

WAVERLEY COUNCIL

PLANE CRASHES AT TAMARAMA

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Local History Fact Sheet



Daily Telegraph, 23 January 1946. Lifesavers from Bronte, Tamarama, and North Bondi surf clubs swim through heavy surf in an effort to rescue the pilot of a plane which crashed into the sea off Tamarama Beach.

Thousands of beachgoers at Bronte and Tamarama beach watched in horror as a low flying Moth Minor aeroplane crashed into the sea on January 22, 1946.

The plane had been flying low and performing stunts when the pilot ran into trouble and the aircraft failed. 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," later reported the Tamarama S.L.S.C.

So many swimmers were in danger of being swept out to sea that lifesavers had to man all belts and reels, plus surf skis. At least four people were carried back to the beach unconscious, but all were saved in what the club's annual report refers to as "the most outstanding rescue of the season".

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.

Published by Waverley Library from sources in the Local History Collection, 2020