

# MNSR

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**Merewether** National Surfing Reserve





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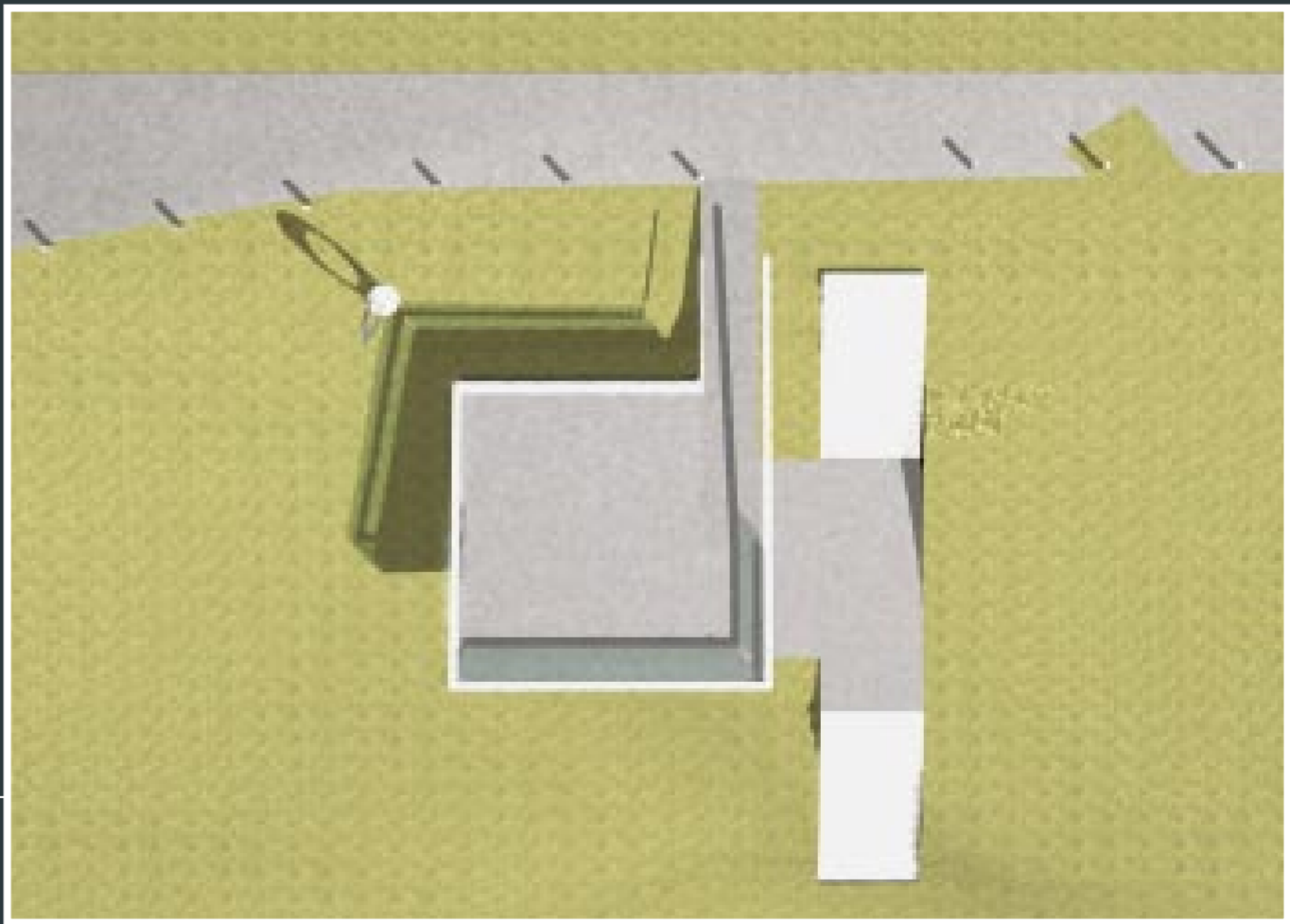
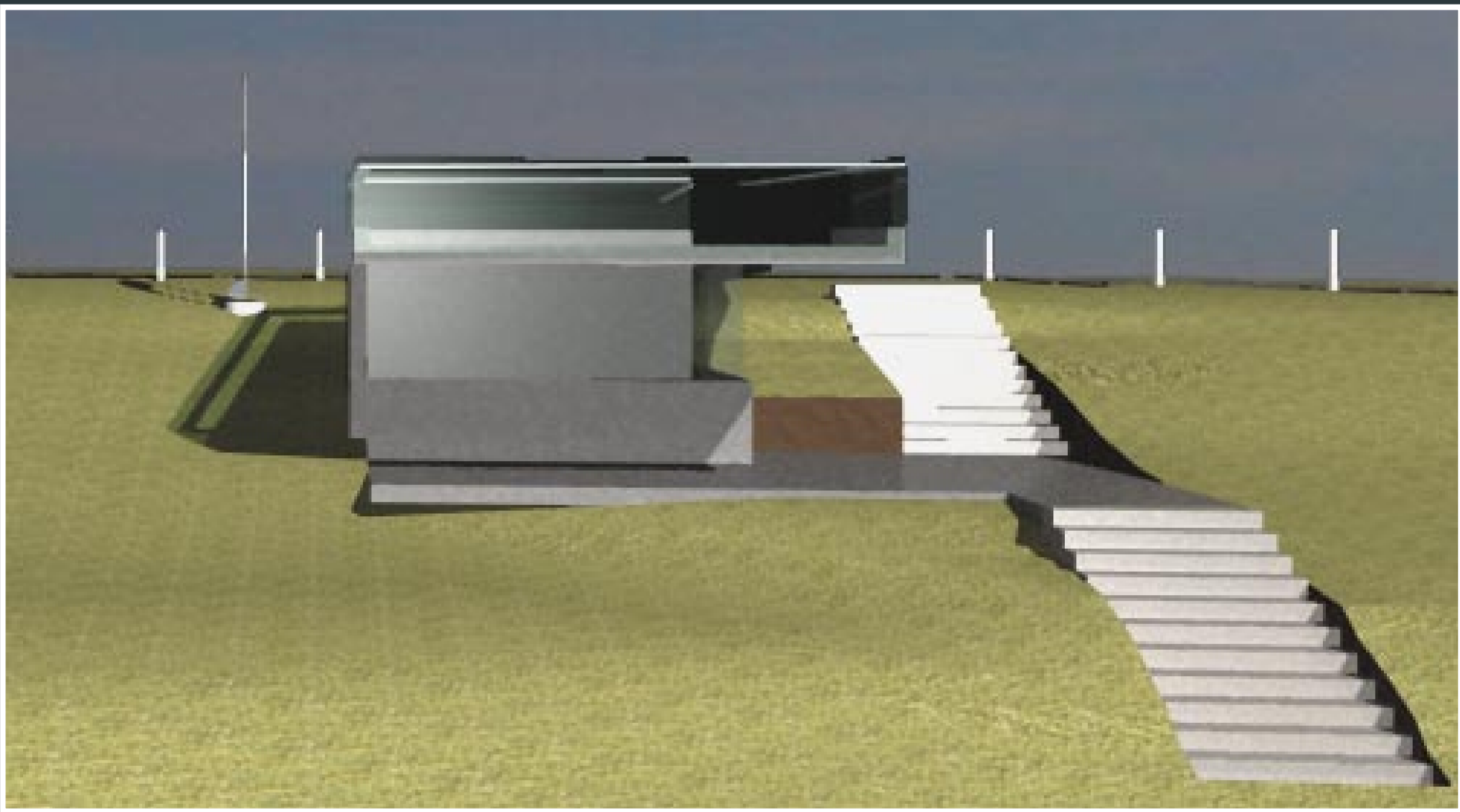
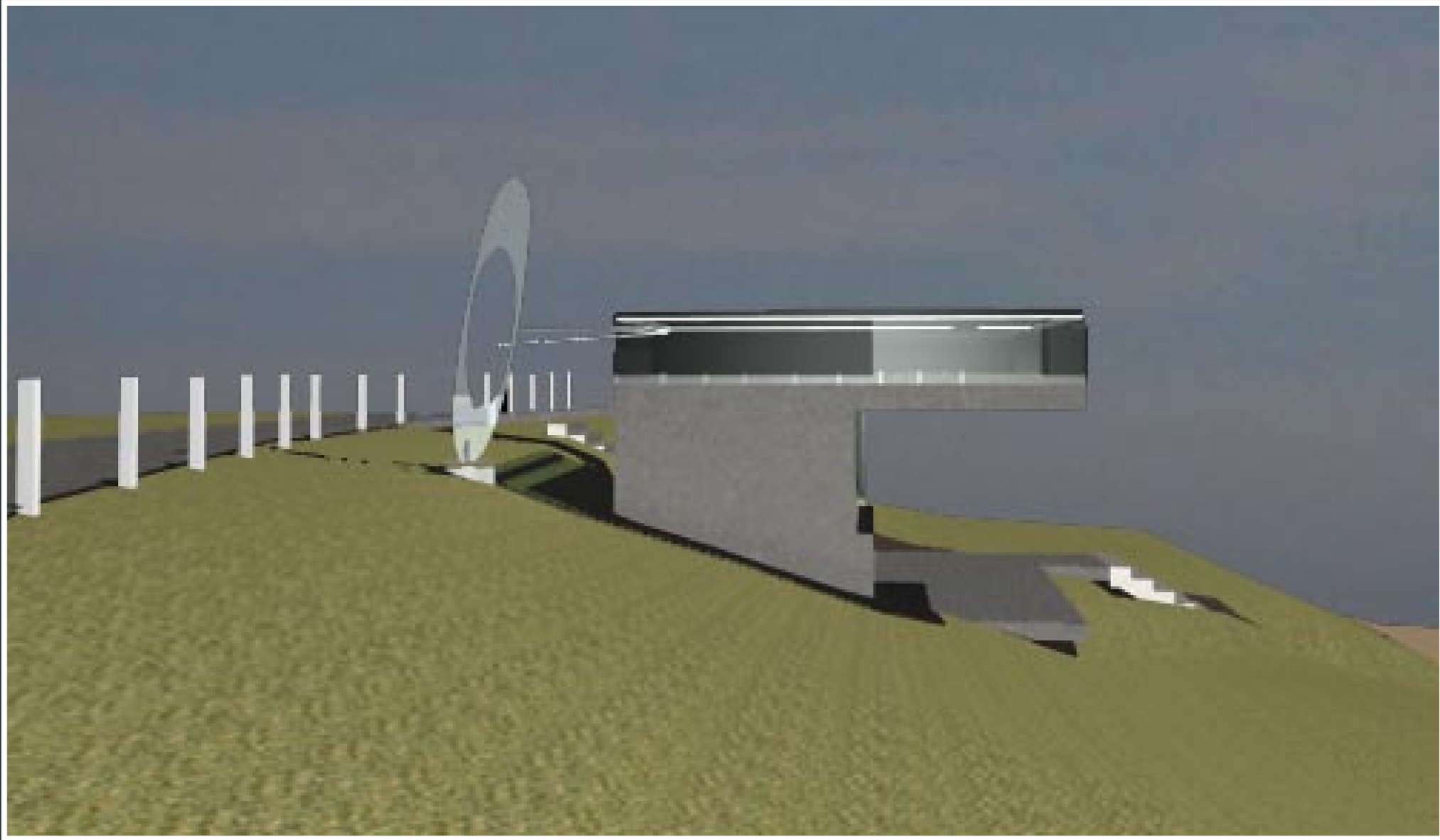




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**Merewether Beach** Newcastle Australia  
Painted by John Earle



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Photo Bosko



M-bay lineup by Dave Kelly

4 times world champion 1979 - 1982

**Mark Richards**

Mark Richards graduated from the Merewether surfing incubator to win four successive world titles. From 1979 to 1982 he was the best competitive surfer on the planet. His introduction came in the gentle waves of Blacksmiths but it was his loose-limbed mastery of Merewether that earned him "the wounded seagull" nickname and a conviction to take on the world. Born in 1957, he was raised in a flat above the Hunter St West car business where his parents, Ray and Val, had made room on the showroom floor for the new fibreglass-coated boards. In his late teens he was a regular in Hawaii, experimenting with twin fins and adopting the famous MR logo modelled on the Superman badge. In 1979, suspecting that his career lay in shaping surfboards rather than

competitive surfing, he missed vital rounds of the world tour but took the final event to win the first of his four crowns. In Hawaii, surfing's spiritual home, he was revered as much for his humility as his surfing. When his competitive days were done, MR built his family home with a perfect view of Merewether Point, continued to run the surf shop founded by his father, shape more than half the boards ridden at Merewether and serve as Merewether National Surfing Reserve patron and committee member.



Mick Adam goes right and MR goes left while Ray Richards looks on. Photo Mark Sutton

At home inside by Dave Kelly

Telethon day June 13, 1981 by Mark Sutton

Off the top by Mark Sutton



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## Merewether National Surfing Reserve Book for sale

\$10



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Merewether - the next wave

champions for four consecutive years, were the core team assisted by Shane Powell, Marcus Brabant, Craig McMillan, Stuart Hughes and Dave McArthur. The team was coached variously by Robbie Wood and Mark Richards.

In 1964, the club's foundation year, Wood had finished second to Newburn in the very first competition. Third in the open division was a lithe goofy-footer called Peter Cornish, who was also Wood's brother-in-law.

It was the emerging generation led by Cornish, Bob Lynch and Peter Thomson who established Merewether as the dominant force in the Newcastle Surfboard Association's annual team titles of the 1960s. Cornish was a stand-out. Runner-up to Wayne Lynch for the 1968 Australian team for the world championships he was omitted on the basis that a goofy-footer would have been unsuited to the rights of Bells Beach. Ironically, Rolf Aurness, a Californian goofy, won the event. In the one-off "Merewether 1000" of 1971 Cornish beat

champion Simon Anderson as well as Michael Peterson and Peter Townend.

Roger Clements, with his radical style and vivid boards, was almost a force of nature heading into the mid-1970s. Watching his every move was a long-limbed kid called Mark Richards who by 1973 had won his third club junior crown. Richards would never collect a club senior championship - he was too busy winning world titles.

The sheer depth of wave-riding ability at Merewether generated epic battles for the club's annual prizes and highlighted the class of Dennis Bridges, Stewart Clarke and Paul "Corky" Carroll. Following them in 1981 was Martin McMillan, a club junior and under-17 NSW Schoolboys champion. McMillan would later become 1991 World Longboard Champion.

By the time Mick Adam won his third club senior title, Nick Wood had already collected six cadet titles. In 1985 Wood swept the pool winning the cadet, junior and senior titles.

Twelve championships rate him as the most prolific trophy-winner in the club's history.

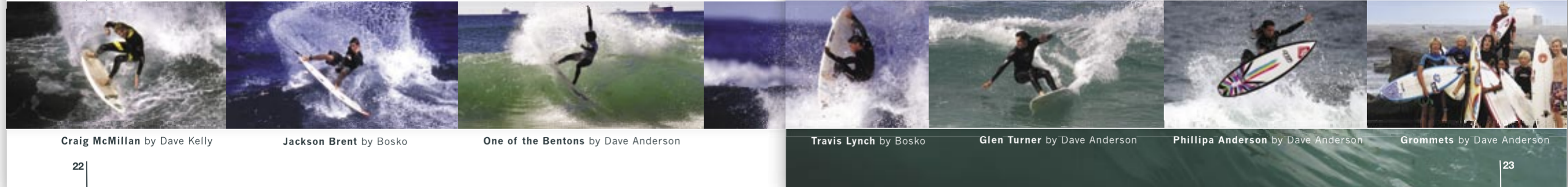
In 1988, Merewether Surfboard Club celebrated its 25th year with the publication of a club history and an anniversary ball attended by more than 500 at Newcastle City Hall. In a one-off event at Surfest that year, a club team took on and beat a "rest of the world" team that included three world champions.

Chad Edser, Merewether's cadet champ of 1988, landed in Lacanau, France in 1992 to win the world junior crown. Mitchell Ross, Travis Lynch, Rhys Smith, Jackson Brent and the next generation of Merewether's best including Jesse Adam, Wes Bainbridge, Craig and Philippa Anderson, Ryan Callinan and Jackson Baker continue the competitive tradition.

In 2006, organisers of Newcastle Surfest announced that the competition would be moving from Newcastle Beach to Merewether, in order to capitalise on its superior surfing conditions. As ever, the wave remained Merewether's most enduring performer.



Jesse Adam by Bosko



Craig McMillan by Dave Kelly

Jackson Brent by Bosko

One of the Bentons by Dave Anderson

Travis Lynch by Bosko

Glen Turner by Dave Anderson

Phillipa Anderson by Dave Anderson

Grommets by Dave Anderson

