

# NEWSLETTER

**REDLANDS BAYSIDE**  
MASTERS SWIMMING CLUB



*March 2016*

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi Members,

Our club has had a busy start to the year with a high level of interest from people in joining our club. With growth comes challenges and coaching has been one of those challenges. Our club is lucky that 5 of our members have stepped up to take on the coaching positions within our club and are currently completing coaching courses.

I'd like to thank Linda Meredith, Sharon Devitt, Tracey Mann, Rod Mackenzie and Trevor Green for supporting our club and taking on the coaching roles.

As you all know Ebony Maher has moved to Cairns and on behalf of our club I know all our members wish her all the best for her future.

I am currently meeting with the Redlands City Council in setting up a Strategic Plan and a Volunteers' Management Plan for our club. This will ensure continuity for our club's future as new committees form. As a club we need to keep moving forward and also look after all our important volunteers.

Our committee are busy preparing for our club postal which as you read on in this newsletter is not that far away. We hope that many of you will get behind this event and support our club. It's a great way of challenging yourself without the pressure of standing on the blocks at a swim meet.

Again I'd like to thank the committee for their ongoing hard work. Also special thanks to Lloyd Sheffield for looking after our club gear every week.

*Shane Knight, Club President*

## MEMBERSHIP

Membership numbers stand at 55, and we are pleased to welcome the following new members in the first quarter of this year: Robyn Beardmore, Gosia Stawiarski, Heather Robinson, Sandra Wiley and her son Daniele (Danny) Tomasi, and Natalie Daley.

For the second successive year the Registrar's Award for the most new members has been awarded to QRB by Masters Swimming Queensland. This has meant a busy time for Registrar Vivien Carlsson who has also been acting Vice President as well as undertaking the necessary protocols and inductions for new members. Membership registration and re-registration is now undertaken online through the Masters Swimming Queensland Members Portal at [www.mastersswimmingqld.org.au](http://www.mastersswimmingqld.org.au). Updates to personal details can be performed at any time through this portal. Health forms are kept as a paper copy on file and need to be updated regularly. This is done systematically and the process

co-ordinated by Vivien. Should you require assistance with on-line registration please contact Vivien on [carlvoo@hotmail.com](mailto:carlvoo@hotmail.com) or catch up with her at training sessions on a Wednesday or Sunday.

### REDLANDS BAYSIDE WINTER WARM UP POSTAL



QRB will host its second postal event from 15 June to 14 August 2016 this year entitled the **Redlands Winter Warmup Postal**. Participants will have the choice of a 25m or 50m pool and a participant can swim up to five events over different distances/strokes in each. The cost is \$10 for each of the courses (LC or SC). It is proposed that QRB will allocate two Sundays to conduct postals for its members, tentatively 19 and 26 June. **Starters and timekeepers will be required.**

This will be an opportunity for members at all levels to get some practical experience in timekeeping while participating in timed swims over various distances without the pressure and travel involved in a swim meet. All times will appear on the MSA and QRB websites and certificates of participation will be posted to all swimmers with details of their swims. Entry forms and further information will be available shortly and will be emailed to all members.

### INCREASE MOTIVATION AND FITNESS

MSA and MSQ offer Masters swimmers the opportunity to participate in recorded programs where results are tallied over the year. Attached are some flyers supplied by MSQ for the **MSX, Lane Warriors and Million Metres Programs**. MSX results are determined from swim meet times but the Lane Warriors and Million Metres can be conducted in the club pool and distance totals compiled progressively.

Copies of the flyers have also been handed out to members by Vivien on Sundays. Recording sheets for the Million Metres program can be downloaded from the below web address [http://www.mastersswimming.org.au/Portals/26/Programs/Million Metres/Record card 2013.pdf](http://www.mastersswimming.org.au/Portals/26/Programs/Million%20Metres/Record%20card%202013.pdf).

An Excel spreadsheet for the Lane Warriors program can be downloaded from <http://www.mastersswimmingqld.org.au/Programs/Lane-warriors>.

The **Endurance 1000** program can also be facilitated in our club pool for distances of 400, 800 and 1500m and 30, 45 and 60 minute swims. Results from swim meets which offer the relevant distances are automatically loaded in the Endurance 1000 program.

Rod Mackenzie itemised the various programs in the December newsletter and further details can be found on the MSQ and MSA websites.

QRB will offer a program for 50-200m swims if sufficient support is indicated. It will be a closed scheme for our club members and offers an opportunity for members to monitor their performances. Timing can take place within club training sessions. In response to a questionnaire five members have indicated interest in participation and/or timekeeping. Rod Mackenzie will facilitate the program. **Please take time to consider this opportunity to incorporate a schedule of timed performances into a QRB training session and evaluate your improvement over time.**

## COACHING



Ebony Maher who has provided coaching predominantly in the 50m pool since her appointment at the AGM last year vacated this position on Wednesday 16 March and has now relocated to Northern Queensland. Members have benefited from her structured programs for general fitness, endurance and race-fitness and her bright personality will be missed. We wish her every success in her future ventures. Andrea of the Cleveland Aquatic Centre is currently conducting programs for Masters members on Wednesday nights in the 50m pool while Masters Coach Ann Gartshore has continued to provide stroke correction, drills and meet preparation in the 25m pool for new members & potential members, and members who prefer the 25m. This has been very demanding with the influx of new and potential members at year end and the beginning of this year. Shane, Rod Mackenzie and Sharon Devitt are currently working together to continue structured training programs in the 50m pool on Sundays.

Rod and Linda Meredith have now completed the on-line modules for coaching, with Sharon, Tracey Mann and Trevor Green currently also undertaking the modules. A MSQ workshop will be conducted in the Cleveland Pool on Saturday 16 April to finalise their accreditation.

## SWIM MEETS

### QUEENSLAND STATE LONG COURSE CHAMPIONSHIPS MIAMI 11-13 MARCH 2016



Enjoying the Queensland sunshine, a familiar presence, QRB's Simon Bole-Brown, a referee for the championships.

226 competitors from Queensland, Northern Territory, New South Wales and Victoria, as well as international competitors registered with the Queensland Barbarians Club, gathered at the Miami Aquatic Centre for the three-day challenge of the Queensland State Long Course Championships. The organisation and running of the competition was seamless with the combined expertise of Masters Swimming Queensland and the host club Miami ensuring that the three-day event ran to schedule and provided the utmost in hospitality and enterprise.



Club President Shane Knight, sleep-deprived after a night shift, assisted Helga Ward in the smooth running of the competition and issue of medals.

Medals were issued for all placegetters with engraving facilities on site. Gary Brinkman Photography provided the official photography and videoed competitors/races on request.

Photographs from each day's races can be viewed at [garybrinkman.com.au](http://garybrinkman.com.au)

## RESULTS

There were 11 QRB competitors and all gained medals in the event. Our club total in individual events was 17 Gold, 13 Silver and 17 Bronze. Medal winners were Rod Mackenzie 3 Gold, 2 Silver and 2 Bronze; Nathan Mead 3 Gold 2 Silver 2 Bronze; Linda Meredith 3 Gold & 2 Silver; Trevor Green 3 Gold & 3 Bronze; Sharon Devitt 2 Gold, 2 Silver & 4 Bronze; Allan Patterson 2 Gold; Sue Robba 1 Gold 1 Silver 1 Bronze; Ann Gartshore 2 Silver 1 Bronze; Clive Griffin 1 Silver & 2 Bronze; Lara Korhammer 1 Silver; Tina Hanley, 2 Bronze.

Relays: Bronzes in Men's and Women's 200m Freestyle; Silver in 200m Mixed Medley; Bronze in Men's 200m Medley and Bronze in 200m Mixed Freestyle.

QRB overall was placed 5th.

Linda Meredith sported a red racing suit and was ecstatic with her personal bests. At her first meet, Sue Robba won medals in all her three nominated individual events including gold in her 200m freestyle.

NAME	EVENT	MEDAL	NAME	EVENT	MEDAL
Alan	100m Free	Gold	Clive	1500 Free	Bronze
	50m Free	Gold		400m Free	Bronze
Ann	50m Back	Silver		100m Butterfly	Silver
	50m Breast	Bronze	Sharon	1500 Free	Gold
	50m Free	Silver		400m Breast	Silver
Linda	50m Back	Gold		200m IM	Bronze
	100m Free	Silver		200m Breast	Bronze
	100m Back	Gold		200m Butterfly	Gold
	50m Free	Gold		100m Breast	Bronze
	200m Free	Silver		100m Butterfly	Silver
Nathan	1500 Free	Silver		200m Free	Bronze
	400m Breast	Gold	Sue	50m Free	Bronze
	200m IM	Gold		100m Breast	Silver
	200m Breast	Gold		200m Free	Gold
	200m Free	Silver	Tina	50m Back	Bronze
	50m Breast	Bronze		100m Back	Bronze
	100m Breast	Bronze	Lara	50 Breast	Silver
Rod	1500 Free	Gold	Trevor	400m Breast	Gold
	400m Free	Gold		200m Breast	Bronze
	50m Back	Bronze		200m Butterfly	Gold
	100m Free	Silver		50m Breast	Bronze
	100m Back	Silver		100m Butterfly	Gold
	50m Free	Bronze		50m Butterfly	Bronze
	200m Free	Gold			

## HERVEY BAY HUMPBACKS LONG COURSE

On 20 February an enthusiastic team of Alan Patterson, Rod Mackenzie, Sharon Devitt and Tracey Mann made the trip to Hervey Bay certain of having an enjoyable time and a great welcome by the fun-loving club, known for its hospitality. The day began with an 1km ocean water swim followed by the long course pool meet at the Hervey Bay Aquatic Centre.

The Club organises a themed presentation dinner each year (this year "Aussie characters") which is optional for participants but by all accounts is a highlight.



THE OCEAN SWIM

SMILES FROM SUE  
PATTERSON AND GILL  
MACKENZIE



THE TEAM

Rod Mackenzie won the Torquay 1000 Open Water Swim in 13.09 and earned a Gold medal at the long course event with firsts in all his 5 races. The Team achieved 10 firsts, 4 seconds and 4 thirds and also earned places in the relays

## LINDA'S RED BEACH NZ OCEAN SWIM

Linda Meredith made the trip across the Tasman and has the following story to tell on the Red Beach NZ Ocean Swim.



"When organising our recent holiday to NZ I noticed there was an ocean swim north of Auckland and I couldn't let the chance pass by so entered the 1.5k.

The organising committee were excited that an Aussie had entered as it made it an international swim! The organisers also commented that visitors usually stop for coffee at Red Beach, not a 1.5km Ocean swim.

I was very relieved that I had decided on the 1.5k and not the 3km. What is usually a flat calm sheltered bay was whipped up by wind and tide following the cyclone that had hit Fiji. The sea was very rough and I found myself singing "on the road to nowhere" to myself. Two people were unable to continue and brought into shore by the lifesavers. I finished 10th overall in a time of 29.29 and yes I wore a wetsuit as even in summer in NZ the water was cool". - Linda Meredith, February 2016





## UPCOMING MEETS

April						
2	SC	North Mackay Sinkers	QNS	Central	06/16	North Mackay State HS
9	SC	Albany Creek	QAC	Sunshine	07/16	Albany Creek Leisure Centre
16	SC	Whitsunday Warriors	QWY	North	08/16	Cannonvale Pool
<b>21 – 24</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>National Championships</b>				<b>Melbourne, Victoria</b>
MAY						
14	LC	Noosa Masters	QNA	Sunshine	09/16	Noosa Aquatic Centre
21	LC	Rats of Tobruk	QRT	North	10/16	Tobruk Pool, Townsville
JUNE						
11	SC	Rum City	QBB	Central	11/16	Bundaberg Swim Academy
15 June – 14 Aug	Postal L & SC	Redlands Bayside	QRB	South	12/16	

## MERCHANDISE AND EQUIPMENT

Our club shirts with the QRB logo are still available for \$15 and have been on display and can be purchased at the pool.



A suggestion has been made that members may like to consider a “casual” alternative club shirt (not bearing the Club logo). This has met with approval if it is favoured by members. Sundrenched Australia, Gold Coast have a range of Hawaiian shirts in a cool, comfortable rayon. Designs in red are displayed and prices are \$20/\$25. The full range at is available at <http://www.sundrenched.com.au>.



Masters Swimming Queensland are selling quality goggles at a good price – Racing \$15 and Training \$12. Please contact Shane Knight if you wish to make a purchase. Also some attractive women’s swimsuits will become available through MSQ at a competitive price.

New members have taken advantage of a sell-off of equipment (fins, paddles, pullbuoys etc). There are still some items available. Although QRB will still keep a supply of swim aids for new members, storage at Cleveland is not large, and Club equipment will be kept to a minimum.

## SOCIAL

Members are reminded that should they wish to organise any social event (movies, theatre, café) this can be facilitated through emailing Susan Lee at [social@qrbmasters.org.au](mailto:social@qrbmasters.org.au). Sue will then forward the email to all members.

We continue to enjoy our cuppa and chat after our Sunday morning training/social swim and are always well looked after by the Cleveland Aquatic Centre.

## POOL ATTENDANCE

Our pool attendance since January has averaged 20-30 on Sundays and 15-20 on Wednesdays with many new members being very eager to participate in drills and stroke correction.

## BEHIND THE SCENES AT MSQ - AND MSX AWARDS FOR QRB COMPETITORS

Shane Knight organised a team of QRB helpers to join forces with volunteers from other clubs for the Masters Swimming Queensland mailout of material to Clubs which included new member's packs, certificates and towels and caps for the various programs. It was a rewarding morning with great hospitality shown by Helga Ward and Masters Queensland. Linda Meredith sighted her Platinum MSX cap and certificate in the pack-up. Rod Mackenzie had also met with success in 2015, being awarded the Gold MSX. Congratulations to both competitors!



## DVDS AVAILABLE FOR LOAN

Members are reminded that that DVD's covering technique in all strokes and drills and skills are available for loan from the Club. These DVDs are a valuable tool for beginners and also recommended for endurance swimming. Please make an enquiry to Ann Gartshore or Rod Mackenzie.

## SHAVE, TAPER, DESTROY

The following extract from an article by Allan Williams, Senior Coach at the Parkway Swim Club in St Louis, MO, found in full at [www.alexandriamasters.com](http://www.alexandriamasters.com) may be of interest to members. Rod Mackenzie adopts tapering as part of his preparation for swim events. For Masters Swimmers who are interested in shaving a few tenths of a second off their time, perhaps shaving all bodily hair not covered by your swimsuit is also for you!

### What Is A Taper and What Is In It?

The word taper in swimming is a word that we all come to know early in our swimming career. Following is a working definition of what a taper is : "the reduction of workload during a period immediately prior to a major competition." As a swimmer goes through their swimming career they may encounter different ways to accomplish a taper. There is no one way to do a taper, nor a magic formula. One of the most important things that a swimmer must do during a taper, any taper, is to believe in themselves, their abilities, and the work they have done over the course of the season.

The taper is used in swimming by groups of all ages and is a common practice everywhere. A taper is the need to recover following prolonged periods of high-volume/high-intensity training. The purpose of the taper is to allow the swimmer to adapt to, or supercompensate for the level of level of work accomplished in the training program. (Supercompensation can be defined as optimal and maximal recovery). An important ingredient of the taper is the work that has gone into swimming before the taper even starts. Tapering allows the swimmer to adapt to perform as the result of regular season training.

During a taper the work volume can be reduced along with the intensity of work. The frequency of practices and focus during a practice should remain at the same level as the regular season. The reduction in volume of work will not result in a decreased performance ability. All performance factors are maintained at this important period of time. The amount of work volume dropped during the taper may/will vary from swimmer to swimmer. This only plays a small part in heightening performance capacity. The length of a taper will vary too. As studies by ICAR (International Center For Aquatic Research) have shown, peak performance can be accomplished at a 60 percent reduction of work volume. This can be done over a long period of time or a relatively short period. Studies also show the same taper can be effective for the high volume and lower volume groups.

During the first three weeks of a taper (according to ICAR) changes that occurred were "increases in power, neuromuscular efficiency, anaerobic contribution of the swim, fast twitch muscle recruitment, and mechanical efficiency."

Shaving down has been a long-time companion of the taper. Shaving down for a swim meet is for gaining an advantage of a few tenths of a second. Just what does shaving body hair do? Shaving results in faster swims independent of training. The advantages of shaving are related to a decrease in drag to be overcome by a swimmer. The final result is that less power application in the pull pattern is required to overcome that drag.

The final aspect of a taper, and by far not the least, is the mental side. It is important to have a clear mental picture of technique before the swim is executed successfully. Experiments in several sports have shown that it is possible to improve performance by sitting in a chair relaxed for five minutes a day and visualizing one's self performing desired techniques.

Now you are ready to go out and execute your taper taking full advantage of the knowledge of what it is you are about to do. You have that winning edge over your opponent and the clock. Be focused, be aware of your body and most importantly be confident that you will do well!

### PROFILE – EMMA MARSHALL

Emma joined QRB in 2015 and in January this year competed at her first meet – River City, Somerville House, winning a Bronze Medal. Emma is a young lady of resilience and determination. She shares with us her journey and a vision for the future and has a special message for readers.



# EMMA MARSHALL

I was born in the North Queensland town of Cairns on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 1990. I am the only daughter of two knowledgeable parents who at the time were engaged in careers in finance as Bank Johnnies (also referred to as bank officers).

When Emma arrived into the world, it was a day that my mother never lets me forget, for a number of reasons which are good though humorous and insightful equally. The memory that comes to mind which mum particularly recalls of this day is being told it was the only day of the week in Cairns Private Hospital that Mango Mousse was a menu choice for lunch dessert. Sadly mum was denied this pleasure as she had a deal coming. The sacrifices that parents make to have children, I tell you! OK, she may have missed out on a yummy tropical treat but she got the better end of the bargain by having a mini me.



The first couple of days of my life were somewhat 'unusual' as I was booked in to see a doctor, probably for a newborn review, when it was determined, after having a case of the 'baby blues' in the doctor's office, that I, in fact, had a Congenital Heart Defect. My mitral valve had a hole which hadn't closed over after birth and in fact had sprung a leak and failed to sustain healthy blood flow correctly, though at this time I didn't need surgery. This brought knowledge, or lack of, to my parents that no degree of understanding through their usual day job could decipher, as there was no lead up to the question of "Why my child?". My condition is one that is not very common in children. Rather it is seen more in the elderly and is usually caused by having rheumatic fever, neither of which applied to me. As a regional family at the time, we didn't have access to the technology to detect deformities like some of the bigger health facilities had in capital cities. So to doctors and certainly my parents they were probably wondering when the 'Guide for Dummies on Heart Defects' would be invented. Let's just say it was the start of what was a very l-o-o-o-ng Journey.

Time continued to pass and through getting educated by doctors and those who know about patients who have experienced this professionally or personally, I had started to go off food and would only keep things such as oats and ice-cream down. Let's just say I came with an instruction booklet that reminded you of a flat pack from Ikea with hard to understand instructions. It was thanks to my Godmother's intuition (she had a nursing background) that when we were on holidays with her and the family in Brisbane she suggested we get a second opinion on my health. Turns out a week later, I endured somewhat 8 hours of open heart surgery in the Prince Charles Hospital in Brisbane as an 11 month old in 1991. Phew! Glad we got that opinion as if we didn't have her I wouldn't be here today. Simple!



I now support a 10cm scar/zipper down my chest which gets me life membership in the Zipper Club.

As life progressed, it was a period of time where the family could just settle as things slowed down..... until next time. The next time came when I was about 2 and life for me was being observed as that I was 'different' to the norm. Again this news didn't come lightly to the family,

although when mother approached the topic of concern of why I wasn't crawling etc. like other children with my paediatrician, rather scooting on my butt from a to b, my paediatrician replied with "Well I am not worried as it is still a form of transport". This comment reassured mother somewhat. It was thanks to my paediatrician it was then observed that I had further delay and I was subsequently diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy- Ataxia.

It was due to my atypical development that by this time, my family had made the decision to transfer back to Brisbane from Cairns as surgeons initially could never guarantee that my heart would be fixed in just one go. Therefore my family had the decision to weigh up the pros and cons of relocating to be half an hour's drive away when it was imperative for me to receive cardiac care, compared with flying and travelling by car. I think this decision to move was a better investment financially and medically as now the fam were going to be closer if the necessity arose for extra support - which it did. 25 years post op and my heart health has been reasonably stable and after



significant amounts of specialist treatment for my CP well, let's just put it that life has travelled along ok though not without a bump every now and again.

Because of these medical hurdles early on in my journey, it was suggested that I start 'school' as a two and a half year old little girl who was to learn to run, walk, sit and learn to grow like other children through a Hungarian approach learning and development called Conductive Education which was being taught in a physical maintenance program at a Special School in Brisbane. It wasn't always easy but the benefits of it really helped me in all areas and it was at this very school that I met my best friend as she was on a similar journey and we are still very close today. Mind you that was in 1993.

This leads me to the next point.....SCHOOL OMG my parents had to let me go off into the big wide world of school.

To my parents this brought a whole lot of emotions as I had already had a battle before I even really started. In brief, my schooling education had its hurdles but it had its good memories too.

Some of the main memories of education, certainly primary education initially, were the fact that I knew I was different to others and required extra help from the specialist teachers that would soon become part of my every day at school, the fact that I got labelled and believed it was ok, and knowing which teachers were inclusive of who I was and not looked at for what I couldn't do. Next came Secondary School - I have better memories of secondary education. The highlights were the fact that after some thorough consultation of ideal settings and whether a school exhibited a lack of inclusivity or discriminatory practices, the joy I had that my parents had found a school for me to attend that was "mine and their dream come true". What made this experience even more special was the fact that my childhood best mate that I touched on earlier was starting grade 8 with me too and a friend that I teamed up with in primary school also attended this school. Familiarity - yahoo - I could tell any label to go jump as this school was about who you are not or what you do or have inability to do. I still remember the phone call like it was yesterday - my family talking to hers. It was sincerely like Christmas as we would be reunited again. Day 1 came around and we were two girls at Christmas excited and scared. I think though it made it easier we were doing it together as big girls now and not little ones. In addition to this we were to be in the same home room class. Ha-ha our poor teachers and the pranks we could get up to, said no one ever. This school not only helped us in our education but helped develop us to believe in ourselves to strive for better opportunities no

matter who we were in our earlier lives and the staff guided us on a more positive journey to develop a greater sense of self of who we were as women. It was at this school that I represented them in a home economics competition and got second place and ended up getting Dux of the School in year 11 and 12. Not bad for a school size of 230 students and achieving this step coming from a girl who had more hurdles at times (compared to any race at the Olympics) in my academic journey. My schooling journey was an interesting one but one I will be ever thankful for as it really impacted on principles that I still live by today.

## ADULT LIFE

As a 17/18 year old. I had many aspirations of what I wanted to be when I grew up yet very little experience and resources to achieve my desired dreams. Some of the highlights were starting a TAFE course via correspondence in Childcare then doing study in Teacher Aiding and riding the highs and lows of employment as a Macca's girl, Gloria Jean's girl and Teacher Aide. Yes, first year out of school and I had three casual jobs. My days working were and are interesting to say the least. Some of my other accomplishments were getting my learner's, probationary and full driver's licence. Having been taught and succeeding in getting my licence is something for which I will always be thankful as it allows me to be independent. Though not without the odd learning bump or 3!

As the years progressed and after a few job industry changes I found a sense of contentment in my passion for education. I really got a kick out of being able to educate others. At the age of 21 me and my childhood buddy went on our first holiday to Sydney What an accomplishment, without our parents, this was - this *is* real life education at its finest - 'backpacking upmarket in 4 star living' and didn't we have a ball. A memory or two I recall - 'dining' outside with a 'classy-Emma and Sarah' style lunch near the Opera House with water views, the main course being ham sandwiches and



dessert blueberries thanks to Woollies restaurant as we couldn't sightsee on a particular day as roads were cut due to a fun-run; and preparing for a night at the theatre in half an hour max. (inc. showers, dressed and back out the door and transport sorted) as we had just come home from travel some 40 mins away with 10mins notice when we got tickets to a show. Since then academically, I have gone on to complete my Diploma in Childcare and am currently working in the field in a permanent capacity. 25 years old and permanency is something that is a great accomplishment after being casual for extended periods of time. It has a good ring to it I reckon as now I can now start planning how to "adult" even bigger.

## MY OTHER PASSIONS

Exercise and sport was not really a fun game for me to do growing up as I was already doing daily therapeutic exercise because of my development. Therefore any time where I was not engaging in such activity I was more than likely fed up with people telling me what to do or fighting a nap as I do tend to tire quickly and was a bugger of a child to get to sleep. I certainly had the work cut out for my folks! Nevertheless, after many sporting hobby changes throughout the year, swimming was always up there with the top 5 sports which Emma either loves or does because other sports are just not her thing. My love for swimming began initially as a three year old when I started 'learning to swim' by being put into a pool and not allowed to come out until I stopped screaming the place down or doing some swimming with my coach or both. Many years later and after much confidence gained with that instructor (over 10 years) my swimming abilities improved which saw me win a few ribbons throughout school swimming carnivals and my love of water prosper with being in pools as

early as 6am on Easter Sundays in sometimes freezing cold temps in family surrounds. Not bad for a girl who had great joy of exercising her lungs. I was in my teen years when I had to give swimming away for a period of time due to extended periods of sickness from a bad chest infection. The frustration that this decision brought was one of my hardest decisions as my love of water and exercise in the pool was very apparent. As I flew through my teens and into early adult life, health issues started occurring which resulted in extended periods of testing, trying to determine why I was effectively getting defaults of primarily unexplained fluid retention. It wasn't until I had made a resolution for 2015 of wanting to engage in an activity for me to exercise my reflexes to shift fluid after a 6 or 7 year break that this activity meant that I returned to and ignited my love of swimming once again.

I recall coming to Cleveland pool early one morning and just getting in the pool to exercise when I stumbled across the Masters advertising. It was then I thought maybe I can check them out and see if they can help me. As they say in the classics, "the rest is history" and it is a great community to be a part of. And to top it off I do it with like-minded people. Good job Redlands Bayside! I have since attended my first meet this year in January with Masters which saw me achieve bronze for my age group.



My other main passion I would like to share with readers is that I am incredibly passionate about social justice on all levels by serving others and giving a hand to others who need help in my community by engaging in community group initiatives. Some of these groups are Vinnie's (St Vincent de Paul Society) or Heartkids QLD, a support group of families and business people nationwide who provide a guiding light in different ways to families of children and adults who have been affected by congenital heart disease, just to name two. Over the years there have been several more. I have been known to represent these organisations on youth



camp, shopping centre fund raising, community events where you sleep rough on the streets to experience homelessness in safe surrounds and many other interesting escapades. My dream one day is to impact every person so that the world we live in will be fair for all. My heart despite its small deformities is rather large and my kindness is a feature that is known in my community though can affect me positively or negatively in how I help or how others require my help. Let's just say it's not always clear cut.

As a summary of my article for readers' interest today, I would like to thank each and every one of you for taking time to read about me. My journey may be perceived with a great deal of mixed emotion though my intent was for each of you to come take a walk in my shoes as I share my story. My journey has been one of great ups, downs, ins and outs though I am very chuffed I got asked for the opportunity to share this. My advice from here on in would be to make the most of what life has to offer. It is not always a given that you are guaranteed tomorrow. Make opportunities count no matter how big or small.





