A Short History of Huia Master Swimmers Club



1982-2012

By Lyall Mortimer & Mike Johnston



The beginning

A meeting of a group of Huia master swimmers on 13th May 1982 is now recognised as the inaugural meeting of the

Huia Master Swimmers Club. John Butt was nominated Chairman of the group and Brian Kerr became Secretary.

Membership lists at the time named 12 initial members of the Huia Master Group and four who were already NZ Master Swimmers. These are the "Foundation" members, as shown in the table:-

Membership grew quickly over the next year so that by December 1983 the club had 54 male and 56 female financial members.

The first AGM was held on 22nd May 1983. John Butt became President and Sally Fergus became Secretary. Other appointments to the first full committee were: Susan Brown (Records Keeper); Barbara Hawkins (Social Convenor); Joy Sears (Newsletter Editor).

The next two years (1984 and 1985) saw Bayly Tanner as President and Warren Meech as Secretary. Bayly continued for another year as President, with Doris Wright as Secretary. In 1987 Jim Caldwell became President and Sally Fergus returned to Secretary.

Club activity

The club was active locally, nationally and internationally from the early years. In March 1983, a team comprising John Butt, Christine Adams, Suzanne Brown, Gordon Dinnison, John Hanson, Hillary Keenan, Patricia Kerr, Brian Kerr, Susan Lennie and Joye Sears swam with distinction at the National Championships in Auckland. Several NZ times were established.

FOUNDATION MEMBERS Original Hutt group

Maurice Bognuda
Patricia Kerr
Brian Kerr
Mary Lees
Albert Lees
Christine Lewis
Lyall Mortimer
Valerie Rodgers
Jennifer Thompson

Vicky Froude NZMS members

David Thompson

John Butt Tony Keenan Ray Gough Mark Nevin

A team of 20 took part in the Arena First International Master Championships held in Christchurch at QEII pool in April 1984. The Huia team of Sue Brown, Bill Cheeseman, Gordon Dinnison and Christine Kingsbeer established a new World Record in the 120+ years 200m Individual Medley relay. The Women's Individual relay team of Sue Brown, Christine Kingsbeer, Joye Sears and Sue Strawbridge was placed third in their 200m Relay. Medals were presented to the first eight place getters, notable among them were: Sue Brown with two 1^{sts}, a 2nd and two 4^{ths}; Brian Kerr with three 4^{ths}; Patricia Kerr with three 3^{rds}; and Doris Wright with two 2^{nds}.

Huia Master Swimmers initially met at the Huia pool for an hour on Thursday night, but the Pool Manager changed this to Sunday night. After the weekly swim, everyone congregated in the upstairs room for supper and a chat. In 1987, the Council decided the Club had to hire the whole pool for its swim sessions, so the cost was included in the subscription. The subscription jumped from \$15.00 (covering Club and NZMS membership, and the cost of supper and spa) to \$70.00. The increase did not meet with universal agreement so a group broke away and formed the Petone Club. Huia Club membership dropped from 87 at the start of 1987 down to 40, then rebuilt to 56 by the end of the year.

The Club has always had two complementary groups – a competitive group and a keep fit group. Both have their place promoting 'fun, fitness and friendship' in keeping with the NZMS motto. At various times, swim coaching was provided at the weekly pool sessions, often by Club members. The first coaches included Gordon Dinnison, Sue West, Christine Kingsbeer and Jackie Lenihan. For several years the Club had 20 minutes each session doing acquarobics.

The 1980s was a growth era for NZ master swimming. At various times, Huia took the initiative to encourage master groups in Stokes Valley, Wainuiomata, Eastbourne and Upper Hutt. For example, in 1985 the Club set up a subcommittee to look at forming a Masters club in Stokes Valley. This didn't come to fruition, but in 1985 up to 25 swimmers were meeting at Stokes Valley pool on Thursday nights. In 1983, Huia Club was offered time at Naenae pool (Wednesday nights 7-8pm). Groups continued to meet at Naenae until recent years.

Attending swim meets was a regular activity with good attendance. There were local meets but also away trips to places like Masterton, Levin, Palmerston North and Napier. For the longer trips, often a van or bus was hired. Club members also competed at NZMS national championships and international events such as the World Championships in Tokyo (1986), Brisbane (1988), Rio de Janiero (1990), Montreal (1994) and Sheffield World Masters (1996) to name some.

In 1985 Huia was involved in running a national raffle for the Tokyo World Championships. To protect members from financial liability, the committee decided the Club should become an incorporated society. A Constitution was developed and the Club was duly incorporated. For many years Huia was the only incorporated Master Swimmers club in New Zealand.

A tradition was established early on where each year members took part in the "tinman event". This is a take-off of an "ironman event" with the trophy made of tin by Lyall Mortimer. The rules were simple - the previous winner had to organise the event, which could include anything, and the winner was not necessarily the first person home. It became an annual event, and is still run on the final night before Christmas.

In 1990, when Margaret Francis was Club President, Huia Club established the Chocolate Frog meet. Apparently chocolate frogs were easier to come by than chocolate fish in those days. The first Chocolate Frog was run in February 1990 and it became a regular event for a while.

Huia developed the Webbed Relay, a national postal event. It became known as Huia Handicapped Webbed Relay. In 1997, 24 teams took part. The Webbed Relay continued until 2004.

Huia has had periods of doing well in pool competition. At the 1985 NZMS Nationals in New Plymouth, Sue Brown won a silver medal and gold was won by Brian Kerr, Pat Kerr and Kingsley Broadbent. Sadly, some time later, Kingsley died at a NZMS swim meet. The 1998 National Championships at Kilbirnie saw a Huia team of 14 swimmers win nine gold, seven silver and four bronze medals. Amy Cowling (Club Captain, 1986) won six of the golds.

Huia has consistently been involved in running swim meets. One of the first meets the Club ran was in February 1985. Seventy swimmers from Huia, Harbour Capital, Raumati, Tawa, Masterton, Levin and Taupo clubs took part. Recently, Harbour City Masters Chocolate Fish Swim was hosted at Huia pool in 2010. And in February 2011 Huia established its flagship outdoor swim meet at Wainuiomata Pool. Modelled on the Chocolate Fish meet and incorporating a barbeque, the event attracted 47 swimmers. A re-run in 2012 attracted 30 swimmers and established the meet as an annual event.

Huia has also organised or supported national NZMS meets over the years, some run by Huia Club and others run jointly, mostly with Harbour Capital Masters. In all, Huia has been involved in organising four long course championships (three at Kilbirnie and one at Naenae) and three short course championships at Huia Pool. A lot of work went into preparation, such as for the 1999 North Island Short Course Championship at Huia Pool. A Huia Club subcommittee spent all of the previous year preparing.

The Club needed a web presence so in 1997 the website (www.huiamasters.org.nz) was developed thanks to the skills of Andrew Gabites and Robert Gibb, both of whom held major roles on the Club committee at various times. Andrew went on to be the NZMS Webmaster and Robert the NZMS Computer Officer. In 2009 the website was refreshed by David and Kester Maddock.

Club colours and logo

From the start the Club needed a logo, so Christine Mortimer designed one for her university entrance art exam. The logo was adopted in September 1982. It is still the official logo of the club. A badge, togs and T shirts were made with the logo embroidered. A flag was also made to take to swimming meets. It is still used today.

The Club colours have changed over the years. The initial green and gold were those of Lower Hutt City and were used on the logo that Christine designed. However the Club colours were changed in 1988 to red and white, the colours of General Finance, the main club sponsor of the time. Following that, in 2000 the club colours were again changed, to dark blue and gold.

Open water swimming

From early days, Club members have taken part in open water swimming. An early event was a 6.5km swim from Petone Beach across the harbour in March 1984 - Ray Gough came 3rd and Rory Curtis came 9th. In February 1985, Kingsley Broadbent made it to the front page of the Evening Post with his swim from Ward Island to Eastbourne.

Two Club members have swum Cook Strait. In 1985, Donna Bouzaid (Club Captain 1985-86) swam it, doing the fastest N-S crossing for a woman at that time. Karen Bisley, a Huia committee member 2003-04, had prior to that swum Cook Strait twice - in 1982 as a 16 year old (then the fastest S-N crossing for a woman) and in 1985 as a 19 year old. In 1990, both Karen and Donna were in a swim team that retraced the legendary swim of Hinepoupou (1750 A.D.)

from Kapiti Island across Cook Strait to d'Urville Island.

From the Cook Strait swim records:

Club members continued to take part in open water events, including the

SUCCESSFUL SINGLE CROSSINGS OF COOK STRAIT						
Name	Age	Sex	Country	Date of Swim	Time	Direction
Bisley Karen	16	F	NZ	14 Feb 1982	6hrs 46mins	S-N
Bisley Karen	19	F	NZ	29 Mar 1985	11hrs 11mins	N-S
Bouzaid Donna	22	F	NZ	01 May 1985	8hrs 15mins	N-S

10km Whale Island swim off Whakatane and 5.6km Kapiti swim, both annual events. Club members also swam in the Eastbourne Wharf-to-Wharf event. In 2005, a Club subcommittee including Lyall Mortimer and Mike Johnston ran a 3km swim from Sommes Island to Petone in which 75 swimmers took part.

Now, almost half of the current Club members are actively involved in distance swimming competition – either open water, triathlon or ironman. A number take part in international events. David Creamer, Club member since 2000, an established triathlete has 10 Taupo Ironman events under his belt and was in the long distance Worlds in 2006. New Club members, Olivia Hilhorst, Angela Campbell and Diana Taylor have all been selected for World distance events in 2012. Angela was selected for the Worlds standard distance event in 2010 and Diana was selected in 2011.

Added to this roundup is current Club member Stu Watson who has played water polo for NZ.

Club identities

An early identity of the Club was Stan Harris. He was a keen swimmer and swam well into his eighties. He went on Masters trips and toured South America with a New Zealand group. He won gold at the Nationals in 1991. Stan was elected a life member of Huia Club in 1992.

No history of Huia Masters Swimmers would be complete without reference to the major contribution of Lyall Mortimer to the Club and NZMS. A 1982 Foundation member of the Club, Lyall was on the committee continuously from 1985 to 2008 (including seven years as President). He became delegate to NZMS in 1986 and represented Capital Region until 2008 – a total of 23 years. In 1989 he was appointed to Vice President of NZMS and held the open water swimming portfolio. Lyall became NZMS president in 1992 for three years and NZMS life member in 2005. He served on the FINA Master Swimmers committee (the international governing body) for 13 years until 2009, the last five years as Chairman, the first time for a New Zealander. For his services, Lyall was awarded the coveted FINA silver pin at the World Master Swimming Championships in Rome in 2009. Lyall was elected Life Member of Huia Club in 2010.

Margaret Francis has also made a significant contribution to the Club, having done 20 years on the committee, second only to Lyall. It started as Secretary in 1989, followed by President for three years (1990-93) and seven years as Treasurer (1997-2003). In 1990, when NZMS established regional councils, Margaret joined Lyall as regional delegate for some years. For her work with the Club and NZMS, Margaret was nominated for the NZMS Service Award in 2005.

Jess Maddock had the longest spell as Club Treasurer. After a year as committee member, Jess took over as Treasurer in 2004 for eight years. Other members of the Maddock family contributed too – David has been on the committee since 2004 and Kester had several years also. Both Jess and David did the 3.3km Capital Classic open water swim in 2012.

Winnie Cleary took over as Treasurer in 2012, after six years on the committee. Winnie is a dedicated distance swimmer having progressed from open water swimming to triathlons and ironman events. She has to her credit the Taupo Ironman and distance swims like Rangitoto and Chelsea in Auckland Harbour, Lake Rotima 6km and Whale Island 10km swims.

Robert Gibb is another with a long period on the committee. Robert's 10 years included two years as President (1995-96) and seven as Secretary (1997-2003). During Robert's term, a Club newsletter was regularly produced, following a practice which began in 1982. The very first newsletter was called a "Newsletter of Sorts". Most were simply "Huia Newsletter", but in Robert's time some were named "Huia Splash".

Ian Kerr and Bruce Holland are current members who joined the Club in 1983. They had spells on the Club committee, competed in swim meets in the early days and remain active Sunday night swimmers. They claim to still be using Robert Gibb's original swim coaching programme.

In all, there have been 12 Club Presidents and 12 Secretaries. Office holders of note not previously mentioned include:

- Bruce Patchett two years as Secretary (1991-92) and two as President (1993-94)
- Malcolm Coleman five years on the committee (1994-98), two as Secretary (1995-96) and one as President (1997)
- Andrew Gabities six years on the committee, four as President (1998-2001)
- Michael Grazier five years on the committee, two as President (2001-02)
- Clayton Gumbrell five years on the committee (2000-04), the last two years as Secretary
- Lester Fensom current President (four years since 2009) preceded by Secretary in 2008.

The last two Presidents, Lyall and Lester, have combined the roles of President and Secretary.

Recent years

Compared to the early days membership has declined, following national trends, but is holding its own at around 30 members currently. Members still gather on Sunday nights to enjoy an easy swim, train or take part in coached sessions. As well, Club members attend local events and occasionally national meets, compete in open water events and help with the organisation of competitions in the region, such as the recent Nationals at Kilbirnie Pool.

In 2002 a Huia Club team of eleven competed in the World Masters in Christchurch: Jess Maddock, Winnie Cleary, Denise Ridley, Sue Kolijn, Lyall Mortimer, Andre Reiper, Mike Johnston, Brent Crowther, Robert Gibb, Neil Rush and Larry Arnold.

The Club has resumed holding a mid-year dinner. The dinner is titled 'Meet your better half' as members can bring their partners. The Club dined at Maharaja, Petone (2009), Bellevue Gardens Establishment, Lower Hutt (2010) and La Bella Italia, Petone (2011). The Club still has a barbecue as the final activity before Christmas break-up. The AGM is now held around March and is combined with a dinner.

In 2009 the 'tinman' fun event resumed and coaching sessions were reinstituted on Club nights. Graham Sharman mentored swimmers in 2009 and in 2011 and 2012 Sarah Coales ran coaching clinics. With the support of Harbour City Masters, Huia Club now runs an annual outdoor swim meet at the Wainuiomata Pool.

Over the years

Many Club members have contributed in various ways in the past 30 years. It's difficult to acknowledge everyone, but perhaps the best way to do this impartially is to record all those who have been committee members since that first official meeting on 13th May 1982. Please refer to the Appendix for the Huia Master Swimmers Club committee and appointments (as well as membership figures), derived from minutes of AGMs and committee meetings, confirmed where necessary by administrative records and the periodic Club newsletters.

FROM THE RECORDS - Club Appointments 1982-2012

1982	First meeting 13th May	Foundation membership: 16
Chairman: John Butt	Secretary: Brian Kerr	

1983	First AGM 22 nd May	Membership: 109		
President: John Butt	Secretary: Sally Fergus			
Other appointments: Susan Brown (Records Keeper); Barbara Hawkins (Social Convenor); Joy Sears (Newsletter)				

1984AGM 19th FebruaryMembership: 120President: Bayly TannerSecretary: Warren MeechTreasurer: Bert LeesOther appointments: John Hansen (Club Captain); Sue Brown (Record Keeper); Christine Kingsbeer (Competition Organiser); Mary Lees (Social Convenor).Other Committee members: Joye Sears, Mary Rowse, Sue Strawbridge, Graham Houston, Mark Niven, John Butt

1985	AGM 10 th February	Membership: 104
President: Bayly Tanner	Secretary/Newsletter Ed: Warren Meech	Treasurer: Sally Fergus

Other appointments: Maureen Reeves (Assistant Secretary); Donna Bouzaid (Club Captain); Lyall Mortimer (Assistant Club Captain); Sue Brown (Competitions Organiser and Records Keeper); Sue Strawbridge (Assistant Records Keeper); Christine Kingsbeer (Travel and Accommodation Secretary); Grant Campbell and Ian McLean (Social Secretaries); and John Baron (Uniforms Officer).

Other Committee members: Mark Niven, Doris Wright; Tricia McKnight

1986	AGM 23 rd February		Membership: 87	
President: Bayly Tanner	Secretary: Doris Wright	etary: Doris Wright Treasurer*: Tess Rushton		
Other appointments: Donna Bouzaid (Club Captain); Christine Kingsbeer (Competition Organiser and Timekeeper); Ian McLean (Social Convenor).				

* Sally Fergus was appointed Treasurer at the AGM but Tess assumed the position later in the year.

Other Committee members: Grant Campbell, Maureen West, Warren Meech, Lyall Mortimer, John Barron, Jeff Hodson, Jim Campbell (ex officio)

1987	AGM 1 st March Membership: 56			
President: Jim Caldwell	Secretary/Treasurer: Sally Fergus			
Other appointments: Jeff Hodson (Club Captain); Sue Dinnison (Competition Organiser)				
Other Committee members: Tess Rushton, Maureen Reeves, Bayly Tanner, Norma Lowe, Lyall Mortimer,				
Dulcie Riley, Ian Kerr		·		

1988	AGM 28 th February		Membership: 44	
President: Lyall Mortimer*	Secretary: Left vacant at AGM Treasurer: Left vacant at AG		er: Left vacant at AGM	
Other appointments: Mike Humphrey (Club Captain); Pauline Humphrey (Competition Organiser)				
Other Committee members: Sue Dinnison, Norma Lowe, Jim Wright, Ian Kerr, Jeff Hodson, Chris Dungan,				
Lyall Mortimer (*assumed President during the year)				

1989	AGM 12 th February	Me	embership: 34		
President: Lyall Mortimer	Secretary: Margaret Francis		Treasurer: Jim Waight		
Other appointments: Norma Lowe (Club Captain); Meg Flux (Vice Club Captain)					
Committee members: John Flux, Chris Dungan, Ian Kerr					

1990	AGM 18th February		Membership: 44
President: Margaret Francis	Secretary: Norma Lowe	Treasurer: Jim Waight	
Other appointments: Meg Flux (Club Captain)			
Other Committee members: John F. Sue Miller, Lyall Mortimer	lux, Chris Dungan, Ian Kerr, Ji	m Irvine (Supper Organiser), Bruce Holland,

1991	AGM 24th February		Membership: 42	
President: Margaret Francis	Secretary: Bruce Patchett Treasu		ırer: Jim Waight	
Other appointments: Club Captain: deferred at AGM				
Committee members: Linda Bouzaid	, Lyall Mortimer, Gwen Patchett	, Stuart	Reed, Stuart Young	

1992	AGM 9th February	GM 9 th February		
President: Margaret Francis	Secretary: Bruce Patchett	retary: Bruce Patchett Treasurer: Chris Dungan		
Other appointments: Jeanette Smith and Roger Anderson (joint Club Captains), Stuart Young (Newsletter)				
Other Committee members: Lyall Mortimer, Gwen Patchett, Sheryl Archilles, Jeanette Smith, Vicky Edwards, Stuart Young				

1993	AGM 21st February			
President: Bruce Patchett	Secretary: Jannette Smith	Treasurer: Chris Dungan		
Other appointments:				
Committee members: Gwen Patchett, Lyall Mortimer, Margaret Francis, Stuart Young, John Grant, Anne Eastwood				

1994	AGM 27 th February	Membership: 34
President: Bruce Patchett	Secretary: Jannette Smith	Treasurer: Chris Dungan

Other appointments:

Committee members: Anne Eastwood, Malcolm Coleman, Kath Hustwick, Lyall Mortimer, Margaret Francis,

Robert Gibb

1995	AGM 5th March		Membership: 35
President: Robert Gibb *	Secretary: Malcolm Coleman *	Trea	surer: Kath Hustwick *
Other appointments: * appointed at a committee meeting on 19 th March.			
Committee members: Lyall Mortimer, John Grant, Anne Eastwood, Margaret Francis, Denise Ridley			

1996	AGM 28th January	Me	embership: 42
President: Robert Gibb	Secretary: Malcolm Coleman Tr		Treasurer: Terry Mountney
Other appointments:			
Committee members: Lyall Mortimer, Denise Ridley, Norma Lowe, Andrew Gabites, Michael Grazier,			
Richard Wickens			

1997	AGM 23 rd February	Membership: 44	
President: Malcolm Coleman	Secretary: Robert Gibb		Treasurer: Margaret Francis
Other appointments: Richard Wickens (Club Captain)			
Other Committee members: Lyall Mortimer, Andrew Gabites, Roger Anderson, Mark Christiansen, Denise Ridley			

1998	AGM 22 nd February	Membership: 48	
President: Andrew Gabites	Secretary: Robert Gibb		Treasurer: Margaret Francis
Other appointments: Richard Wickens (Club Captain)			
Other Committee members: Amy Cowling, Roger Anderson, Mark Christiansen, Malcolm Coleman,			
Jackie Lenihan, Lyall Mortimer			

North Island Short Course Championships subcommittee: Andrew Gabites, Robert Gibb, Amy Cowling,

Jackie Lenihan, Malcolm Coleman, Michael Grazier

1999	AGM 28 th February	Membership: 44	
President: Andrew Gabites	Secretary: Robert Gibb	Treasurer: Margaret Fran	
Other appointments: Amy Cowling (Club Captain)			
Other Committee members: Roger Anderson, Jackie Lenihan, Lyall Mortimer, Christine Lawrence,			
George Emorfopoulos, Rebecca Solomon			

2000	AGM 27 th February	Membership: 36	
President: Andrew Gabites	Secretary: Robert Gibb		Treasurer: Margaret Francis
Other appointments: Malcolm Coleman (Club Captain)			
Other Committee members: Denise Ridley, Michael Grazier, Lyall Mortimer, Richard Wickens,			
George Emorfopoulos, Christine Lawrence			

2001	AGM 25 th February	Membership: 35	
President: Michael Grazier	Secretary: Robert Gibb		Treasurer: Margaret Francis
Other appointments:			
Committee members: Andrew Gabites, Clayton Gumbrell, Rebecca Solomon, Lynn Okey, Lyall Mortimer			

2002	AGM 24 th February	Mem	bership: 33
President: Michael Grazier	Secretary: Robert Gibb		Treasurer: Margaret Francis
Other appointments:			
<u>Committee members:</u> Andrew Gabites, Karen Bisley, Clayton Gumbrell, Lyn Okey, Lyall Mortimer, Malcolm Coleman, John Le Cren, Sarah Packer			

2003	AGM 2 nd March		Membership: 34
President: not filled	Secretary: Clayton Gumbrell & Karen Bisley (jointly)	Tr	reasurer: Margaret Francis
Other appointments:			
Committee members: Michael	Committee members: Michael Grazier, Jess Maddock, John Le Cren, Lyall Mortimer, Denise Ridley		

2004	AGM 14th March	Membership: 28	
President: Lyall Mortimer	Secretary: Clayton Gumbrell	Treasurer: Jess Maddock	
Other appointments:			
Committee members: John Le Cren, Michael Grazier, David Maddock, Margaret Francis, Mike Johnston			

2005	AGM 14th May		Membership: 21	
President/Secretary: Lyall Morti	rtimer Treasure		er: Jess Maddock	
Other appointments:				
Committee members: John Le Cre	en, Margaret Francis, I	Mike Johns	ton, David Maddock	

 2006
 AGM 14th May
 Membership: 18

 President/Secretary: Lyall Mortimer
 Treasurer: Jess Maddock

 Other appointments:
 Committee members: David Maddock, Margaret Francis, Chris McJorrow, Lois Frew, Winnie Cleary

 2007
 AGM 1st July
 Membership: 25

 President/Secretary: Lyall Mortimer
 Treasurer: Jess Maddock

 Other appointments:

 Committee members: David Maddock, Margaret Francis, Chris McJorrow, Lois Frew, Winnie Cleary

 2008
 AGM 30th March
 Membership: 25

 President: Lyall Mortimer
 Secretary: Lester Fensom
 Treasurer: Jess Maddock

 Other appointments:
 Committee members: David Maddock, Margaret Francis, Chris McJorrow, Lois Frew, Winnie Cleary

2009AGM 5th AprilMembership: 20President/Secretary: Lester FensorTreasurer: Jess MaddockOther appointments:Committee members: David Maddock, Nicola Hikaka, Kester Maddock, Janette Martin, Lois Frew, Winnie Cleary, David Creamer

2010AGM 28th MarchMembership: 20President/Secretary: Lester FensorTreasurer: Jess MaddockOther appointments:Committee members: David Maddock, Nicola Hikaka, Kester Maddock, Lois Frew, Winnie Cleary, David Creamer, Rayna Clinton

2011AGM 3rd AprilMembership: 22President/ Secretary: Lester FensomTreasurer: Jess MaddockOther appointments:
Committee members: Lois Frew, Winnie Cleary, David Creamer, Rayna Clinton

2012
AGM 11th March
Membership: 28

President/Secretary: Lester Fensor
Treasurer: Winnie Cleary

Other appointments:
Committee members: Lois Frew, David Creamer, Rayna Clinton