

Tamarama Aeroplane Crash, 1946

"The most outstanding rescue of the season was that effected during the mass rescue which occurred at Tamarama after a plane crashed into the seas about 300 yards off the beach," reads the Tamarama Surf Life Saving Club Annual Report 1945-46.

Surprised surfers and bathers at Tamarama and Bronte Beaches were buzzed by a Moth Minor aeroplane on January 22, 1946. It flew low doing stunts and then - **disaster** - it crashed into the sea. An eye-witness reported: *"I saw him loop the loop twice. On the second occasion the engine appeared to cut out and the plane went into a tail spin at a height of about 300 feet. It then crashed into the sea."* The 29 year-old pilot, Eric Alfred Hurst, lost his life.

"The force of the impact caused the plane to break up, the wreckage being washed towards the beach and many sightseers, disregarding the dangerous current running at the time, swam out to collect souvenirs," reported the Tamarama S.L.S.C. So many persons were in danger of being swept out to sea that lifesavers had to man all belts and reels plus surf skis, at least four persons being carried on to the beach unconscious, but all were brought in safely. In recognition of this gallant effort on the part of its members, the Tamarama S.L.S.C. was awarded the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia Certificate of Merit.

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