

NECKSAFE PATRON: SIR NICHOLAS SHEHADIE AC OBE

Sir Nicholas Shehadie was born in Coogee in 1926 and grew up in the inner-Sydney suburb of Redfern. His grandfather, Nicholas, was a clergyman in the Antioch Orthodox Church who migrated from Lebanon in 1913. His father was a chemist who also trained as a priest and took over the church when Nicholas Senior passed away in 1934.

Sir Nicholas attended Cleveland Public School and later Crown Street Commercial School. Upon leaving high school he worked in several industries before starting his own manufacturing business for a large British engineering company.

In 1962 he was elected as an alderman of the City of Sydney Council and served additional terms in 1966 and 1969 when he was elected Deputy Lord Mayor. He was elected Lord Mayor of Sydney in 1973. His term of office coincided with the opening of the Sydney Opera House by Queen Elizabeth II, and the Green Bans campaign to protect the city's heritage and natural environment. Sir Nicholas was appointed Chairman of the Special Broadcasting Service in 1981 where he remained until 1999. He also served as Chairman of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and the Migrant Employment and Qualification Board.



A keen sportsman, Sir Nicholas was selected for the 1947-48 Wallaby rugby tour and subsequently represented Australia with the Wallabies in the United Kingdom, Ireland, South Africa and New Zealand on 114 occasions in the 1950s. Rated as one of the world's best props, Sir Nicholas Shehadie set a new Australian record for being the most capped Wallaby, a record only recently surpassed.



He also captained the Wallabies on several occasions.

Sir Nicholas later became President of the Australian Rugby Union Board, a position he held until 1987. After much international lobbying he was instrumental in 1985 in setting up the Rugby World Cup and in 2011 he was inducted into the International Rugby Board Hall of Fame.

Working with Prof. John Yeo, at that time the head of the Spinal Unit at Royal North Shore Hospital (and another NeckSafe Patron), Sir Nicholas was instrumental in bringing about changes to the scrummaging laws for schoolboy rugby. He is especially proud of the fact that since that time there has not been a single scrum-related spinal cord injury in schoolboy rugby, which he counts as one of the greatest in his long line of achievements in sport.

Sir Nicholas was a member of the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust from 1978-2001 and served as its Chairman from 1990-2001.

In 1971 Sir Nicholas was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) and in 1976 was appointed a Knight Bachelor as well as a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC).

Sir Nicholas married Marie Bashir, currently the Governor of New South Wales, in February 1957. They have two daughters and a son, and six grandchildren.

Sir Nicholas has been associated with Rugby for over 50 years and we are delighted to have him as one of our Patrons.