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International working party for  
**documentation and conservation**  
of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the  
**modern movement**

**NR & NIS MINIMUM FICHE**

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composed by working party of: **Australia**



- 1 **Identity of building/group of buildings/urban scheme/ landscape/garden** **Manly Surf Life Saving Pavilion**

1.1	current name of building	Manly Surf Life Saving Pavilion
1.2	variant or former name	n/a
1.3	number & name of street	South Steyne
1.4	town	Manly
1.5	province	NSW
1.6	zip code	
1.7	country	Australia
1.8	national grid reference	
1.9	classification/typology	Recreation, Pavilions and Club Houses
1.10	protection status & date	RAIA Register 1979 Local Environmental Plan, Heritage Schedules
<b>2</b>	<b>History of building</b>	<p>Sea bathing was considered to be beneficial for health. It was not, however legal, in NSW for people to be "<i>bathing in waters exposed to views from any wharf, street, public place or dwelling house between the hours of 6am and 7pm</i>". (<a href="http://www.surflifesavingsydney.com.au">www.surflifesavingsydney.com.au</a>)</p> <p>In 1902 a Manly newspaper editor, William H. Gocher, took on the authorities and announced he would enter the surf at noon on Sundays. Eventually he was apprehended but no charges were laid. Finally the legislation was altered and swimming was allowed, provided the bathers were discreetly dressed with neck-to-knee costumes. Manly became a popular weekend destination.</p> <p>In October 1907 the Surf Bathing Association of New South Wales was formed when representatives from various clubs, including two Manly clubs, the Manly Surf Club and the North Steyne Bathing and Life Saving Club, met at the Sports Club in Hunter Street, Sydney. In 1920 the name was changed to the Surf Life Saving Association of New South Wales. In 1922 the name changed once more to the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia, marking the introduction of clubs from Queensland. Their headquarters remained in Sydney. The Manly Surf Club continued to operate, building new headquarters shortly before World War II. The building, designed by Eric W. Andrew won the 1939 Sulman Award. Life Guards continue to patrol the beach today, ensuring that swimmers remain between the flags.</p>
2.1	original brief/purpose	Surf Life Saving Pavilion

2.2	dates: commission/completion	<p>Surf pavilion of Interwar functionalist style.</p> <p>Prize winning civic architecture in the 'ultra-modern' style of late 1930s. The pavillion was awarded the Sulman Medal for Architecture in 1939. The Sulman Award judges noted that the <i>"the most noticeable quality of the pavilion it its complete harmony with its setting". It is felt that nothing more could be done to make it, as it should be, and integral part of the landscape, and a difficult site has indeed proved to be the architects opportunity. The planning is clear, direct and freely treated, and the organization of the volume of the building is most skilful. The elevational treatment is very satisfactory, with a nice balance between form, line and texture. The handling of the detail shows a high degree of refinement and a good sense of colour"</i></p>
2.3	architectural designers	<p>Eric W. Andrew</p> <p>The design team included E A Winsome Hall and possibly Sydney Ancher. Ancher is thought to have prepared the perspectives.</p>
2.4	others associated with building	Built by W. H. Thompson And Co
2.5	significant alterations with dates	Modified in 1936, 1938 and 1940
	current use	Demolished
	current condition	Demolished in 1980 due to concrete cancer.
<b>3.0 Description</b>		
3.1	general description	The Manly Surf Lifesaving Pavilion was an L shaped located at the southern end of the beach.
3.2	construction	Re-inforced concrete.
3.3	context	The building was constructed on South Steyne, Manly Ocean Beach fronting the water. The beach is separated from the waterfront park by a sea wall. A series of Norfolk Island pines line the curve of the beach.
<b>4 Evaluation</b>		
4.1	Technical	The building was designed with concrete baffles to allow light to enter but not views.

4.2	social	<p>The beach front esplanade was continued in front of the surf pavilion allowing pedestrians to continue on to Shelly Beach / Fairy Bower.</p> <p>The survey of the Sulman Architectural Award Wining buildings, <i>Architecture in Transition</i> noted that the building “represents a gear change in the introduction of modernism into Sydney Architecture”, paving the way for the later work of Sydney Ancher and Harry Seidler.”</p>
4.3	cultural & aesthetic	<p>Manly Ocean beach, one of Sydney’s main ocean beaches had been a popular weekend destination since the commencement of the Manly ferry in the nineteenth century. The park dates from the late nineteenth century, the surf pavilions are more contemporary.</p>
4.4	Historical	<p>Indicating the growing popularity of surfing and swimming, as well as indicating the need for surf life saving patrols at beaches with dangerous rips.</p>
4.5	general assessment	<p>This building was an important modern icon in Sydney. A surf pavilion continues to occupy this position at the southern end of Manly Ocean beach, adjacent to the safe swimming area.</p>
<b>5</b>	<b>Documentation</b>	<p>Refer to <i>Architecture in Transition</i></p>
5.1	principal references	<p>Decoration and Glass, March 1937, pp.30-31 and 70 – 71, (also on the cover, perspective by Sydney Ancher). Metcalf, Andrew, <i>Architecture in Transition, The Sulman Award, 1932-1996</i>,</p>
5.2	visual material attached	<p>Images from Architecture in Transition and <a href="http://www.surflifesavingsydney.com.au">www.surflifesavingsydney.com.au</a></p>
5.3	rapporteur/date	<p>Noni Boyd, June 2003</p>

1939

MANLY SURF PAVILION (DEMOLISHED) MANLY BEACH

ARCHITECT: ERIC ANDREW

BUILDER: H.W. THOMPSON PTY. LTD.



AWARD CATEGORY: PUBLIC

The Manly Surf Pavilion represents a gear-change in the introduction of modernism into Sydney architecture. Like previous winners Eric Andrew's design was the result of a competition (1936) but unlike Science House (1932) or St Anne's Roman Catholic Shrine (1935) the results were far from conventional. The Manly Surf Pavilion paraded functionalism, sun-worship, flat roofs, unbalanced composition and an absence of decoration brazenly in one of Sydney's most public places. Nobody could have seen it and felt that architecture would ever be the same again. It paved the way for future winners Ancher and Seidler as no other building could have.

In an inspirational moment, Andrew overcame the problem of allowing maximum sunlight into the top of the pavilion whilst ensuring privacy from the neighbouring flats through the device of curved concrete baffles on the roof which allow the sun in and maintain privacy. The building's civic gesture was to run a promenade linking Fairy Bower to Manly Beach cantilevered right across the entire frontage allowing both a place to walk and to pause and look over the beach.

The long, horizontal, sand-coloured building containing dressing rooms, club rooms, a laundry, sunbathing areas and a multipurpose hall was completed in 1938 by an architectural team which included E.A. Winsome-Hall (later Andrew) and possibly, Sydney Ancher, whose signature appears on the perspective featured on the cover of *Decoration and Glass* of March 1937 showing a view of the pavilion from the beach. The question of Ancher's involvement in the project is tantalising; he was certainly

in the country at the time and a partial explanation for the apparent fading of Andrew's architectural light after the pavilion's completion, is that he may not have been the sole designer at Manly. The building was demolished in 1980 following the discovery that it had terminal 'concrete cancer', i.e. irreversible rusting of reinforcing steel and widespread deterioration of the concrete leading to loss of structural integrity.

## JURY COMMENT

*The most noticeable quality of the pavilion is its complete harmony with its setting. It is felt that nothing more could be done to make it, as it should be, an integral part of the landscape, and a difficult site has indeed proved to be the architect's opportunity. The planning is clear, direct and freely treated, and the organisation of the volume of the building is most skillful. The elevational treatment is very satisfactory, with a nice balance between form, line and texture. The handling of the detail shows a high degree of refinement, and a good colour sense.*

*Decoration and Glass*, March 1937, pp. 30-33 and 70-71 (also cover). *Decoration and Glass*, February 1938, pp. 18-20. *Architecture*, 1 November 1940, p. 221. *Building*, 24 January 1939, pp. 18-22 and 26-27. *Building*, 25 November 1942 p. 31. *Building*, 24 December 1940, p. 47.

1 Manly Surf Pavilion (1938), above photograph, surf pavilion, front view (detail), 1980, photographer unknown. Manly Library 2 Manly Surf Pavilion (1938), original axonometric drawing, ink and pencil, hand coloured on paper, Eric Andrew. Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales 3 Manly Surf Pavilion (1938), above photograph, surf pavilion, side view with deck chairs and sunbather, photographer unknown, 1937. Manly Library

## JURY

Architects  
MORTON E. HERMAN  
SAMUEL G. THORP  
HENRY PYNOR  
FRANK COSTELLO

Others  
WILL ASHTON  
Art Critic  
FRANK MEDWORTH  
Artist  
HOWARD HINTON  
Art Patron

