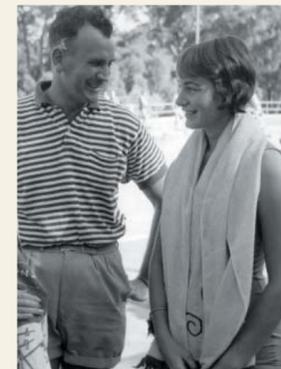


One Sunday morning during a race I dived in alongside the official competitors since I reckoned I could beat those kids easily. Fortunately the pool attendant who ordered me out of the water, a wise old Scot named Jock with tattoos adorning his muscular arms and a Glaswegian accent as thick as porridge, was in a good mood and instead of throwing me out, explained that if I wanted to be in the swimming races all I had to do was join the club. Two shillings and sixpence joining fee, plus a bit more for the Parramatta City ASC club badge proudly adorning my new Speedo racer, was all it took to launch my competitive swimming career which continued for the next 15 years and changed my life. Julian Carroll, Australian backstroke champion and Olympian

In the early 50s I set about teaching the local kids to swim. Most of the kids came from the local Marist Bros schools and couldn't swim at all. I taught ten kids and then those kids taught another ten kids each. Within about three years nearly every one in the school could swim, and so we had a swimming carnival. There were around 50 kids lined up along the edges of the pool to rescue anyone who wasn't going to make it to the end of the pool. Bruce McDonald, coach



Susan Costin with coach Bruce McDonald, about 1961
Courtesy of Susan Bridie

Parramatta City Amateur Swimming Club

Parramatta City Amateur Swimming Club was formed in about 1951 by police officer and coach Bruce McDonald and pool manager Ted Simms. Often there would be over 600 children competing in Saturday races – in a single pool. The difficulties of organising training for such large numbers of children were solved by Bruce's invention of 'interval training', which became a standard technique around Australia.

Bruce McDonald coached hundreds of children to regional, state and national titles – among them Colleen Pettiford, Julian Carroll, Susan Costin, Rob Griffiths and Nick Whitlam. When the pool was too crowded the team would train at 'Little Coogee' (part of the Parramatta River) or in Lake Parramatta. In winter, when most clubs stopped training altogether, Bruce's squad would continue training and racing at White Bay or Bunnerong power stations.

These days the Parramatta City Swimming Club has a membership which is much more culturally diverse than in the early days, reflecting changes in the area's population. It still plays a vital role in teaching local children to swim, and in coaching and supporting future champions.

The Parramatta City Amateur Water Polo Club

Granville's water polo club formed in 1958 as an arm of the swimming club, became a first-grade team in 1962, and continued until about 1970. Members included several State players such as Ron deGroot, Joe Konic and Graeme Hannan. In 1968 a team embarked on a European tour, the first Australian water polo club to tour overseas. Besides competing in Singapore and Germany, the team travelled to Czechoslovakia, where they became caught up in the August 1968 Soviet invasion.



The original Parramatta City Amateur Swimming Club water polo team. Left to right, standing: Ben Schmidt, Ron DeGroot, Joe Konic, Frank O'Brien and Greg Birkett; sitting, John Curran and Garry Dent
Courtesy of Joe Konic



Above: Parramatta City Amateur Swimming Club awards night, about 1956. (Left to right) Michael Sloan, Julian Carroll, Len Griffiths (holding the Wheaton Shield), John Moss and Rob Griffiths
Courtesy of Christine Maher



Left: Parramatta City ASC awards night, 1957/58. Left to right: Rob Griffiths, Julian Carroll and Colleen Pettiford
Courtesy of Colleen Pettiford



Above: Parramatta ASC members Gary Naughan and Gary Estlick, mid 1960s

Below: Chief learn-to-swim instructor Bruce Horlyck and some of Parramatta City ASC's young members, Granville, 2000
Photos courtesy of Bruce Horlyck



Susan Costin receiving an award
Courtesy of Susan Bridie

