

MBBC Diving Section was formed in 1972

The Club's diving section was formed in 1972, some nine years after the club's inauguration. The section was formed to enable MBBC members to enjoy safe diving and relaxation for the family.

For the first three years, the section was supported by ten families whose main activities centred on Scuba Diving.

Also in those years, sincere attempts were made to break down the rift which had formed between line fishermen and divers. In order to achieve this, dive members provided the anglers with useful information on the sea floor, as well as retrieving lost anchors and other equipment that had fallen overboard.

The divers claimed some success with the animosity having been replaced by a co-operative sense of Clubmanship.

In 1988 when the Club celebrated its silver jubilee, the authors of the diving report, Jeff Jewell and Bill Naylor, noted that morale remained high in the Diving Section, "High morale coupled with youthful enthusiasm remains with the Dive Section," they said.

They reported in the Best of Bay News that at the first Clubhouse trophies presentation, the Commodore's Pennant mysteriously disappeared from under his nose causing a furore. The flag was doctored to represent a diver's flag, but was represented to the Commodore at the next meeting. The Commodore was suitably relieved but the activity continued with good humour and daring as any opportunity presented itself.

Back in the 1980s, the Diving Section played an important role in the Rescue Squad and members considered themselves to be on-call 24 hours a day.

The section also supported the Club's display at the then Annual Boat Show. The whole section could take part in producing the display which highlighted the Club, and assisted in its membership drive.

"The Blessing of the Fleet is a Club annual event which the divers obviously enjoy. The entertainment segment attracts their athletic sense of competition and the belief that they can walk On or Under water. Their participation ensures that the members and visitors also find this to be an enjoyable day," Jeff and Bill wrote.

The diving Section also became involved in organised sport such as: -

Spear Fishing

In this they started off well and some of the seniors achieved a high level in Queensland competition. Later on, some of the juniors came on to push them for placing. The high standard maintained resulted in some being selected to represent the Queensland in the Australian titles.

Underwater Hockey

This novel sport gained momentum over a few seasons. Starting with two bare teams, they progressed to having eight competitive sides in weekly matches. Eventually MBBC had eight members representing Queensland and five of those were selected to represent Australia in international competition.

Some of the highlights of those early years, which are etched on the minds of the original founding members of the Diving Section include:

- Supporting racing events by manning the control boats at strategic spots.

- The salt water aquariums in the Divers Cave at the Boat Show, which attracted a lot of attention and resulted in Club Awards
- The Rescue Squad demonstration at the Warana Festival held in the 1970s. Held near the South Bank of the Brisbane River, a number of MBBC boats participated in line astern. One of the cruisers was a mock-up on an expendable dinghy being towed and crewed by dummies. At a predetermined time “expert” Dennis Benson in the towing boat was to blow up the mock-up with a small charge. This was so that the rescue boats could show off their fire fighting and life saving skills. The explosion certainly attracted the spectators on the South Bank, but it was so fierce that neither the boat remained to be saved nor the victims rescued.
- Caring for Moreton Base on Moreton Island and the successful Queensland Diving Championship hosted by the Club at Cowen in 1978.
- The Diver’s Pot Friday at the Clubhouse organised by David Sparkes using membership numbers.
- Octopus being taken by like divers on a reef and development of a superb Underwater Hockey Team with members in the winning side at the Australian Titles in Cairns in 1976.

Next Issue – The Clubhouse Saga

Caption: The first A Grade Underwater Hockey Team