

## Sportfishing Legends Immortalised: Vic McCristal and Eric Moller Memorial Celebration

The Cardwell Sportfishing Club officially unveiled the Vic McCristal and Eric Moller Memorial on Sunday 26 November 2017 on the Cardwell foreshore at the southern side of the Cardwell Ampitheatre in Victoria Road.

The public was welcome to the event to celebrate the lives of these 2 well known local recreational fishers who contributed a great deal not only to the local fishing community but also to all Australian recreational fishers over their lifetime.

The memorial was erected with the help of the Cardwell Sportfishing Club in conjunction with the Australian National Sportfishing Association Ltd, the Australian National Sportfishing Association Qld Branch, the Cassowary Coast Regional Council, the Cardwell Chamber of Commerce and the Cardwell Historical Society.

The memorial plaque features the following inscription written by Marina Hoare from Cardwell SFC.

### VIC MCCRISTAL

Cardwell resident, Vic McCristal OAM was a pioneer of sportfishing in Australia and founder of the Australian National Sportfishing Association, a body that transformed fishing from a pastime to a recognised sport underwritten by a strict code of conservation and integrity.

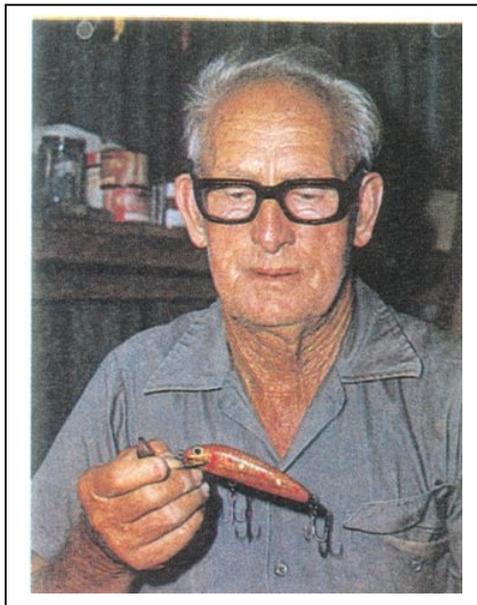
Vic is also regarded as the nation's greatest fishing writer who gave inspiration to so many readers and anglers. In addition to numerous articles published over many years in various fishing and hunting magazines, he wrote eight renowned books which are coveted collectors' items



today. Published between the 60's and the 80's his books and articles brought anglers in droves to the Cardwell/Hinchinbrook area, who wanted to experience the type of fishing written about by Vic. His motto was consistently about conservation and sustainability, encouraging anglers to diversify their skills, location and tackle, thereby protecting the fishery for the future. These practices soon became the norm for the Sportfishing fraternity throughout Australia.

He freely passed his skills on to all he met and helped promote Cardwell and the Hinchinbrook area through his writings. His door was always open to visiting anglers. The main room of the Cardwell Sportfishing Club house bears his name.

Vic passed away on January, 14 2015, aged 87. His ashes were scattered in Missionary Bay closest to his favourite fishing spots. In 2017, on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of ANSA, a Vic McCristal writing scholarship has been established to encourage other young writers to keep his passion alive.



#### ERIC MOLLER

Cardwell resident Eric Moller who passed away on 18 September 1981, was a modest hardworking man of many talents who in his own way endorsed and promoted Cardwell as the place to visit and fish.

Eric achieved fame for his quality hand carved wood fishing lures. His skills inspired anglers to make their own, becoming forerunners for an extensive amateur home lures manufacture cottage industry that exists in Australia today. He also helped put Cardwell on the Sportfishing map of Australia, as word of his exceptional lures spread throughout the fishing scene.

A humble and generous man, Eric was also a forerunner of the catch and release ethic when such a concept was foreign to the average angler. Courtesy to fish was as natural to him as breathing. Eric was held in such high regard, he was awarded the first Life Membership of the Australian National Sportfishing Association on the strength of his philosophy, attitude and ethics.

He quietly studied the reasons why fish were lost or landed and why they responded to a certain style, size or depth of action in lures. Eric did much of his carving with an old pocket knife with blades worn thin and the bone

handle nestling in his palm, as if it grew there, working the beech wood in a quiet, relaxed fashion while the lure shaped itself.

Always available for a yarn and to give advice about making lures and fishing, he presented his creations as gifts to many who visited him, and his lures are now eagerly sought by collectors throughout Australia.

Erected by the Cardwell Sportfishing Club in conjunction with:

Australian National Sportfishing Association Ltd  
Australian National Sportfishing Association Qld Branch  
Cassowary Coast Regional Council  
Cardwell Chamber of Commerce  
Cardwell Historical Society

