

WINTER 2014: MOUNT MAUNGANUI LS



RESCUE OF THE MONTH

RECOGNISING OUTSTANDING RESCUES

EASTERN WINNER

In it for life

Date: October 1, 2014

Location: Mount Maunganui Main Beach & Mauao

At 11am on October 1, lifeguards undertook the rescue of a 13 year-old surfer near the end of Moturiki Island on the main beach.

What the lifeguards didn't know was that was to be the first of a long list of incidents to take place that day.

At approximately 11.45am, off-duty lifeguards were monitoring surf conditions following the earlier rescue, only to be advised that a young boy had been swept into the water around the Mount.

Police had been notified simultaneously by an off-duty policeman who had come across the incident site.

Lifeguards were dispatched to the scene as calls were placed to the callout squad required to crew and launch IRBs.

Due to conditions and the fact that some members of the Mount Maunganui Callout Squad were out of town, calls were placed to members of the local Surf Life Saving Clubs and SLSNZ staff who were in town for the day.

The search quickly escalated to a full scale operation involving multiple agencies such as Police, Coastguard, Land Search and Rescue and the rescue helicopter.

The full scale search continued for a number of days and involved Mount Maunganui Lifeguard Service and neighbouring clubs to a level and variety of roles that had not been seen for many years.

On the same day as the large scale search began, lifeguards also undertook a further six rescues between 3pm and 6.40pm.

The rescues included a 29 year-old surfer who was picked up by an IRB near the end of Moturiki Island, followed by another two separate rescues, just over an hour apart, of surfers near the blowhole on the main beach.

Another hour later, a 43 year-old surfer was picked up in an IRB in the Banks Ave area followed five minutes later by two more surfers, aged 25 and 22, near the blowhole area of the main beach.

These rescues, performed during a full scale search, could have easily resulted in fatalities had lifeguards not been on hand to assist very quickly.