

Youths play part in surf rescue



Two young men holidaying in Caloundra played a major role in the rescue of two women and a girl in the same surf accident in which two men drowned.

They are Scott Pearson, a 15-year-old schoolboy of Blackwater in Central Queensland (left) and Steven Odger (17), an apprentice panel beater from Biloela.

Both boys have been staying with Mrs. Phyllis Pearson, of Orsova Terrace, Caloundra, for part of the Christmas holidays. Mrs. Pearson is Scott's grandmother, and Steven's aunt.

The boys said they were board-riding off the Bar when their attention was attracted by a man on a surf ski in the middle of the passage, who was supporting a woman and a girl on his ski. Another woman was in the water not far away.

Scott paddled over to the man and took the woman and the girl on to his board, bringing them safely back to shore at Bulcock Beach. In the meantime Steven had reached the other woman, but was not able to pull her on to his board. Holding her by the hand he paddled back to shore, bringing her in safely.

The two boys then returned to the water, and Scott held one of the drowned men afloat, stroking for the shore until another man relieved him. He returned for the third time, by which time other people were giving assistance. Both boys stayed to help until the victims were brought ashore.

Speaking after the incident, the boys said there had been no time to think of their own danger during the incident. Both are reasonably good swimmers, but have not had much experience in board-riding. They said they were exhausted after the rescue.

Scott discovered later that the woman and girl he brought to shore were Rita Viksne and Velga Lapins, and Steven rescued Helena Kork-Nobel. Drowned were Edward Kork-Nobel, 24, sales representative of Indooroopilly and Atis Viksne, 33, vendor of Durrá.

The Pearson family has featured in two other rescues on Caloundra beaches in the past. Fifteen years ago Scott's father brought in a drowned man from the same area as Sunday's incident, and four years ago another relative also assisted in a similar emergency.

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