

# MARION MARLINS MASTERS SWIMMING CLUB INC

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 2021

### Summary

Your club, now in its 41<sup>st</sup> year, enjoyed another successful year. Fortunately, all of our activities were able to proceed despite some ongoing restrictions due to COVID-19. Despite some uncertainty going forward your Committee and volunteers will continue to work hard to meet the fitness, training, competition and social needs of members. Some of the key accomplishments in 2021 were as follows:

- Maintained a very strong balance sheet which will allow the Committee to consider ways to provide more benefits to members in 2022
- Increased our membership and welcomed 23 new members to the club.
- Hosted a very successful SA State Masters Open Water Swimming Championships in 2021 at a new venue, Somerton SLSC, raising significant funds for the club
- Some outstanding results achieved by individuals in pool and open water swim competitions; less success as a club.
- Hosted a number of well attended social functions and a fund-raising event

### Committee:

A club like ours cannot function and continue to prosper without the efforts of its committee members, all of whom are volunteers. I personally would like to thank the Committee for their support and hard work throughout the year-it has been another strong team effort.

Key positions on our Executive were filled by **Ace Lewis** as Treasurer, **Heather Carbone** as Nominations Officer/Recorder/Registrar, **Tony Fowler** as Safety Officer, and me as Acting Secretary. Attempts to fill the roles of Vice President, Secretary and Social Media /Newsletter Coordinator during the year were unsuccessful and I undertook to fill these additional roles as best as I could.

**Ace Lewis**, with his banking experience has done a fantastic job managing the club's accounts and has been an invaluable asset to the club. He also maintains and updates a spreadsheet that records attendance and costs (coaches and lane hire) for each training session.

**Heather Carbone** is an extremely valuable member of our club, serving as both a coach and handling multiple roles as member of the Executive team. She has been our Registrar for ten years, responsible for processing all new member registrations and maintains and updates the Club Records. Heather took on the role of Coaching Coordinator in October 2020. She is also extremely generous of her time assisting with our fund- raising events, in particular the Bunnings BBQ.

**Tony Fowler** joined the Committee in 2020 and continued in the important role of Safety Officer. He developed COVID Safety plans for each of the pools that allowed us to continue training under SA Health protocols.

**Ben Warr** joined the Committee in late 2018, and for the last two years, has taken on the very important role of Open Water Swim Coordinator. There are a large number of tasks involved in the role, including event preparation and compliance work, liaising with Somerton SLSC, and organising and managing activities on the day. A job very well done! Ben has also assisted with other club activities, including fund- raising and merchandise.

**Gavin Rowell** and **Deborah Wareing** share the Captaincy role. Gavin initiated a Winter Pool Series Competition (delayed to the start of the Summer Pool Series due to COVID) to encourage more members to participate in swim meets. Gavin also assisted the club by preparing the member survey and organises the member and coaches' profiles for our monthly newsletter which have proved to be very popular. Deb has led by example with her dedication to training and competition throughout the year and works hard, with Gavin, organising our relay teams and assisting with other club activities (eg. merchandise).

**Jane Sutton**, one of our Life Members, is stepping down after serving on the Committee for 14 years, including 12 years as our Social Convenor. Jane has done a great job planning, organising, and catering for the club's social and fund- raising events. She will be missed! Thanks also to **Helen Walsh** who assisted Jane by preparing flyers for these events and our open water swim.

**Robyn Brown**, also a Life Member and our former Head Coach, assists the club in many ways as a General Committee member. She has been recording the Minutes at our Committee meetings and volunteers at our OWS and fund- raising and social events. Given her experience we value her input on key decisions facing the club.

**Ikaeho Osobase (IK)** has been our Webmaster for the past 3 and has done a great job updating our web site and ensuring information remains current for our members. Due to a very busy work and home- life she won't be continuing on the Committee. We wish her well and hope she remains with the club.

**Stephen Carthew** has been our Member Protection Officer, an essential role mandated by the Branch, and thankfully one that has not required any intervention on his part! Stephen has also been invaluable in securing sponsors for our open water swim. Stephen will be moving to North Queensland so he will be unable to continue in these roles.

**Meredith Taylor**, a long- time member of the club, took on the role of Club Historian in 2020 and has made significant progress on compiling information about the club's history (refer summary below).

**Jan Langan** took a lead role in organising a very successful fund-raising BBQ at Bunnings in April, ably assisted by **Jane Sutton, Glenda Cook, Robyn Brown, Heather Carbone, Ben Warr** and all the club members who manned the stand.

Apart from the Committee and those mentioned above many of our members have helped with our club's social and fund- raising activities and Club & Branch open water swims in the past year. In no specific order thanks to: Jen Heath, Brenda Mangelsdorf, Michael Perkins, Jane Horgan, Judy Vowles,

Ruth Henty, George Crowder, Nola Sutton, Sue Tennant, John Van Loggem, Tony Fowler, Max Yates, Charlie Roberts, Lindsay Martin, Rebecca O’Loughlin, Stephen Brown, Maryanne Heffernan, Sharyn Roach Anleu, Mark Trenwith, Dean Shard, Kate Johnson, Michael Gaibinger, and Neil Anderson (with sincere apologies to anyone I’ve missed!)

On behalf of the club, I would like to thank all our members for their efforts.

### **Membership:**

In order to support our clubs’ activities, it is important that we maintain or ideally increase our membership base. It is equally important that we continue to provide programs that appeal to our members so that participation in our activities, particularly our training sessions, is maintained.

At YE 2021 we had 98 financial members, up from 92 at YE 2020. As of today, we have 91 members compared to 80 members at the same time last year. I am reasonably confident that we will exceed our target of 100 members by year end. Our committee will continue to look at ways to attract new members, particularly younger ones to help balance ages across the club and we’ll continue to offer incentives to our members to assist us with this. It is equally important that we retain existing members and so are hoping to improve on our current retention rate of approximately 80%.

### **Coaching and Training Sessions:**

Training sessions will always be our main club activity and in 2021 we continued to host five sessions per week at the Marion Outdoor Pool (Summer) and the Westminster School and SAALC (Winter). We returned to SAALC for our week-day morning sessions for the second year, and although we were inconvenienced at times when lanes were unavailable, these sessions proved to be very popular.

Training session attendance has been very good, assisted in part by a few club initiatives. In October 2020 we held a Swim Ticket Sale, which offered extra free tickets when purchasing a book of ten. A second initiative, introduced early in 2021, allowed members to use 1- hour session tickets to swim up to an hour in the 1.5-hour sessions. This provided greater flexibility and improved attendance in the evening sessions. There were few takers in our third initiative which offered two free tickets for those who attended ten or more training sessions per month. Given the club’s strong balance sheet further initiatives will be considered on return to our Winter training venues in April 2022.

Following a number of changes in our coaching roster in 2020 our arrangements through much of 2021 remained unchanged. **Leila Nazimi** and **Heather Carbone** continued coaching Tuesday nights and Thursday mornings respectively while **Frank Lindsay**, who commenced in mid-2020, led our Thursday evening and Saturday morning sessions. **Sandy Bennett** started coaching our very popular Monday morning sessions in mid- January while **Meredith Ryan** was able to fill- in on an emergency basis. Heather has continued in the role of Coaching Coordinator. We were fortunate to have such excellent coaches guide our swim program and this helped boost attendance during the year!

Unfortunately, Frank Lindsay was resigned in mid- August for personal reasons and this created a period of uncertainty for the club. In the short- term **Dean Shard** and **Pete Holley** did an excellent job filling in while we searched for a “permanent” replacement. **Stewart Galliford**, our current senior coach, commenced coaching two sessions per week in September. With Heather stepping down

from coaching duties in late October and Leila being unavailable from December Stewart has been coaching up to four sessions per week. Training session attendance has remained strong over the summer months, and this is a credit to Stewart's efforts.

Although Stewart has committed to coaching the club for the foreseeable future it is in the club's best interests that we encourage our members to become qualified coaches and to help in re-building a coaching roster. Financial support is available to any member that wishes to complete the training and accreditation program.

### **Open Water Swim:**

Our club has been organising an open water swim under various formats and at a number of different venues since 1981. For the last eleven years we have been proud to host the SA State Open Water Swim Championships, one of the premier events in the Channel Nine Open Water Swim Series. It is our main fund- raising activity and in 2021 it raised \$3,617 for the club. The event attracted a record equalling 162 entries in 2021, an increase in attendance and profit compared to 2020.

Although a full summary of this years' event will be included in the 2022 AGM report it would be remiss not to mention the very successful Championships we held at Somerton SLSC on 16 January. We had a record number of entries (168), including 33 Marlins and we successfully defended the Team trophy. The club raised \$3,455. A big thanks to Ben Warr who did an outstanding job once again organising the event. Somerton SLSC is proving to be an excellent venue and we look forward to working with the club in the years ahead and building on our success.

As always, our open water swim requires a big team effort on the day with beach set-up, registrations, time keeping and presentations- thanks to everyone who provided assistance. With COVID guidelines more work was required again this year. **Mike Perkins** (Register and Chief Time-Keeper) and **Jane Horgan** managed the very difficult task of time keeping and preparing results using the "new" Webscorer system. It worked perfectly! We are known for the generous prizes we offer so thanks to **Stephen Carthew, Jane Sutton, Ben Warr** and **Brenda Mangelsdorf** for their efforts (and of course our sponsors!)

A big shout out to the ten Marion volunteers, led by **Max Yates**, who assisted with registrations at the Jetty to Jetty OWS.

### **Competition:**

Despite some COVID restrictions remaining in place in 2021 all the pool and open water swim events were able to precede, and our members achieved some excellent results individually and for the club. Unfortunately, no team trophies for the trophy cabinet in pool competitions although we finished a close 5<sup>th</sup> in the 2021 Winter Interclub Series and a close 4<sup>th</sup> in the 2020-21 Summer Pool Series. In open water swim competition, we won the Team trophy for Aggregate points at the 2021 State Masters Championships for the tenth consecutive year (and repeated again earlier this year). Our strong performance at the State Championships, an event we host, is based on the excellent participation of our members, with 37 competing in 2021 and 33 this year.

Our Club Captains and coaches have been working hard to encourage participation in pool events. A “points competition” was held over the 2020-21 Summer Pool Series which awarded prizes to those who competed in the most individual events in the four meets. Our coaches have also been assisting those unfamiliar with certain aspects of competition such as starts and turns. It was great that we were able to welcome so many “first timers” at the Relay Meet in September.

Although the focus has been on participation some of our members enjoyed outstanding success in the pool in 2021. **Maryanne Heffernan**, competing in the Women’s 65-69 age group, set an incredible 18 National and 63 State records! She will be receiving the SA Female Swimmer of the Year trophy at the upcoming Presentation Dinner, making it two years in a row for our ladies following Diane Ross’ success in 2020. Another to achieve National recognition was **Ron Hardie** who set 2 National and 5 State records. Others to set State records in 2021 were **Diane Ross** (12 events), **Deb Wareing** (6 events), **Andrew Stephenson** (6 events), **Stephen Carthew**, (3 events), **Ace Lewis** (2 events), **Barb Pearce** (1 event) and **Michael Perkins** (1 event). The relay teams of **Maryanne Heffernan, Judy Vowles, Deb Wareing** and **Diane Ross** (1 event), **Maryanne Heffernan, Judy Vowles, Stephen Carthew** and **Ron Hardie** (1 event), **Andrew Stephenson, Gavin Rowell, Ian Young** and **Ron Hardie** (1 event), **Andrew Stephenson, Ben Warr, Michael Gaibinger**, and **Ace Lewis** (2 events) and **Mark Trenwith, Ron Hardie, Paul Vale** and **Stephen Carthew** (2 events) also set State records.

Many of our members achieved top 3 placings in the Winter Interclub Series and the Summer Pool Series. Interclub achievers were **Kate Johnson** (2<sup>nd</sup>, W30-34), **Maryanne Heffernan** (1<sup>st</sup>, W65-69), **Deb Wareing** (3<sup>rd</sup>, W65-69), **Barb Pearce** (1<sup>st</sup>, W80-84), **Diane Ross** (1<sup>st</sup>, W85-89), **Ben Warr** (1<sup>st</sup>, M35-39), **Ace Lewis** (1<sup>st</sup>, M40-44), **Gavin Rowell** (1<sup>st</sup>, M50-54), **Ian Young** (3<sup>rd</sup>, M65-69) and **Stephen Carthew**, (1<sup>st</sup>, M70-74). Medallists for the 2020-21 Summer Pool Series were **Judy Vowles**, (1<sup>st</sup>, W70-74), **Barb Pearce** (1<sup>st</sup>, W80-84), **Gavin Rowell** (3<sup>rd</sup>, M50-54), **Andrew Smith** (1<sup>st</sup>, M55-59) and **Ian Young** (2<sup>nd</sup>, M65-69).

Seven Marlins achieved individual FINA World Top Ten rankings in 2021: **Maryanne Heffernan** (23 events!), **Diane Ross** (8 events), **Deb Wareing** (3 events), **Barb Pearce** (3 events); **Ron Hardie** (3 events, including #1 in SC 100m Free), **Stephen Carthew** (1 event) and **Ian Young** (1 event). The 23 events recorded by **Maryanne** is the most ever achieved by a SA Masters swimmer in a single year. Six of **Maryanne’s** results also made the FINA All Time Top 10 rankings. The relay teams of **Deb Wareing, Judy Vowles, Maryanne Heffernan**, and **Diane Ross**; **Kate Johnson, Julie Prica, Mattea Palombo** and **Deb Wareing**; **Ace Lewis, Ben Warr, Michael Gaibinger**, and **Andrew Stephenson** and **Mark Trenwith, Ron Hardie, Stephen Carthew** and **Paul Vale** also achieved a Top Ten ranking. Congratulations all!

Despite the apparent focus on pool competition more of our members enjoy competing in the ocean rather than the pool. Completing all eight events in the Channel Nine Ocean Water Swim Series is a goal for some and in 2020-21 **Lindsay Martin, Deb Wareing** and **Charlie Roberts** received embroidered towels for this achievement. At the 2021 Masters State Championships there were many age group medallists amongst our members. In overall results podium finishes in the 1km event (Males) were achieved by **Ian Young** (1<sup>st</sup>) and **Dean Shard** (2<sup>nd</sup>). **Andrew Smith** and **Ron Hardie** received Golden Marlin trophies for completing their 10<sup>th</sup> swim. The biggest event, the Jetty to Jetty was, unfortunately, cancelled in 2021 due to unsafe conditions.

Apart from swimming competitions many of our members competed in and excelled in related sports, using our club training sessions in their preparation. Masters Surf Life Saving events were popular with **Robyn Brown, Deb Wareing, Heather Carbone, Helen Walsh, Ruth Henty, Dennis Hay, Ben Warr, Tony Fowler** and **Ian Young**. **Mattea Palombo** and **Julie Prica** competed in triathlons while **Kate Johnson** competed in distance running events.

### **Fund Raising:**

To provide additional financial support for the club we held a sausage sizzle at Bunnings (Marion) on 11 April, raising \$961. Thanks to all our members who assisted in organising this event and manning the stand. Appreciation is also extended to Bakers Delight at Marion (through member **Ron Hardie**) for providing loaves of bread for free.

Given the clubs strong financial position we are not planning any Bunning BBQ's this year. However, future fund-raising events (like Bunnings and Open Days at the Marion Outdoor Pool) will still be considered because they are good opportunities to promote the club and attract new members.

### **Social:**

A "Return to Marion Outdoor Pool" brekkie was held on 9 October and our annual Xmas Party was held on 21 December, both at the Marion Outdoor Pool. Both events were well attended; special thanks to Jane, Jan, Sue, Ace, and Ben for organizing the food and drinks. As is custom **Robyn Brown** (with **Sandy Bennett** assisting) handed out prizes to some well-deserving club members at the Xmas function. Special awards were made to **Jeff Ryan** ("Mr Persistent" for being the most improved), **Maureen Thompson** ("Smiley Award" for being happy to try anything) and **Bronwyn Waldeck** ("Go Getter" award for training session attendance). A plaque was awarded to **Darryl Hawkes** recognising his Life Membership in Masters Swimming Australia, which had been conferred in 2009.

With COVID restrictions having eased we will be looking at options for holding more social events in 2022, including possibly more Thursday curry nights. A reminder that on an informal basis our weekday morning swimmers enjoy coffees after training at Café Finniss in Marion while a number of our Saturday morning group enjoy breakfast at Jetty Rd, Brighton (currently ETC Café).

### **Constitution:**

Following a direction from the SA Branch the club has prepared a new Constitution that better reflects current governance requirements for sporting clubs and is aligned with the MSSA Constitution. **George Crowder** kindly took on responsibility of drafting the document with input from the Branch and our Committee. Following endorsement by the Committee we are seeking member approval for its adoption at the 2021 AGM.

### **Survey:**

The club conducted a member's survey in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr. 2021, enquiring about members interest and preferences in relation to training (primarily). We had a very strong response with a participation rate of 65%. For the most part members are happy with the current training schedule and are very pleased with the coaching. There are a few areas which we will look at more closely in 2022, including the number and types of social events.

## Club History:

**Meredith Taylor** took on the role of Club Historian in 2020 and has made significant progress on compiling information about the club's history. This has included dates and names of office bearers and coaches, training venues and anecdotes from some of our early (Life) members. Text has been saved to an accessible Goggle Drive document while scanned photos and newspaper articles have been uploaded to a Dropbox shared file. We have fairly complete documentation from 1981 (club's founding year) to 1995 but a significant gap up to ~2013 which we are hoping to fill. Any further assistance from members past and present would be appreciated! Some of the photos have been posted on Facebook (more to come!), rekindling fond memories from our older members. Other options for making the report and photos accessible to members will be considered.

## The Year Ahead:

Consistent with our 2018-21 Strategic Plan (to be updated) I consider the following to be the key opportunities and challenges for the club in the year ahead:

- **Values:** Continue to maintain an inclusive training and social program to encourage and support member participation and provide a courteous and welcoming environment.
- **Membership:** Build up to our YE membership target of 100+ members by attracting new members and improving our member retention rate. Consider conducting a Come and Try program during the Winter season at SAALC and/or Westminster pools.
- **Finance:** Maintain the club's strong financial position and consider options for returning excess funds to members by providing additional benefits and training and competition incentives.
- **Coaching:** Encourage and support members to gain accreditation using the new Online Club Coach course.
- **Committee:** Encourage members to take up Executive /General Committee positions at the club and Technical or Board positions with the Branch. Ensure that position descriptions are up to date and understood and facilitate handovers in key roles.
- **Competition:** Actively encourage and support members to compete, regardless of ability, in pool and open water swim events and in the process, help to develop a strong team spirit
- **Open Water Swim:** Build on our success at Somerton SLSC by improving delivery, promotion, and sponsorship and by considering other initiatives to improve attendance.
- **Social:** Plan and partly fund more social events for members.
- **Stakeholder Relationships:** Maintain and build relationships with other stakeholders including the Branch, other Masters Swim clubs, Aquatic Facilities, Somerton SLSC, Marion Star Club, State and local government and their agencies (Department of Sport & Recreation) and sponsors. Create a positive awareness in the local community of the Club's activities through marketing, promotion, and other initiatives.

Ian Young

President & Acting Secretary, Marion Marlins

March 2022