



# Festival marks Kirra success

THE highly successful "Bring Back Kirra" campaign is set to culminate with the Kirra Surf Stock Festival from November 5-8.

"We have plenty of reasons to celebrate," local surfing identity and event organiser Andrew McKinnon said.

However, McKinnon said the promise of money, and even the completion of the first stage of work to help restore the famous Kirra break, the surf dunes and reef in the region, did not mean the end of the line.

He said it was important for the local community to continue to talk about coastal management – not just for the benefit it would bring surfers but for the environment in general.

Campaigns have been held over the past decade or so to try to help the ailing Kirra coast line.

But McKinnon said it was people power that finally won the day.

"On Australia Day this year more than 3000 people turned out at Kirra for a paddle out," he said.

"We (McKinnon and the other organisers) had only expected 200 people but we had 3000 and there were more people watching from the shore and from high-rises.

"That was the turning point."

He said at the time of the Queensland state elections, both sides of politics had offered \$1.5 million to restore the famous Point break.

In August, the Bligh Government began work with the Gold Coast City Council to remove sand and curve the shoreline.

"There will be further extensive sand clearing, creating dunes and contouring the shoreline from council," McKinnon said.

"Talks between respective NSW and Queensland state ministers, Tony Kelly and Kate Jones, saw them agree on back-

pumping to Fingal, utilising multiple outlets such as the west pipe at Snapper.

"They also agreed on a more flexible approach to the overall sand-pumping operation."

He said all this was a direct result of the community's push to persuade the government and council into coastal action.

McKinnon said the inaugural Surf Stock Festival would have a little of everything for the public.

"It is a kind of coastal club sandwich," he laughed.

The Surf Stock event will kick off with an opening party at the Coolangatta Sands on November 5, featuring Tim Bonython's Australian Surf Movie Festival, and include live music from Nick Saxton and Burleigh boys The Tokyo Beef Band.

Friday night, November 6, will include a massive fundraiser for the Surfrider Foundation at Kirra Surf Club.