

# Basic Detail Report

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**Title**

Children on Clovelly Beach Steps (Clovelly 1981)

**Date**

1981

**Primary Maker**

Roger Scott

**Medium**

Silver gelatin print, paper

**Dimensions**

Overall: 511 x 609 mm, 0.05 kg Image: 378 x 559 mm Sheet: 511 x 609 mm

**Name**

Photograph

**History**

Clovelly Beach is popular with families as concrete platforms and promenades have been constructed on both side with direct access steps into the water, making Clovelly Beach more like a large ocean pool than a beach. These concrete foreshores were built by unemployed men during the Great Depression in a local attempt to keep them employed. As a result Clovelly Beach has essentially no waves which makes it very safe for children. Scott's interest in beach photography began in the 1970s while bodysurfing in Manly. He spent hours in the water watching fellow swimmers floating around waiting for waves. At the time Scott was living in North Sydney, frequenting Manly Harbord, Queenscliff and Palm Beach on the Northern Beaches. He later moved to Double Bay, which led to a focus on Eastern Suburbs beaches. The photographs evoke the exuberance and energy of swimmers on the Australian beaches in the 1970s and 1980s. They convey the spontaneity and splash of the surf, and the surge of adrenalin surfers experience when catching a wave. Scott used a Nikon 'Nikonos' underwater 35 mm camera with a wide angle lens. He believed in the full frame, and would not crop out parts of the scene. He swam around with the camera hanging from his neck, seeking out both the odd and the typical. Although he focused on people, his subjects were generally unaware of the camera and he would catch them off guard. In the chaos of the surf the photographer managed to get very close to his fellow swimmers, and Scott describes this method as 'sneaking up like a shark'. He was awarded a Visual Arts Board grant in the mid 1970s, which enabled him to travel to the USA. During the 1980s and 1990s his subject interests broadened, and he held a number of solo exhibitions during this period.