Australia.

Once the landscape class has been identified and defined, the general principle characteristics for the assessment of a cultural landscape, are:

1. the place demonstrates strong links or associations with important historical events or cultural processes;
2. the place demonstrates a completeness or integration of the features and components in and with the landscape and has richness, depth and complexity;
3. the patterns of use and living are clearly legible in the landscape;
4. the features that are retained are fundamental or 'keystone' and there is an absence of disruptive or discordant features or components in the landscape.
5. the relationship between the different features and components remains intact and meaningful, and there is a

retention of authentic features with a high degree of legibility;
6. the place retains a coherent setting.

In the case of Bondi Beach:

1. Bondi Beach has strong links with the important historical cultural processes of the development of surf bathing in Australia, and the development of the surf lifesaving movement. Both these developments can be traced in the way in which the natural attractions of the beach have been adapted by man made facilities. The basic form of the beach - a strand of sand at the waters edge, backed by dunes and enclosed by sandstone headlands – has been adapted to accommodate safe surf bathing and accompanying leisure activities. The strand has been stabilized by the construction of the seawall to control sand drift. The dunes have been levelled to facilitate the parklands and recreational facilities encompassed within Campbell Parade and Queen Elizabeth Drive. The requirements of bathers have been met by imposing over the natural landscape facilities such as the Pavilion, and the bathing pool complex at the southern end of the beach. To facilitate life saving activities, surf lifesaving clubs have been built beside the Pavilion and at North Bondi.
2. Bondi demonstrates an integration of features and components within the landscape in a way that has richness, depth and complexity. While the man-made features have been redeveloped from time to time, the respective elements of the landscape today retain cohesion as a result of the beach and park improvement scheme carried out in 1928-29. The improvement scheme is important in the history of urban design in NSW because of its ambitious scale, date of construction and relative isolation at the time. Its integrity also makes it an exemplar of a trend in landscape design typical of the inter-war era. The use of the 'Mediterranean-Georgian Revival' style in the construction of the Pavilion and the two surf clubs integrates with the planning and scale of the parklands. The repeated symmetry of the arched arcades, the buildings' low-lying forms, the use of terracotta Cordova-style tiles and white-cream walls, have come to represent the lifestyle of the inter-war period for generations of Sydney-siders. Only the original groynes constructed at the Pavilion to facilitate entry from the change rooms to the beach, have been removed. On both headlands, Ben Buckler and Mackenzies Point, the natural landscape has been adapted to provide recreational facilities for beachgoers through the provision of parklands, walkways, seating at viewpoints, etc. These elements of the parks, Pavilion, clubhouses, and seawall, together with the pool facilities at both the northern and southern end of the beach, all combine to give the site richness and complexity within the conceptual framework of bathing.
3. the patterns of use are clearly legible in the Bondi landscape. As a result of the 1928-29 improvement scheme, and the fact that this layout has had little substantive alteration, the design of the landscape to facilitate surf-side recreation is still clearly legible in the layout of the parklands, the Pavilion and the clubhouses, and the pool complexes. Each element is designed to accomplish a different purpose, but those purposes and the relationship between the respective elements can be clearly seen in the extant fabric.
4. there is an absence of disruptive or discordant features or components in the landscape. With little substantive re-development since the 1928-29 beautification program, the landscape retains coherence. Of the original features, only the groynes are missing, having been removed as a defence precaution during World War II. Subsequent development in the area has been controlled by Waverley Council to ensure that inappropriate development does not detract from the beach. Height and development restrictions have been imposed on the western side of Campbell Parade to ensure that the urban landscape within which the beach sits remains appropriate and does not overwhelm the beach landscape.
5. The elements of the 1928-29 improvement program were designed to provide an integrated design plan for the beach. The retention of these elements, almost unchanged, has ensured that the relationship between the different features and components remains intact and meaningful. These original and authentic features enable us to read the site with a high degree of legibility, facilitating understanding of how each element contributed to the overall purpose of enhancing the beach experience.
6. the setting of Bondi Beach remains coherent. The basic natural geological structure of the beach remains. The man made elements introduced in the 1928-29 improvement program work coherently within that natural structure to enhance the experience of surf and pool bathing, and make that experience demonstrable. The development restrictions imposed by Waverley Council on sites around the beach itself are designed to ensure that the present setting of the beach and its facilities are not compromised and remain coherent.

Do the cultural landscape characteristics displayed at Bondi Beach, however, map onto the generic cultural landscape

characteristics in a way that is of outstanding national significance? There are thirty four beaches in the Sydney metropolitan area, and of these Bondi is regarded as the most consistently developed to facilitate surf and pool bathing. The pavilion at Bondi was the largest example of its type in Sydney. The construction of the sea wall in 1911 was amongst the first attempts to control the problem of sand drift at Sydney beaches. The beach itself has always been regarded as Sydney's premier beach site – as evidenced by its use for the Royal Command Surf Carnival in 1954, and its use as the venue of the Beach Volleyball competition at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games.

However, even if Bondi is Sydney's premier beach, this is no assurance that it demonstrates the characteristics of a surf beach cultural landscape in a way that is outstanding at the national level. There are over 11,000 beaches around Australia's coastline (NMA 2006: p.1) and little, if any, comparative information is available on these beaches. This makes it impossible to ascertain whether Bondi, of all these 11,000 beaches, is nationally significant as the exemplar that best demonstrates the characteristics of the surf beach cultural landscape.

Bondi Beach does not have outstanding heritage value to the nation under Criterion (d).

CRITERION (e) *The* place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group.
The predominant aesthetic feature of Bondi beach is the open space of the beach dominated at the edges by rugged, imposing cliffs. Contributing to the aesthetics of the landscape are the contrasting forms of cliffs and beach sands, the colours and movement of water and the ephemeral effects of wave sounds, and surf and wind action. The headlands at either end of the beach frame the beach vistas and provide vantage points for beach and sea prospects. It could be argued, however, that these aesthetic elements at Bondi are typical of many beaches in the Sydney area, and indeed around the national coastline.

It could also be argued that greater aesthetic enjoyment of Sydney beach vistas might be found at beaches like Dee Why or Palm Beach, where the longer sweep of golden sand leads the eye along a beach front less constrained by manmade development to a view of rugged rocky headlands. In the case of Dee Why, the vista from the southern end of the beach combines a sweep of sands and dunes famed on one side by the waves and on the other by the natural coastal scrubland of the Dee Why Lagoon fauna reserve. In the distance, the eye is drawn across the beach to the rugged volcanic headland of Long Reef. Similarly, at Palm Beach the vista from the southern end of the beach leads the eye across the parklands of the spit, with the waves on one side and the calmer waters of Pittwater on the other, to the towering rocky eminence of Barrenjoey headland crowned by its lighthouse - view enjoyed by viewers of the television soap opera 'Home and Away', which is filmed at the beach. As with Bondi, the aesthetic enjoyment of both Dee Why and Palm beaches is enhanced by the interplay of wind and wave, of changing light and colour, and the sounds of the seaside.

A lack of comparative material on the 11,000 Australian beaches, however, makes it difficult to assess whether any aesthetic characteristics displayed at Bondi Beach would in comparison be outstanding at the national level.

Bondi Beach does not have outstanding heritage value to the nation under Criterion (e).

CRITERION (f) *The* place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.
The evidence does not suggest that any of the developed elements of Bondi Beach are outstanding as a demonstration of creative or technical achievement at the time of construction. **Bondi Beach does not have outstanding heritage value to the nation under Criterion (f).**

CRITERION (g) *The* place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
Bondi Beach is significant because of it special associations for Australians. Bondi has a central place in the development of beach culture in Australia. Egalitarian in nature, the beach and surfing had a profound effect in changing our way of life, and the development of our sense of national identity.

Australians are surrounded by over 11,000 beaches and the beach has become an integral part of the Australian cultural

landscape. Australia has long been a highly urbanised country and its major cities are nearly all on the coast. Eighty-five per cent of Australians live within a two-hour drive of the beach, people make over 80 million visits to Australian beaches every year, and surf, sand and sun have become ingrained in Australian life (NMA 2006: p.1). The existence of beaches, together with a culture that enables and encourages people to freely enjoy them, played a large role in shaping Australians' lives and their leisure activities during the 20th century.

At the end of the 19th century, the beach emerged as an alternative cultural landscape to the mythology of the interior. The two settings shared a purity granted by an association with the struggle against nature, but otherwise rested on vastly different pillars. The interior represented notions of toil and hardship against an often unforgiving landscape, while the coast evoked images of health, leisure and democracy in the equally unforgiving environment of the sea.

As the late nineteenth century progressed, sea bathing began to be seen as a healthy, therapeutic activity Sir John Ployer, author of the *History of Cold Bathing* (1701-02) recommended the cold bath for 'nearly every malady in the medical dictionary'. Whereas previous medical theory deemed the 'permeable body' ill-equipped to defend itself against immersion, Ployer discovered that the human physiology thrived in cold water.

Australia's medical fraternity also embraced cold water-bathing. Dr David Thomas, who practised medicine in Manly for over 50 years from the late 1880s, called surfbathing 'the best and cheapest medicine of mankind'. It was also strongly believed that, through exposure of the body to sun, fresh air and salt water, and physical exercise, Australians made themselves stronger, taller, and healthier.

The increasing popularity of surf bathing in Sydney in the early years of the 20th century gradually led to a shift in the way Australians saw themselves. Restrictions on daylight bathing, such as those in force in Sydney since the early 1800s, had prevented surfing from becoming a major pastime. This situation changed at the beginning of the twentieth century as more and more people were using the beach, owing to an increase in leisure time, growth in public transport, and an easing of public attitudes to morality and the revealed body. Police became increasingly reluctant to prosecute daytime bathers. Regulations prohibiting daylight swimming had to be abandoned; styles of dress more suitable for the beach had to be accepted without threatening public morality. In this process the surf lifesaving movement played a central role. The presence of surf lifesavers on Australian beaches had opened them up as sites of recreation in the early 20th century, but while surf lifesaving made people less fearful of the ocean, many still felt uneasy about the beach. They were concerned about the moral dangers associated with the mixing of people, especially as it involved some degree of undressing. Surf lifesavers helped to lessen the concerns about these moral dangers. The earnest public face of the movement initially established at Bondi Beach reassured the moralists (Jaggard 2007: p.5). Surf life saving helped to allay the anxieties surrounding the revealed body by linking the body with discipline, selflessness and national pride (Jaggard 2007: p.6). The practical and ethical service provided by surf lifesavers enabled Australia's beaches to become the nation's playground.

Even in the restrictive regulation bathing costumes of the early years of the 20th century, people were liberated from their woollen trousers, neckties, heavy footwear and restrictive underclothing. Women in particular were encouraged to enjoy the beach and its health giving attributes. By the seaside, they were not only freed from the cumbersome dress of the day, but were also freed from social expectations of female quietness and passivity in the holiday atmosphere of the beach. The approval of medical practitioners and health enthusiasts made the surf a pleasure that could be pursued without guilt, and beaches became a favourite resort. Now pleasurable recreation on the beach could be legitimised as both healthy, and safe, thanks to the presence of the life savers. A new facet of Australian identity: Australians as a fun-loving people gained currency.

The perception of Bondi as a place of wellbeing was strengthened by contrast with the increasingly polluted state of the city centre. The outbreak of plague in the inner city in 1900 coincided with a property boom in Bondi as land developers played upon the public's concerns with health and hygiene to promote the suburb (Historic Houses Trust 2005: p.3).

As it developed, Bondi took on a character distinct from the city's other principal beaches. Through the 1880s and 1890s, property developers in expectation of continued middle-class development, subdivided the area into bungalow-sized plots. However, a sudden demand for housing in the first decade of the 20th century saw investors building

blocks of flats in their place. The size and quality of the apartments were generally more modest than those in neighbouring suburbs and quickly attracted a population of rent-paying, working-class tenants. With tram access extended all the way to the beach in 1894, Bondi also became the most accessible ocean beach to the large working-class population living in the inner-city suburbs. The pleasures of the sun, sea and surf were free to all, showed no partiality to wealth, and the city's poor never felt ostracised from its attractions. The Australian notion of beaches as egalitarian playgrounds took root and Bondi, with its strongly working-class constituency, became the epitome of that idea (Historic Houses Trust 2005: p.3).

Well established by the end of the decade, the egalitarian appeal of Bondi Beach was only reinforced by the Depression, which heightened the attractiveness of inexpensive recreations. 1929 proved to be the beach's turning point. Following the collapse of Wall Street, Australia fell into a deep recession and Bondi, as a rent-paying, working-class suburb suffered more than most. Through the Depression years, armies of unemployed men and women would flock to Bondi to spend the day on the beach. Government and social organisations actively encouraged the use of the city's beaches, believing that exposure to sun, sand and sea would restore the spirits and health of the city's unemployed masses (Historic Houses Trust 2005: p.5).

The Bondi Icebergs swimming club has an important part in the growth of Bondi beach culture. The idea of grown men willingly swimming in the icy Bondi winter waters was a longstanding source of humour in Sydney, and they were a source of inspiration for some of Australia's finest press cartoonists (Andrews 2004: p.55). However, as John Singleton pointed out during the fight to save the club during the 1990s, the Icebergs are iconic and something that all Australians held close to their hearts - larrikins who still had the discipline to complete a minimum 75 swims during five years of swimming almost every winter Sunday (Andrews 2004: p.142). To many the Icebergs were seen to share the Anzac spirit, 'a unique representation of a fast-disappearing Australian culture: one that doesn't take itself too seriously, one where competition is important but where a fair-go generosity, and mateship are even more so (Larry Mountser *Sunday Life Magazine*, quoted in Andrews 2004: p.204).

In 1935, it was reported that half a million people a week, from all classes of the community - in terms of age, wealth and status - met on the common ground of the beach. It was not the exclusive preserve of any single group, for no distinctions of rank or wealth could be identified on the beach. Young and old, rich and poor, male and female, flocked to the beaches. The developing beach culture reinforced an already strong myth of Australian egalitarianism, of a nation where 'a fair go' was available to all. The theoretical notion of beaches as egalitarian bastions was made real by the events of the Depression, and Bondi's status as a people's icon was born (Jaggard 2007: p.9).

Australia's relationship with the beach is reflected in the way we have depicted it in the arts. The beach, and our relationship with it, has provided subject matter for succeeding generations of Australia's finest artists, including: the masters of the Heidelberg School, such as Charles Condor, Tom Roberts and Arthur Streeton; inter-war expressionists like Sidney Nolan, Albert Tucker, Arthur Boyd and John Perceval; and post-war abstractionists like Brett Whiteley (Booth 2001: p.1).

During the 1920s and 30s a school of painters, writers, and photographers consciously sought to develop a new and distinct iconography for Australia. Influenced by the vitalistic and eugenic philosophies coming out of Europe, concerned by the perceived threat to white Australia's racial hegemony by Asian immigration and falling birth-rates, and conscious of the gathering war clouds, artists and writers, including Max Dupain, Charles Meere, D H Lawrence and Douglas Annand, began to create a new Australian archetype (Historic Houses Trust 2005: p.4). The artists increasingly adopted the beach as the natural setting for their idealised Australians. Some of Australia's most iconic images emerged from this period and Bondi is prominent among them as Australia's new playground (Historic Houses Trust 2005: p.4).

The academic modernist, Charles Meere's 1940 painting *Australian Beach Pattern* emphasises the perfection and fecundity of youthful beachside bodies. All the people on the beach, including the lifesavers, are heroic in form and stature, frozen in mid-movement. In contrast, William Dobell's 1961 painting *Bondi Beach* is alive with the movement of the crowd enjoying the freedom of the beach (Historic Houses Trust 2005: p.8).

Posters of beach scenes were produced by Gert Sellheim and Fred Leist for the National Travel Association in the

inter-war years, while Percy Trompf's 1929 poster for the Association was based specifically on a scene from Bondi Beach (Booth 2001: p.1). These depictions became the embodiment of a national culture during the inter-War years. Photographers such as Harold Cazneaux, Philip Quirk, Ann Noon, Max Dupain and Rennie Ellis all photographed beach activities (Booth 2001: p.1). Max Dupain's photos depict warrior-like surf lifesavers battling the elements, while his photo *Sunbather* has achieved iconic status as the quintessential depiction of beachside leisure.

Novelists and short-story writers like Robert Drewe have set their plots within beachside contexts (Booth 2001: p.1). Drewe's best known work, the 1983 novel *The Bodysurfers*, has also been adapted for film, television, radio, and stage productions, and was the inspiration for a series of paintings by Bill Leak. Poets like Adam Lindsay Gordon, John Le Gay Brereton and David Campbell have also extolled our relationship with the beach and the sea (Booth 2001: p.1).

The film industry was quick to notice the sensualisation of Australian beaches through the 1960s and the beach was reinvented as a place of physical pleasure. The trend precipitated a genre of Australian beach films. A number of feature films, such as *Puberty Blues*, *The Last Wave*, *The Empty Beach*, *The Place at the Coast*, and *Weekend with Kate* have all been set at Australian beaches, which have also given rise to multiple specialist surfing films such as *Palm Beach* (Booth 2001: p.1). Bondi, with both logistical and photogenic recommendations, was an obvious choice as a location and launched its film career in 1959 with *The summer of the seventeenth doll* (transposed from St Kilda where the play on which it was based is set), followed by *They're* a *weird mob* in 1966 (Historic Houses Trust 2005: p.8). From the 1970s Bondi became Australia's default media beach, the almost inevitable backdrop for any artistic or commercial project that required a beach setting (Historic Houses Trust 2005: p.8).

Television producers build plots, themes and scenes around life in beach suburbs and towns in such productions as *Home and Away*, and *Sea Change*. Bondi Beach itself has been the setting of six Australian television series since the 1980s, including *Bondi Banquet* for SBS and *Bondi Rescue* for the Ten Network (Historic Houses Trust 2005: p.8).

Bondi Beach remains the third most visited site in Sydney after the Opera House and the Harbour Bridge, and the 380 bus route from Circular Quay to Bondi Beach is the most profitable in Sydney (Historic Houses Trust 2005: p.10).

Bondi Beach has played a nationally significant role in the development of Australia's self image. Love of the beach is a defining characteristic of the Australian way of life (Jaggard 2007: p.1). Bondi Beach is one of the world's most famous beaches and is important to both the Australian community and to visitors. The beach, with its golden sands, parks, and the blue waters of the bay, framed within its rocky headlands, embodies a powerful sense of place and has come to symbolise Australia's way of life and leisure. It is where Australians meet nature's challenge in the surf and is strongly associated with the Bronzed Aussie myth of easygoing hedonism and endeavour balanced with relaxation. A place full of Australian spirit, synonymous with Australian beach culture, surfing and the surf life saving movement, it is recognised internationally. Australia has changed from being a collection of colonies, steeped in the attitudes, customs and practices of the 'Mother' country, to a more self-confident, distinctive culture, more at ease with itself in a very different environment. People are increasingly able to appreciate and enjoy what the continent has to offer. The beach and the surf lifesaving movement established at the beach facilitated a movement away from the restrictive attitudes of 19th century morality and the view that hard work was to be valued as morally uplifting, and enjoyment for its own sake was immoral. The beach became the source of morally acceptable healthy pleasure. With increasing numbers of people engaging in surf bathing in the early decades of the 20th century, particularly during the Depression, the Australian notion of beaches as egalitarian playgrounds took root. Bondi, with its strongly working-class constituency, came to embody the idea that the pleasures of the sun, sea and surf were free to all. The development of the Bondi Icebergs swimming club assisted in the development of that egalitarian, hedonistic beach culture. The beach reinforced an already strong myth of Australian egalitarianism, of a nation where 'a fair go' was available to all. The central role of beaches, and Bondi Beach in particular, in Australia's self image is reflected in the use of the beach by painters, filmmakers, poets and writers in analysing the growth of this new self image and reflecting it back to Australian society. Bondi has played a central role in this process, and has come to be viewed both within Australia and internationally as the quintessential Australian beach.

Bondi Beach might have outstanding heritage value to the nation under Criterion (g).

CRITERION (h) *The* place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's special association with

the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural or cultural history.
There is little evidence to suggest that Bondi Beach is nationally significant for its association with the life or work on any particulat person or group of persons.

Bondi Beach does not have outstanding heritage value to the nation under Criterion (h).

CRITERION (i) *The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance as part of Indigenous traditions.*

There is no evidence to suggest that Bondi Beach is important as part of Indigenous tradition.

Bondi Beach does not have outstanding heritage value to the nation under Criterion (i).

History:
19th century to 1920:
The attractions of sea bathing in Australia are almost as old as the colony itself. By 1803 Governor King had issued an edict forbidding convicts from bathing in Sydney Harbour because of 'the dangers of sharks and stingrays, and for reasons of decorum' (National Museum of Australia 2007: p.49). By 1834 the *Sydney Gazette* was reporting that bathing is 'the favourite recreation in Sydney', so much so that in 1838 bathing at Sydney's harbour and surf beaches was banned between 9.00am and 8.00pm on pain of fine (NMA 2006: p.49). The first drowning in the Australian surf was also recorded in the *Sydney Gazette* on 18 July 1818 at Bondi Beach (National Museum of Australia 2007: p.49).

During the middle of the nineteenth century the Bondi Beach area started to become popular for picnics and other recreational activities. This popularity has continued, with the exception of the war years, unabated to this day.

A grant of 200 acres (81 hectares) of land around the beach was first made in 1810 to William Roberts, and remained in the Roberts family until subdivided in 1852 by another family member, Francis O'Brien. In 1855, O'Brien made the beach and adjacent land available to the public as picnic grounds and a pleasure resort. He closed it in 1877, due to lack of control over people's rowdy behaviour. Although the land was freehold, calls were made for the beach to become a reserve. The Municipal Council of Waverley was proclaimed in 1859, and from that time efforts were made to establish the beach as a public reserve. Eventually in November 1881 an area at Bondi Beach was surveyed by the NSW Government, and in June 1882 an area of 25 acres 2 roods 16 perches (approx. 10.3 hectares) was resumed and dedicated as a public reserve. In 1885 the Council of the Municipality of Waverley was appointed Trustees of 'Bondi Park'. In November 1915 the area of the reserve was again increased to 32 acres 2 roods (approx. 13 hectares) (Clive Lucas et al 1997: p.68).

Until the twentieth century, sea bathing was restricted by legislation and was officially prohibited between 9.00 am and 8.00 pm by Section 77 of the *Police Offences Act (1901)(NSW)*. This situation began to ease by the beginning of the twentieth century and the law never seems to have been vigorously pursued by the authorities (Clive Lucas et al 1997: p.108)

While the beach at Bondi is one of many surfing beaches along the coastline of metropolitan Sydney, Bondi was a particularly popular destination. The first tramway reached the southern end of the beach in 1884 and a regular tram service from Circular Quay to Bondi was begun in 1902. In 1911 these tramways were extended along the beachfront. The fast pace with which the early steam trams thundered down the final hill to Bondi Beach gave rise to the vernacular saying 'to shoot through like a Bondi tram' – to leave in a hurry.

Waverley Council erected the first shelter or surf bathing sheds in about 1903 and as a result of increased interest in surf bathing, a number of changes occurred including the building of bathing sheds (1911), the construction of a sea wall (1911 extended in 1915), construction of a marine drive (with tramway turning circle in the middle), tree reserve, and new club houses at Bondi and Bondi North Life Saving Clubs.

The world's first surfing newspaper, *The Surf* (later known as *The Surf and Suburban News*) was established in

December 1917 by a group of Bondi surf bathers. As part of its mandate, the newspaper covered the activities of individual surf clubs along the coast. Details of rescue work during the period were also provided. During WWI club members on active service were sent copies of *The Surf* to keep them informed of events on their beach, and some regularly wrote letters to the Editor as a way of keeping in touch (Brawley 2007: pp.90-1)

In December 1883 residents petitioned Council for baths at the southern end of the beach, and in 1884 baths were built over a natural rock pool. In 1892 the Bondi Amateur Swimming Club (BASC) was formed. The baths were also used by the Bondi Ladies Amateur Swimming Club which was initially formed in 1907 (reformed in 1920), and which was for a time before World War II the largest such club in Australia. Several women champions came from the club including Pam Singleton who competed at the Melbourne Olympics in 1956. The two swimming clubs amalgamated in 1969. The popularity of the BASC contributed to Council's work on the pool. In 1898 the Baths were extended; and in 1911 they were remodelled. The pool was lengthened to 50 yards in 1915 and then 50m in 1930. In 1931 the baths were repaired although they were in need of rebuilding. The entire pool was repoured in 1978 but using the existing framework.

1920s and 1930s:
During the 1920s improvements to the beach, park and baths were adopted including a kiosk, surf shed, lavoratories, band stand and increased pedestrian and vehicular traffic capacity. By the end of 1933 Waverley Council was reported to have spent approximately £162,000 on the improvement works (Clive Lucas et al 1997: p.72). The pavilion, and other works forming the rest of the scheme, were opened on 21 December 1929. The crowd of onlookers was estimated at 160,000 to 200,000. By 1928 the number of visitors carried by tram and 'bus to Bondi was estimated at 14 million, and by 1929 an average of 60,000 people were visiting the beach on a summer weekend day (Clive Lucas et al 1997: p.73).

The pavilion served several purposes, including offering changing facilities for swimmers, food outlets and entertainment venues. There were Turkish baths and a ballroom and entertainment areas on the upper floor that took advantage of the excellent location. Tunnels provided bathers with access from the change rooms to the beach under Marine Drive, from which bathers exited via the concrete groynes which also served to mitigate sand drift problems.

The use of the 'Mediterranean-Georgian Revival' style with the repeated symmetry of arched arcades, its low-lying form, use of terracotta Cordova-style tiles and white-cream walls proved to be an ideal style for a beach front setting. It has come to represent the lifestyle of the inter-war period for generations in Sydney. The pavilion at Bondi was the largest example of its type in Sydney. In addition to the change facilities provided on the lower floor, the upper floor of the pavilion was operated as a separate entertainment area providing dining and supper dances. It became a popular entertainment and social venue, most notable for Roy Starfield's Supper Dances. The pavilion was unique in Sydney for the time with a combination of entertainment facilities and fine location. The pavilion's planning originally also incorporated an amphitheatre at the rear, a relatively common feature at the time but the example at Bondi, however, was more sophisticated than others.

The park as part of the improvement scheme is arguably a landmark in the history of urban design in NSW because of its ambitious scale, date of construction and relative isolation at the time of construction. In view of its integrity it is also an exemplar of a trend in landscape design typical of the inter-war era (Clive Lucas et al 1997: p.110). In the park the use of pedestrian bridges and tunnels over and under Campbell Parade and Marine Drive was an imaginative engineering solution to the introduction of grand traffic thoroughfares (Clive Lucas et al 1997: p.111).

The 1930s were a popular time at the beach and Bondi drew not only Sydneysiders but also people from elsewhere in Australia and overseas visitors. Advertising literature of the 1930s referred to Bondi Beach as the "Playground of the Pacific". The iconography centred on female bathers and the pavilion. This image of the pavilion and location at Bondi Beach came to represent at a national level an aspect of the Australian lifestyle, and the beach and the pavilion are integrally linked in this association.

1940s to the present:
The period of the early 1940s was dominated by World War II. After the outbreak of war with Japan, the Army took control of the beach and facilities including the Bondi Pavilion. In preparing the beach for defence against enemy

landing the groynes of the pavilion (which projected onto the beach for access and stabilising sand drift) were demolished, and the beach front generally fenced off (Clive Lucas et al 1997: p.77). Despite these emergency measures the first floor of the pavilion at least continued in its pre-war mode with Roy Starfield's supper dances.

The war years of the 1940s produced far-reaching changes in the social and economic climate of Australia. Bathing patterns had changed, and the post-War popularity of the new nylon bathing costumes meant there was less reliance on changing sheds. The post-war era also saw increased use of cars which facilitated greater choice in the number of beaches that bathers could visit. The reliance on public transport began to fade. These developments affected the future of the pavilion, which Waverley Council (faced with the financial burden of maintaining the building) was ready to recognise (Clive Lucas et al 1997: p.77). An improvement scheme for Bondi Park and Beach was submitted to Waverley Council in January 1952 but never acted upon.

An indication of Bondi's significance at the time is that in February 1954 a "Royal Command" Surf Carnival was held at Bondi Beach in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh. Bondi Beach had the distinction of being specifically chosen for the event. As a result of the event, Her Majesty gave permission for the Marine Parade to be renamed 'Queen Elizabeth Drive' (Clive Lucas et al 1997: p.77).

Although the beach was popular, Waverley Council was losing money on the pavilion. By 1959 the pavilion was unlicensed and the fabric of the building was declining. By the 1960s one third of the men's changing area was closed and the auditorium was rarely used (Clive Lucas et al 1997: pp.79-80). The pavilion generally declined during the 1960s, although an occasional plan was mooted about its future.

By the early 1970s the pavilion was seen as a white elephant. It was at this time that a reprieve and a new direction arrived, with the Bondi Theatre Group gaining approval to convert the ballroom into a theatre (Clive Lucas et al 1997: p.81). The theatre was opened by Prime Minister Gough Whitlam in 1975, and the pavilion became the centre of Waverley Council's cultural program in 1977 (Clive Lucas et al 1997: p.81). This saw the demolition of the change rooms, lockers, the former Turkish baths. The courtyard was replaced by a grassed amphitheatre, netball court, craft workshops, art gallery, child care centre, gymnasia and a restaurant, and the building was licensed again. The Bondi Pavilion Community Centre was opened by NSW Premier Neville Wran in 1978. In 1980 Council sponsored a mural in the courtyard, and in 1987 a new forecourt was constructed. Substantial repairs were carried out in the mid 1990s and by the late 1990s the pavilion was the centre for various community and cultural events (Clive Lucas et al 1997: p.82).

In 2000 the beach took on a new guise as the venue for the Sydney Olympic Games beach volley ball competition. Recent changes from 2002 to 2005 to the Bondi Surf Pavilion included construction of new forecourt community facilities by Tanner Architects; a glazed semi-circular addition to northern end of pavilion to house a seafood restaurant; restoration of the fenestration to northern end of the east facade; and relocation of the Foundation stone. In September 2007 female government leaders and spouses in Sydney for the APEC meeting were invited to lunch at the 'Icebergs' restaurant at Bondi Beach by the wife of the Australian Prime Minister, Mrs Janette Howard.

The Bondi 'Icebergs'

The well known Bondi Icebergs (regarded as cranks' at the time) were formed in 1929. The Icebergs grew out of a group of swimming enthusiasts who enjoyed swimming in winter. To be a member of the club, swimmers have to take the plunge into the icy waters of Bondi Baths on at least three out of every four Sundays during winter months, for a period of five years. The Icebergs did not have a clubhouse for the first three years of their existence. In 1932, a year after the baths had been extended, the Bondi Ladies Swimming club moved to a new clubhouse nearby and the Waverley Municipal Council offered their old premises adjacent to the pool to the Icebergs. The Icebergs would eventually take out a long lease on the clubhouse at an initial annual rental of one £1 (Andrews 2004: p.75). Additionally, on 14 June 1932 the Waverley Council Assistant Engineer submitted plans and specifications for the erection of a weatherboard club room for the Icebergs Club, at a cost of £150. These premises were to be their home for more than a quarter of a century, but by the mid-1950s it became obvious that a new clubhouse would have to be built. They had seen this coming and for several years had been putting aside money to help pay for the rebuilding. The 'Bergs' referred to this nest egg as the club's 'Frozen Assets'. Once again negotiations with Waverley Council got underway. The Council decided to build a new clubhouse on the condition that the Icebergs contribute the money they

had been saving. The 'Bergs" cash contributed to around a third of the construction costs (Andrews 2004: p.75).

Of the rules under which the Bondi Icebergs operated, Rule 15B was regarded as the most important. Under Rule 15B members were required to complete three swims a month during winter months for five years, and if:
"A member fails to complete three swims in one calendar month during the winter season, he or she is then required to submit a written explanation to the Swimming Committee prior to the first Tuesday after the last Sunday of each month, giving their explanation for failing to complete the compulsory swims."
The rule was rigidly enforced. Failure to offer an explanation, or where that explanation was rejected by the Committee, meant that the member was barred from the club for twelve months, and not even permitted to come to the club as a visitor (Andrews 2004: p.25).

The idea of grown men willingly swimming in the icy Bondi winter waters was the subject of long standing jibes, both private and public. The Sydney press often reported on the winter antics of the 'Bergs' and they were a source of inspiration for some of Australia's finest press cartoonists including Brodie Mack and Emile Mercier (Andrews 2004: p.55).

On 5 September 1971 members of the Icebergs club were involved in the dramatic rescue of a 27 year old woman parachutist from Cremorne, Mrs Pattie King. The desperate struggle to save the young woman was watched by more than 10,000 people who had gathered at Bondi beach to watch the finish of the first 'City to Surf' race (Andrews 2004: p.109). Mrs King was one of ten Australian Parachute Federation members who were to make a display jump from 10,000 ft and land on the beach. A sudden drop in the wind caused three of them to fall into the sea. Mrs King hit the water only five yards from MacKenzie Point beside the South Bondi baths, where 12ft waves were breaking onto the rocks. The Bondi Icebergs were lined up ready to start a race in the baths and two members immediately dived in to help (Andrews 2004: p.109). The two Icebergs reached Mrs King, but could not keep her head above the water, and with each wave she became more entangled with the parachute lines. The power rescue boat from the beach got to within 10 yards of the drowning woman and her supporters, and a crewman dived in with a line and tied it to the chute hoping to tow her away from the rocks but the boat itself was smashed on the rocks (Icebergs 2007). Fifteen Icebergs fought desperately to keep Mrs King up, but her parachute and sodden equipment were too heavy. She was underwater for about 20 minutes because she kept snagging on the rocky bottom (Icebergs 2007). Three doctors who had taken part in the City to Surf race tried desperately to resuscitate Mrs King, but she was to die four days later in hospital (Andrews 2004: p.110).

Because of their attempts to save her, the Bondi Icebergs became the first Club ever to receive the Certificate of Merit for Bravery of the Royal Humane Society of NSW (Andrews 2004: p.110).

In 1993 tests on the Icebergs clubhouse revealed that it was riddled with concrete cancer, and a massive upgrade was required (Andrews 2004: pp.137-8). Waverley Council was reluctant to bear the cost and recommended demolition and the disbandment of the club. The Labor dominated Council was also of the opinion that a 'men only' club was politically incorrect and had outlasted its usefulness (Andrews 2004: p.137). Members of the 'Bergs' commenced a successful community campaign to save the club based on the slogan "Remember the Titanic" with 'SS Waverley Council' foundering on a Bondi Iceberg (Andrews 2004: p.138). During 1993 the Council rejected proposal after proposal, but the tide of public opinion was turning against it. The NSW Government under Premier John Fahey, weighed into the fight suggesting that the Icebergs clubhouse was an Australian icon. The Federal Opposition Leader, John Hewson, stated bluntly that the clubhouse would be demolished "over my bloody dead body" (Andrews 2004: pp.139-40).

Eventually the advertising and media tycoon, John Singleton, was to come to the club's rescue and secured financial support for the demolition of the old club building and the construction of new modern facilities. Singleton saw the Icebergs as iconic and something that all Australians held close to their hearts - larrikins who still had the discipline to complete their five years of swimming almost every winter Sunday (Andrews 2004: p.142). In October 1998 a $10 million development application was lodged with Council for a four story building on the space of the old clubhouse. One of the Council's persistent objections to the Iceberg's club was removed when the club admitted women members as from May 1995 (Andrews 2004: p.127). The ground floor of the new club building, opened in 2002 and contains public facilities, with the first floor becoming the headquarters of Surf Lifesaving Australia, the heirs of the surf

lifesaving organisation that had been born on Bondi Beach over ninety years earlier. The top two floors contain the Iceberg's clubhouse, and a restaurant to a design by Lazzarini and Pickering Architetti in conjunction with Tanner Architects completed in 2004.

The commencement of the Australian surf life saving movement at Bondi

Through the nineteenth century the rise in the popularity of swimming in Europe raised issues about the proper training of swimmers. The British Royal Humane Society educated people on resuscitation techniques and acknowledged the bravery of swimmers in rescues, but provided no instruction on how to actually effect a rescue and secure a patient. Impressed by the active approach to educating the public advocated by the Melbourne-based Royal Humane Society of Australasia, English swimmer William Henry and his friend Archibald Sinclair approached the English Royal Humane Society stressing the need for greater public education by the organisation, including practical instruction on securing and saving a drowning person (Brawley 2007: p.12). The two men and a number of supporters formed the 'Life Saving Society' in 1891. As the society's membership grew a handbook of practical lifesaving techniques was formalised which borrowed heavily from the squad drill section of the 1892 British Infantry Drill Book and the Manual of the Medical Staff Corps (Brawley 2007: p.12).

The late 1880s also saw swimming pools and swimming clubs appear throughout the Sydney metropolitan area. In part, public interest in swimming was fuelled by the efforts of a group of commissioned and senior non-commissioned officers of the NSW Army Medical Corps, who were stationed at Victoria Barracks at Paddington in Sydney. Aware of the benefits of exercise for health, the group saw swimming as an especially restorative pastime and many of the early swimming clubs that emerged at this time were formed as a direct consequence of the initiatives set in motion by these men (Brawley 2007: p.12).

The increasing popularity of bathing in Sydney raised a number of issues concerning the prevention of drowning. Given Henry and Sinclair's assertion that a lifesaving instructor should be familiar with the Infantry Drill Book, John Bond of the NSW Army Medical Corps took on the mantle of instructor of a life saving class (Brawley 2007: p.14). He moved to Waverley in 1893, became interested in the activities of the Waverley Amateur Swimming Club and spent time coaching other club members in life saving techniques. With the success of Bond's early classes, the Waverley branch of the Life Saving Society sought to expand its activities to the nearby Bondi Baths by affiliating with the Bondi Amateur Swimming Club. A demonstration by Bond and his students in lifesaving techniques was held at the Bondi Baths on Commemoration Day 1895 (Brawley 2007: p.12). For his achievements in the introduction of early lifesaving techniques and training Bond was elected a life member of the Bondi Beach Surf Lifesavers Club in March 1909, and inducted into the SLSA Hall of Fame on 18 March 2005 (SLSA 2007).

There has always been a debate in surf lifesaving circles about whether the first surf lifesaving club was at Bondi or Bronte Beach. In late 1906 a local man nearly drowned at Bronte. Responding to this incident, a group of his friends began to meet irregularly on Sunday afternoons to train in the use of the lifeline positioned on the beach by Waverley Council. In February 1907 a rescue at Bronte nearly had fatal results when the lifeline was not immediately available because the group were training with it, and as a result Waverley Council ordered the group to cease their activities (Jaggard 2006: p.34). Because of the Council's chastisement of the Bronte irregulars, bathers at Bondi resolved to place their attempts to protect the public on a more formal footing. In consequence of the drowning of 16 year old Reginald Bourne at Bondi on 10 February 1907 (Brawley 2007: p.31), what is now regarded as the world's first formally documented surf life saving club, the Bondi Surf Bathers' Life Saving Club (HBSBLSC 1956: p. 10), was formed at the Royal Hotel, Bondi Junction, on 21 February 1907 (NMA 2006: P.3).

As the city's beachside councils accepted their control of the beaches in the wake of the passage of the *NSW Local Government Act (1906)*, they looked beyond issues of protecting surf bathers and decided that issues of public decency related to surf bathing would also be their responsibility. At the beginning of the surfing season of 1907/08, Manly, Waverley and Randwick councils issued ordinances concerning acceptable dress for surf bathers. Many bathers regarded the new costume code as draconian. Further, the costume itself was seen to be impracticable and dangerous for bathers and surf lifesavers. The Bondi Surf Bathers Life Saving , Manly Surf Club, and a private social swimming club on North Steyne Beach launched a campaign against the new costume ordinance. It was as a result of this that the clubs decided that an umbrella organisation representing all the emerging surf clubs on Sydney's beaches would be desirable. The meeting to form this umbrella body took place at the Sydney Sports Club on 18 October 1907, and

resulted in the creation of the New South Wales Surf Bathing Association. This was the parent body of today's organisation, Surf Lifesaving Australia, and it is from this date that the surf lifesaving movement in Australia marks its birth (NMA 2007: P.3).

The aims and objectives of the Bondi club were to train members on how to rescue a drowning person, the correct procedure in resuscitation, to provide efficient life-saving apparatus, to regulate surf bathing, and to promote surf bathing as a sport and recreation. Many of the key features of surf rescue were laid down in these early years, and several were Australian inventions. The custom of surf patrol members wearing red and yellow quartered caps to identify themselves as lifesavers commenced at Bondi during the summer of 1907-08 (Brawley 2007: p.61). The surfboat developed from small open boats such as those used by the Sly brothers of Manly from 1903 to rescue distressed bathers from the surf. The first surf ski was made in 1913 and adapted for lifesaving by the 1930s. Resuscitation methods, which were on the whole imported from overseas, also changed markedly over time (NMA 2006: p.5). From 1922, Association-patrolled beaches gradually began to have manned lookout towers or vantage points with shark alarm bells, and even shark harpoons in surfboats. To recognise the valour of surf lifesavers and the very great demands made on them in the course of rescues, the Surf Bathing Association introduced the Meritorious Awards system in 1919 (NMA 2006: p.5).

Along with the lifesaver's cap, flags and surfboat, the surf-reel is one of the most identifiable of surf lifesaving's objects. A model reel was developed by members of the Bondi Club, Lyster Ormsby, John Bond, and Percy Flynn, using a cotton reel and hair pins, and the first prototype was manufactured by a Sydney firm of coachbuilders, Olding and Parker (HBSBLSC: p.8). This reel was first used at Bondi in a display on 23 December 1906 (My Beach 2007). The reel, line and belt were used in lifesaving rescues for seven decades, and events centred on the reel became a regular element of surf lifesaving carnivals. Since the introduction of the inflatable rescue boat (IRB), the rescue board and the rescue tube in the 1970s and 1980s, the reel has gradually been relegated to competition use only (NMA 2006: p.7). But it remains an important symbol for surf clubs around the country, and even today in the March-past at Australian surf carnivals each club squad consists of a standard bearer and a 'rescue and resuscitation' party carrying a reel emblazoned with the club's name and crest.

The Bronze Medallion was introduced in 1910 by the Surf Bathing Association as its measure of proficiency, and is still the basic qualification required to perform surf rescues today. The Association's Bronze Medallion proficiency test included use of the reel, and it was adopted widely in New South Wales and interstate, and remained largely unchanged for decades (NMA 2006: p.7). The first Bronze Medallion squad was examined at Bondi Beach on 2 January 1910, and the Bondi Surf Bather's Life Saving Club's Sid Fullward was the first man to gain a Bronze Medallion (HBSBLSC: p.10).

The first woman to gain her Bronze Medallion was Edie Kieft of Greenmount in northern NSW. Kieft was 15 years old when she qualified for her Bronze Medallion in January 1923, and was 84 when she finally received the award, since women were not allowed to become full members until 1981. Because Kieft had registered using only her initial and surname, the Surf Bathing Association of New South Wales didn't realise she was a woman. When they discovered that 'E' stood for Edith, they withheld the award. Kieft (by now Mrs Rowe and a grandmother) was finally awarded her bronze medallion in 1991 (NMA 2006: p.9). Women now comprise 40 per cent of club membership. The first woman surf club captain was selected in 1987, although it was not until 1998 that a woman became a member of SLSA's governing National Council (NMA 2006: p.24).

Sunday 6 February 1938 - 'Black Sunday' - bought home to the Australian public the value of the volunteer surf life savers who manned Sydney's beaches. An estimated 35,000 people were on Bondi beach, and a large group of lifesavers were about to commence a surf race when three freak waves hit the beach and hundreds of people were swept out to sea (Brawley 2007: p.133). Eighty lifesavers went to their aid and many of these lifesavers had to be saved themselves, as desperate swimmers grabbed onto rescue lines and dragged them underwater. Due to the dedication of the lifesavers 300 people were eventually rescued (Australian Culture and Recreation Portal 2007), 60 immersion cases required treatment, while 35 were unconscious and required resuscitation (Jaggard 2006: p.28). As more and more people were rescued the Bondi clubhouse began to resemble a hospital emergency ward. Four people did not respond to resuscitation, and the body of a fifth was recovered some days later (Jaggard 2006: p.28). Bondi's 'Black Sunday' remains the largest mass surf rescue recorded in Australia's history.

The events of 'Black Sunday' 1938 had taken place against the backdrop of Europe's descent into war and chaos. At this time the Australian surf lifesaver offered an alternative vision to the ideals of masculinity promulgated by Nazism and Fascism. Writing of the achievements of Bondi's lifesavers during the events of Black Sunday, English writer Paul McGuire informed Britain that:
'Australian Surf and Life Saving Clubs are volunteer services, regiments with an heroic tradition earned in the saving, not the slaughter of life'. (quoted in Brawley 2007: p.144)

Within 18 months of the events of Black Sunday, Australians would again be at war and as they had 25 years before, Bondi's lifesavers would answer the call in numbers that rivalled and surpassed the enlistment rates of any other Australian community organisation (Brawley 2007: p.144). Records show that 210 club members enlisted in the armed services, of which 14 were to die on active service (HBSBLSC: p.22).

The familiar red and gold flags that have become to hold an enduring place on Australian beaches were introduced at Bondi during the war, when reduced club membership made it difficult to patrol the whole beach. The flags would be positioned along the safest stretch of water, and bathers advised to 'swim between the flags'.

The Bondi march-past pennant became part of Australian military folklore. In February 1940 the club had paid £6 to have a replacement standard made. When the club's pre-war standard bearer in march-past competitions enlisted in mid-1940, he took the old standard to the Middle East with him. On meeting other lifesavers he asked them to donate their unit colour patch or other insignia, which was then sewn onto the pennant. The pennant travelled through the Middle East and the Pacific before advancing into the Philippines with Macarthur's headquarters, collecting patches as it went. It was retuned to the club in November 1945, and remains on display in the clubhouse (Brawley 2007: p.161).

Many Bondi lifesavers took their interest in surf lifesaving with them to war. During their time in Palestine, the 2AIF found a number of beaches at which its men and women could relax. In the wake of several unfortunate drownings, Australian military authorities began to seconde former surf life savers to patrol beaches such as Tel Aviv and Neuserat. As well as beach patrols, the 2AIF also held a number of surf carnivals as a means of rest and recreation (Brawley 2007: p.161). At a carnival at Tel Aviv beach in September 1941, watched by General Sir Thomas Blamey, a nine event program included a march-past, rescue and resuscitation, and a surf race. A carnival at the same beach in October 1941 attracted 160 entrants for the surf race, 24 teams for the rescue and resuscitation competition, and 28 teams for the beach relay (Jaggard 2006: p.194).

In the Pacific campaign surf lifesavers also found themselves back on beaches doing patrols to protect their brothers and sisters-in-arms. In 1944 Australian units were sent to the island of Bougainville in the Solomon Islands to replace American units needed for the invasion of the Philippines. Torokina Beach was out of bounds to the then resident American forces after a number of drownings. The Bondi men joined with a number of other surf lifesavers from New South Wales and Western Australia to form the Solomon Islands Surf Life Saving Club at Torokina. The Solomon Islands Club patrolled the beach, and held carnivals. More than 5,000 spectators watched the 1945 carnival (Jaggard 2006: p.194). By mid-1945 the club had 286 members including over 100 Bronze Medallion holders (Jaggard 2006: p.194). By the time the club disbanded at the end of the war, they had trained and examined 300 members of the military for the Bronze Medallion (Brawley 2007: pp.161-3).

Following the War, the internationalisation of the surf lifesaving movement gained pace. On the evening of 2 November 1953 at the London Coliseum, a Royal Command Performance took place before the newly crowned Queen Elizabeth II. The performance concluded with an 'Australian Tableau' which included cricketers, servicemen, and Indigenous peoples. At the rear of the tableau, dominated by a large flag, were six lifesavers dressed in Bondi march-past costumes and caps and the flag was Bondi's march-past standard. The Queen subsequently issued a royal command to the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia to hold a 'Royal Surf Carnival' at Bondi Beach during her tour of Australia in 1954. It was held on 6 February, 16 years to the day after the momentous events of 'Black Sunday' (Brawley 2007: pp.202-3). Both royal events were widely reported in the Australian and international press and stimulated interest in the surf lifesaving movement.

At the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne, the opportunity was taken to hold an international surf carnival at Torquay

beach outside Melbourne. Teams from California and Hawaii in the USA, as well as from New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and Ceylon took part in front of crowds of athletes and visitors that had come to take part in the Olympic Games (Walding 2003: p.22). Many of these teams and athletes were to take Australian life saving techniques back to their homelands. Another more significant outcome from the carnival was the formation by the representatives of the participating nations of the International Council of Surf Lifesaving.

Another major evolution in the development of post-war surf lifesaving in Australia was the encouragement of pre-adolescent members, or 'Nippers', during the 1960s. The Nippers program was introduced to arrest falling membership and to attract young people aged from eight years to young teens to surf lifesaving. While there had been junior clubs in the 1920s and 1930s they were essentially in name only, whereas Nipper members had the opportunity to learn and participate. The first Nippers group started in the Illawarra club, NSW, in the mid-1960s and the concept soon spread interstate. The first interstate carnival specifically for Nippers alone was held in January 1972 at Palm Beach in Queensland. Within two years, teams from New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania and Western Australia were competing, and other states followed (NMA 2006: p.24).

In 1991 the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia changed again to 'Surf Life Saving Australia' (SLSA), its present name. Today SLSA is Australia's largest volunteer water safety organisation. By 2006 there was a national membership of 120,000 members representing 305 clubs (SLSA 2007). Forty percent of these active members are female (Jaggard 2006: p.223). Surf lifesavers have rescued more than 520,000 people in the 80 years since records have been kept, with the number of rescues each season in recent years fluctuating between 8,000 and 12,000. An independent economic study conducted for SLSA in 2005 concluded that if not for the presence of volunteer surf lifesavers, 485 people would drown each year and 313 would be permanently incapacitated as a result of accidents in the surf (Australian Culture and Recreation Portal 2007). The study found that the economic and social value of surf lifesaving services provided by volunteer lifesavers is worth more than $1.4 billion per year (SLSA 2007). Today in NSW, over 58,000 members spend in excess of 270,000 voluntary hours patrolling 129 clubs to protect 1,590 kilometres of coastline from Fingal Beach in the north to Pambula Beach in the south (SLSNSW 2007). During the 2006-07 season they performed 6,319 rescues, 188,824 preventative actions and treated 30,940 first aid cases.

Condition:

The condition of the place is good. In recent years considerable efforts have been made to clean the beach water of pollutants by lengthening the Bondi sewerage outfall. Portions of the weathered sandstone dykes were previously used by Waverley Shire Council as a garbage dump is now discontinued. The major potential danger is from vandalism and abrasion from increasing pedestrian tourist traffic. The pavilion has been repaired and refurbished on several occasions; substantial works were undertaken in the 1970s and the 1990s. An external visual inspection made by Clive Lucas Stapleton & Partners in 2007 for Waverley Council found the condition of the Bondi Surf Pavilion and the Bondi Surf Bathers Life Saving Club Building to be generally satisfactory, and that routine maintenance is carried out. There are no aspects of the physical condition of the building which affect the significance of the pavilion. The landscaped area of Bondi Park, including the picnic shelters and footpaths, were the subject of an upgrade in late 2003 and are generally in fair condition. There is signage over the façade and various alterations have been made. In 1994, the Icebergs' clubhouse and pool area at the southern end of the beach was in a poor state of repair including waterproofing problems and concrete cancer. In 2002, a new Iceberg's clubhouse was opened.

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End of Report
