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SOUNDINGS



Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW | Issue 24, Spring 2015

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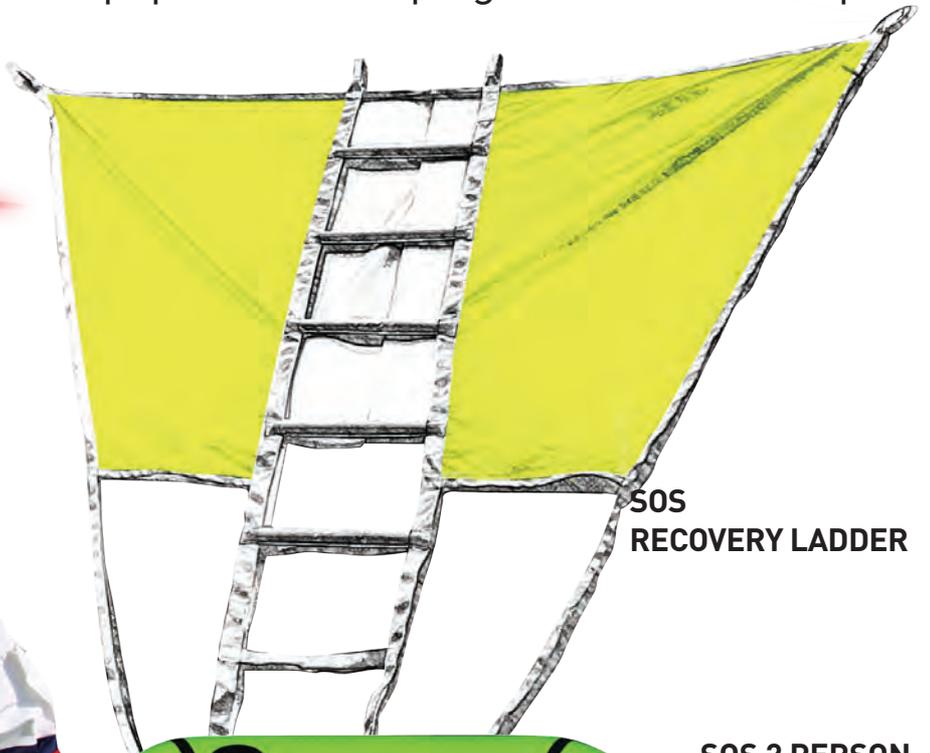
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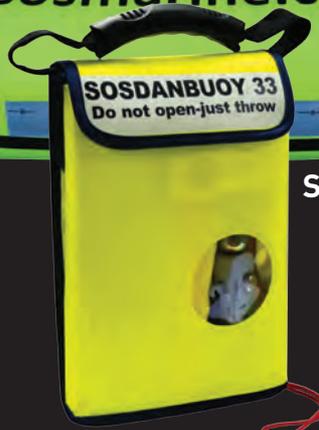
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Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW

Cover Image

The newest addition to the Marine Rescue NSW fleet, *Cottage Point 30*, powers down the Hawkesbury River. *Photo: Patrick O'Brien.*

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From the Commissioner

The cost of essential capital works will run into the millions.



Commissioner
Stacey Tannos ESM

Marine Rescue NSW volunteers have some of the best located workplaces in the State, offering panoramic views over picturesque waterways.

The very nature of our work obviously requires that our units are based on the waters we watch over.

I am sometimes asked why we can't be based further inland and monitor rivers, bars and the inshore zone remotely via webcams. I always reply that technology cannot replace a trained, experienced and vigilant professional familiar with the risks, hazards and trouble spots of the waters they know like the back of their hands and the habits and practices of their local boating communities. An on-site observation and immediate emergency activation can save minutes and mean the difference between life and death on the water.

However, it is fair to say that some of our premises are not holding up as well as others to the ravages of coastal winds and sea spray, constant use and age.

In mid-September, I ordered that MR Ballina would cease operations in the infamous "leaning tower of Ballina". The radio tower has a definite list and is accessible only by a steep metal ladder. Recent incidents involving injuries to members mean it has become untenable to continue to ask our volunteers to work in this environment. Further south, the MR Port Macquarie radio base is located on Town Beach above a public toilet block riddled with concrete cancer that needs to be rebuilt.

We do not own our premises, occupying them under Crown Lands or other public authority leases often managed by trusts or local councils. We are fortunate that as an emergency service, we pay only a peppercorn rental for properties that have lucrative commercial potential.

Our units are proud of their

workplaces and employ the skills of their members to carry out the routine maintenance and repairs required under our leases, but as a not-for-profit organisation we have only limited funding to contribute to major renovations or rebuilding premises, especially given these are not assets under our control.

I thank Ballina and Port Macquarie-Hastings shire councils, which have prepared plans and allocated substantial funds to replace these two dilapidated facilities. The State Government also has contributed

I am hopeful the Government will appreciate our need among many competing budget demands.

funding to the Ballina re-build. I am continuing to work with the councils and government authorities to identify additional sources of funding. In both instances, we will have to make a financial contribution to ensure the work can proceed.

These two examples alone serve to highlight the need to develop a Total Assets Management register of the assets we occupy, mapping their condition, required works, emerging problems and Work Health and Safety risks. This fiscally responsible and prudent measure is necessary to enable us to better plan for the impact of essential capital works on our future budget position.

As this is a large project that requires specialised building and risk expertise beyond our own resources, we have engaged the services of Asset Future to develop the register. Asset Future personnel will visit every base to inspect and register details of all built assets, including bases, radio facilities, jetties, wharves and other spaces associated with MRNSW activities to identify and prioritise risk-reducing remedial works or processes.

I would like to acknowledge the cooperation of NSW Roads and Maritime Services in agreeing to

provide an advance on our public funding to pay for this project.

I anticipate the funding that will be required to address identified risks will run into the millions - money we just don't have. The register will, therefore, form the basis of a submission to the State Government, seeking capital funding for work to address identified risks at these publicly-owned assets. I am hopeful that the Government will appreciate our need among the many competing State Budget demands and priorities.

In the past few weeks, MRNSW members have received well-earned public acclaim for their service and courage. The crew of *Ballina 30*, which capsized during an operation on the hazardous Ballina bar in April 2013, has been awarded a national Group Bravery Citation. Congratulations to Tony Handcock, David Nockolds and Rodney Guest for this prestigious recognition of their fortitude (see page 15.)

The Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards recognise personnel from six NSW emergency services. MR Port Stephens Watch Officer and Engineer Eryl Thomas was named the Rotary MRNSW Officer of the Year at the Awards. Congratulations to Eryl and our other finalists, Dennis Travers, Derek Ford and Bruce Mitchell (see page 7).

Governor of NSW, General David Hurley, Premier Mike Baird and Emergency Services Minister David Elliott all paid tribute at the Awards to the volunteers who dedicate their time and efforts to serve our community. I can only echo their thoughts. I am proud to lead an organisation of such fine, dedicated men and women.

Stacey Tannos ESM
Commissioner

Get away into the great Australian outdoors

New Art Union offers something for everyone in \$281,500 prize package.

The Great Outdoor Getaway Art Union is the most exciting Marine Rescue NSW fundraising venture yet.

There's something for everyone on offer, from the off-road enthusiast and mad keen boater to the run-around-town type and four-wheel bike funster.

With a total prize pool worth \$281,500, the Art Union kicks off on the October long weekend and will be drawn on April 26, 2016, giving keen entrants plenty of time to snap up their tickets over the summer boating season.

The proceeds of ticket purchases are going straight to Marine Rescue NSW units to support our volunteers' work to save lives on the water.

The Art Union prize package has been developed with MRNSW's preferred outboard motor supplier, Suzuki Marine and its Australian distributor, the Haines Group, along with Suzuki Motors, VW, Redco and Sea Jay Aluminium Boats.

First prize is an off-the-beaten-track adventurer's dream. The lucky winner gets to choose between the hardy Haines Seachange 595 Off Road Caravan plus a VW Amarok CORE 4WD, worth a total \$140,397, OR the rugged luxury of the Haines Seachange 640 Off Road Caravan, valued at \$120,000, plus \$20,397 in cold hard cash.

Boaters will be chasing the \$73,427 second prize: a Haines Signature 525F S-Series with Suzuki 90hp outboard. Tow it to the boat ramp with your new Suzuki 4-door Grand Vitara Sport 4WD.

The third prize winner will also be able to get on the water in their new Sea Jay 3.7m Nomad, complete with trailer and 15hp Suzuki, which comes with a Suzuki S-Cross GLX Auto - all worth \$40,397.

Fourth place is a \$16,790 Suzuki Swift GL Navigator, perfect for navigating the peak-hour commute or the weekend trip to the beach,

while 5th prize offers all the sturdy fun of a Suzuki KingQuad ATV 400 ASI 4x4 bike.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos said the Art Union was a fresh new approach to Marine Rescue's fundraising activities.

"Marine Rescue is fortunate to receive vital financial support from the State Government and the boating community through the levy on boat registrations and licences.

"Even with that support, we could not provide the NSW boating community with our first-class services without our members' hard work at fundraising and the generous support we receive from the general public," he said.

"Our units' boat-trailer-motor raffles over the past three summers have been a great success.

"We're really grateful for the strong response we've received to these campaigns. This year we wanted to offer our supporters something new and we've come up with an irresistible prize package. It's unbeatable value at just \$2 a ticket or three for \$5. The lucky winners truly will be able to get away into the great outdoors."

Commissioner Tannos said people would be able to buy tickets from their local MRNSW volunteers as



usual or online, either directly via the MRNSW website or by swiping their smartphone across the QR data code on promotional materials.

Each of the 45 MRNSW units will be given a unique promotion code for buyers to enter to ensure the proceeds of their ticket purchases are directed to their local or other preferred unit. Commissioner Tannos said MRNSW was not employing

professional fundraisers, who would take a sizable proportion of the proceeds, to conduct the Art Union.

"When people buy a ticket from their local volunteers or enter the unit's promotion code online, they can be assured that their money stays with that unit," he said.

MRNSW units are being provided with a range of marketing materials, including posters and table covers.



The Haines Signature 525F S-Series ... second prize, complete with a Suzuki 4-door Grand Vitara Sport 4WD.



The first prize winner in the MRNSW Art Union can choose to get away in the rugged luxury of the Seachange 640 Off Road Caravan, valued at \$120,000, with \$20,397 cash in their pocket for supplies.

From the Chair

Directors contribute diverse skills and experience to help shape the organisation.



Chair
James Glissan QC, ESM

Serving as a company director on the board of a not-for-profit organisation such as Marine Rescue NSW is a rewarding and energising experience.

It comes with responsibilities and obligations but I'm sure I speak on behalf of all my fellow Directors when I say that it is a privilege to be able to apply the range of experience and expertise we have amassed in life to help shape the direction of such a vital community service.

This was a topic for discussion at a recent Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) course run for the Board as part of our ongoing focus on our corporate governance. Specifically tailored for our organisation, the course examined the duties and responsibilities of directors of not-for-profit organisations and the factors that contribute to good governance.

While there might not be a rule book for the composition of an effective board, we agreed with the proposition that the most important consideration was to ensure the board had a balance of skills and experience that would benefit the organisation and fit with its objectives and strategic aims.

In the case of the MRNSW Board,

the skills around the table are not confined solely to our rescue experience but are drawn from each individual director's professional, business, recreational and volunteering background.

This diversity is the foundation for solid decision-making, facilitating spirited discussion, challenges to assumptions, considered analysis and the ability to look at issues from varying viewpoints.

Skill sets are a particularly significant consideration as we approach the Annual General Meeting and Board elections. Five Directors will be elected this year (see page 5). As well as their specific operational and MRNSW experience, I would encourage all nominees for election to reflect on the additional knowledge they can contribute to ensure the Board continues to provide decisive and effective leadership. Similarly, members might encourage a colleague whose skills and know-how would add value to consider putting up their hand for election.

Directors must act diligently, impartially and in good faith at all times, while focused on compliance and performance. The Board's role is not operational; it is to provide strategic direction for the allocation of funding, assets and resources but

not to direct day-to-day activities.

Amid these serious responsibilities, one of the most pleasant aspects of the Directors' role is the opportunity to meet so many of our fellow volunteers and applaud their achievements.

Along with Directors David White and John Lynch, I attended the Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards at Darling Harbour on August 28.

A power of good was contained in the room as representatives of six emergency services were celebrated for their contribution to the safety and well being of our community.

The unifying feature of all was their pride in their organisations and commitment to serving the people of this State. Congratulations to Eryl Thomas, from MR Port Stephens, named the MRNSW Officer of the Year, and our finalists, Derek Ford, Dennis Travers and Bruce Mitchell.

Likewise, I take my hat off to the members of MR Ballina, David Nockolds, Tony Handcock and Rodney Guest, who received a prestigious Group Bravery Citation for their efforts during a rescue operation and capsize in frightful conditions in 2013. All seven are a credit to our organisation.

Good sailing
Jim Glissan

New education officers focus on boat safety

The State Government is deploying 13 frontline staff to boost education and safety at key NSW boating hotspots.

NSW Roads and Maritime Services Maritime Director Angus Mitchell said Boating Education Officers (BEOs) had been trialled in Ballina, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Port Stephens, Newcastle, West Gosford, Rozelle, Sydney, Sutherland, Port Kembla,

Batemans Bay and Albury.

"Feedback and data collected about the education process was so successful the positions will now be made permanent," Mr Mitchell said.

"Research has shown increasing education for the boating public is one of the most effective ways of reducing boating fatalities."

BEOs provide key support to RMS Boating Safety Officers who traditionally have been tasked with

the majority of the frontline boating and safety education role.

From July last year to the end of June, BEOs interacted with 39,963 members of the boating public and visited 206 schools to talk about boating safety.

"This has increased the number of school visits by 10 times the previous year, a valuable increase in our ability to reach entry level boaters to provide them with the

skills and knowledge to enable them to be safe and responsible boaters," Mr Mitchell said.

"BEOs also made 3070 visits to boat ramps, engaged 1248 retail outlets and 563 sailing, boating clubs and marinas to provide information and key safety messages and represented Roads and Maritime at 211 boat shows or community field days."

Visit rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime/

Volunteers to elect five Directors this year

Casual vacancy created by resignation of Monaro Board member.

Elections for five members of the Marine Rescue NSW Board will be held in conjunction with the 2015 Annual General Meeting on November 28.

The AGM will be held at the State Headquarters at Cronulla.

This year members will elect a General Director for a three-year term and the Northern Rivers, Mid North Coast and Hunter/Central Coast Regional Directors, each for a two-year term. The incumbent Regional Directors are Bernie Gabriel (Northern Rivers), John Lynch (Mid North Coast) and Tony Long (Hunter/Central Coast). Mr Long has advised the Board he will not seek a second term.

Monaro Region members will also vote for a new representative to fill the casual vacancy created by

the resignation of Regional Director Howard Staples. This will be a one-year position to complete Mr Staples' original two-year term.

General Director Tony Drover's position is up for election but as he has completed his maximum term permitted under the Constitution, he cannot stand again.

Nominations close on October 14.

Chair Jim Glissan thanked all Directors for their service Board, which is charged with providing strategic leadership and direction.

"I would encourage all eligible members to vote in the elections to ensure that we have a strong and representative Board," he said.

"The Directors work closely with the Commissioner and staff and are in frequent contact with our units and individual members. The Board



Retiring General Director Tony Drover and his wife Laima (left) with former Monaro Director Howard Staples and his wife Barbara.

meets monthly, alternating between the Cronulla Headquarters and regional venues.

"Candidates should take the time to familiarise themselves with Directors' responsibilities under the MRNSW Constitution, Board Charter and Code of Conduct (on Otter), as well as the *Corporations Act*."

A person nominating for election

to the Board must have been an active member for at least two years, unless there are extenuating circumstances. All Regular and Life Members are eligible to vote in the election for the General Director. Regular and Life Members in the four relevant regions can vote for their Regional Directors. Provisional members are not eligible to vote.

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Lightweight uniform put to test over summer

Natural fibre promises to be more breathable, comfortable and functional.

A trial over the coming summer will test a new lightweight, cooler fabric and design for the MRNSW work blues uniform.

All Unit Commanders, Deputy Unit Commanders and members of the Fleet Advisory Team are being issued with test uniform items - long blue pants and long-sleeved shirts - made from 100 per cent cotton, rather than the current cotton-polyester fabric.

The lightweight pure cotton provides natural moisture wicking properties to draw moisture away from the body and greater breathability, softness and comfort.

Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey said the participants would report back in February on the comfort and functionality of the trial uniform.

"There has been feedback over time that the current work blues are

hot, not very breathable and take a long time to dry when wet," he said.

"Our current uniform supplier agreement with Bisley is coming to an end and our original uniform stocks need to be replenished so this is a good time to review the performance of the uniform and consider any potential changes to make it more comfortable, functional, durable and cost-effective."

Involving the leaders of each unit in the trial will ensure that the new items are tested across a range of our operations, activities and environmental conditions.

The shirts have vents added on the side seams, back panels and under the arms to make them cooler and more breathable.

The 100 per cent cotton is a natural fibre, providing improved static control.



MRNSW Fleet Manager Jody Hollow tests the trial lightweight uniform for comfort and functionality.

Deputy Commissioner Storey said the trial pants and shirts issued would be navy blue.

"This is simply because we are using existing Bisley stock on hand. This avoids the cost and time involved in ordering a one-off special batch of test items in our

existing colour," he said.

The trial does not involve any costs for units or participants.

The items are to be handed out at the Unit Commanders and Deputy Unit Commanders Conference.

The trial results will be considered by the Board.

Manager keen to make volunteers' job easier

Don't try calling new MRNSW Emergency Systems Officer Andrew Cribb in the week after Christmas.

He'll be on his way south on board the yacht *Balance* in his 11th Sydney to Hobart yacht race, hoping to beat his previous bests of a second and third in Division 1.

"I like pushing the limits. I like the lack of sleep, the bad food, being constantly wet and cold," he said.

He also likes speed and hanging on by the seat of his pants, recounting flying up the coast from Melbourne to Sydney, hitting 41.21 knots under sail in a race on Melbourne Cup weekend last year.

Growing up in a family in the marine industry, Andrew took up sailing when he was six-years-old on his home waters of Nelson Bay. In the intervening years he has ridden jet skis around the world for stunt filming and tow surfing and

trained water patrol crews for the Bells Beach Pro surf event.

Andrew replaces previous Emergency Systems Officer Matt Thompson, who has now joined the NSW Rural Fire Service.

He brings an innate long-term user's understanding of communications systems and infrastructure to his new role.

He comes to MRNSW after nine years as Development Manager with Yachting NSW.

"I was supporting volunteers, implementing participation strategies and developing athlete pathways, ranging from someone who had just left learn-to-sail and was racing at a club level to those qualifying for the Olympics," he said.

"It also involved coaching development strategies - making the coaches better so the sailors could be better - and high performance junior programs."



New MRNSW Emergency Systems Officer Andrew Cribb.

Before joining Yachting NSW he was responsible for Research and Development at Surf Life Saving Australia, including producing its Rescue Water Craft manual.

At MRNSW he will be working on major communications infrastructure projects, starting with the Mt Imlay radio repeater and work outlined in the comprehensive strategic

communications review.

"Marine Rescue seemed like a bit of a challenge, something I could sink my teeth into," he said.

"I'm looking forward to working with our volunteers. I'm a big supporter of putting systems in place to make their job easier while providing an enhanced service to the public."

Port Stephens officer takes out Rotary award

Dignitaries pay tribute to the volunteers who serve the NSW community.

Eryl Stephens, from Marine Rescue Port Stephens, has been named the MRNSW Volunteer of the Year in the Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards.

The awards were announced at a ceremony on August 28 attended by Awards Patron, Governor of NSW General David Hurley, Awards Ambassador Premier Mike Baird, Emergency Services Minister David Elliott and members of six emergency services.

The Governor, Premier and Minister all spoke of their pride in and gratitude to the volunteers who dedicated their time to serving the NSW community.

MRNSW's other three finalists in the awards were Dennis Travers, from MR Forster-Tuncurry, Derek Ford, from MR Port Macquarie and Illawarra Regional Controller Bruce Mitchell.

Port Stephens Unit Commander Tony O'Donnell and Administration Officer Iain Blackadder were on hand to applaud the recognition of Eryl's 16 years of service, along with MRNSW Chair Jim Glissan, Directors John Lynch and David White, Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Member Services Manager Mat



Proud MRNSW winner Eryl Thomas (second from right) with finalists, Bruce Mitchell, Dennis Travers and Derek Ford and Commissioner Stacey Tannos at the Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards.

Smith.

Eryl has served the Port Stephens boating community since 1999, contributing more than 10,000 hours of duty as a skipper or crew member.

Also a qualified Watch Officer, he has committed 3500 more hours to his radio duties.

Eryl was awarded a Commissioner's Commendation for his role in the rescue of the crew of sinking vessel, *Tradewinds*, in 2002.

Commissioner Tannos

congratulated all four finalists for their lengthy commitment to boating safety and community service.

"The knowledge, experience and dedication members such as Eryl, Derek, Dennis and Bruce bring to their roles is a great strength," he said.

Dennis has been a Forster-Tuncurry member since 2004, holding a number of senior positions, including four years as

Unit Commander.

Derek has a 15-year career with MR Port Macquarie and continues to serve as its SARCC Operations Officer and Training and Assessment Officer.

Bruce Mitchell has served the boating community since 2001, coordinating numerous rescue operations and training and mentoring many volunteers.

He is currently the Illawarra Regional Controller.

Shark attack victim member of Forster unit

Marine Rescue Forster-Tuncurry member David Quinlivan has survived a terrifying shark attack, one of a series of recent strikes along the Northern NSW coastline.

Mr Quinlivan, who joined MRNSW in 2012, was on his surf ski just 50m off Black Head Beach, north of Forster, around lunchtime on September 4 when he was struck by a great white believed to have been about 2m long.

Mr Quinlivan was knocked from his board, losing his paddle, when the shark leapt from the water and

grabbed his left ankle, biting down to the bone.

He managed to climb back on to his surf ski and start paddling back to shore, where two passers-by ran into the surf to pull him the last 5m to safety before he was flown to John Hunter Hospital for surgery.

On July 4, MR Ballina watch officer Meg Luckie and radio operator Douglas Hunter provided vital first aid to Matthew Lee, helping his friends apply makeshift tourniquets to his legs after he was attacked by a shark, thought to be a



Raced to help ... Meg Luckie and Douglas Hunter from MR Ballina.

4m great white, off East Ballina.

"We thought we were running to help a heart attack victim," Meg

said. "We were shocked to see his injuries and the massive amount of blood lost."

App attracts interstate rescue interest

2016 update to incorporate new features based on boaters' feedback.

The success of the *MarineRescue* mobile App has prompted widespread interest from rescue organisations around Australia.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos and IT and Business Development Director Florian Glajcar gave a presentation on the integrated App and Seahawk vessel tracking system to the Western Australia Fire and Emergency Services Conference in late September.

Commissioner Tannos said other state services were attracted by the safety benefits and user-friendliness of the free App.

Since its release on March 7, the App has been downloaded 8340 times: 5396 on Apple iOS devices and 2944 on Androids.

Boaters are keenly using the App to Log On with MRNSW when

heading out on the water: more than 15 per cent of all Log Ons are now made electronically.

Mr Glajcar said the App also was encouraging a broader field of boaters to Log On, with notably more kayakers and commercial vessels Logging On since March.

Based on feedback from users and MRNSW units, an update to the App is now being developed for introduction in 2016.

"The feedback is overwhelmingly positive," Mr Glajcar said. "One of the most common requests is from users who would like to be able to load more than one vessel into their App profile, so we are incorporating this feature into the update."

This will be useful for charter companies, allowing their customers to Log On the vessel they are on



Happy Radio Club winner ... MR Port Kembla Unit Commander Peter Purnell presents Reg Wooldridge with his App competition prize.

board. The update also will enable users to add comments to their profile or when they Log On, such as "boater is deaf" or "travelling as part of the Fishing Classic competition".

The final winner in the draw for Radio Club members Logging On

and using the App's safety tracking service was Reg Wooldridge, a member of MR Port Kembla's Radio Club. Reg won a 5hp Suzuki 4-stroke outboard and Raymarine Dragonfly with chart plotter and depth sounder, worth \$2500.



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SND

Eryl Thomas

Rotary award winner, Watch Officer & Engineer, Marine Rescue Port Stephens.



Eryl Thomas with former Governor, Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair and on board PS 40 (*Danial Thain*).

Eryl Thomas has served the boating community of Port Stephens since 1999. A member of the crew that was awarded a Commissioner's Commendation for the *Tradewinds* operation in 2002, Eryl was named the MRNSW Officer of the Year at the Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards.

■ **I like being on the water; I've always had a sailboat or dinghy and I had a 30-foot catamaran for 10 years.** I was an avionics engineer and when I retired, we came up to Port Stephens but I got bored so I went up to the RVCP (Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol). I had my interview and the day after I found out I was Assistant Radio Officer. I started as incompetent crew. You worked your way up through the ranks in those days and I eventually made skipper after five years and became a Boat Master.

■ **Believe it or not, the *Tradewinds* (operation) wasn't the worst we've faced.** I've been on the bridge of the boat five or six metres above the water and looking

up at the waves. *Tradewinds*, which was a fishing-style boat, came in through the entrance making heavy headway in 40 knot winds. They went down on a sandbar in the middle of the bay. Four of us headed out on *Danial Thain* (CP 40), Rod Reeson, Col Wynn, Geoff Moore and I. It was dark and Col picked them up in the spotlight. All we could see was the top of the flybridge with four people huddled underneath. Rod took the boat in nose-first. The second line we threw landed on the deck and we pulled out the four people but the skipper was inside and drowned.

■ **I've done over 10,000 hours on the boats and 3500 hours logged time at the base.** I spend 20 hours a week on average with MRNSW, it's become my hobby.

■ **I knew nothing about the Rotary awards.** It was a pleasant surprise but I look at it as being not just for me but for the whole unit. You can't rescue a boat on your own. The people here are a first class bunch, always have been.



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Blue ringed octopus: small, pretty, lethal

Fast-acting venom can lead to cardiac arrest within minutes of bite.

MRNSW Life Member, Dr Peter Taylor, from the Shoalhaven unit, continues his series of reports on first aid treatments for stings, bites or other painful encounters with venomous Australian sea creatures. His tip: leave the blue ringed octopus well alone.

I used to believe that the blue ringed octopus was found only in tropical waters but I was wrong: this venomous marine creature can be found virtually anywhere around the coast of Australia.

The blue ringed octopus ranges in size from four to six centimetres in length, with tentacles reaching seven to 10 centimetres.

Although its venom can be deadly, the blue ringed octopus does not appear to be overtly aggressive and usually tries to flee if threatened.

When it is not threatened it looks much like any other small octopus but, if the threat persists, the octopus will go into defence mode and display its characteristic

bright blue fluorescent rings. This is its warning to LEAVE ME ALONE! If it is displaying its blue rings it is prepared to bite!

Habitat: The blue ringed octopus is found in tidal pools and throughout coral reefs at depths from the intertidal flats down to 50m. It tends to hide in crevices or under rocks during the day and emerges at night.

Fatal bites have been rare in Australia but take care particularly when wading in and investigating rock pools and coral reefs at low tide. This octopus tends to bite when handled, poked or harassed so, if you see one, just leave it alone.

Venom: The blue ringed octopus produces a fast-acting venom powerful enough to kill humans. No antivenom has yet been developed and this, coupled with the fact that the bite can be painless, makes the blue ringed octopus a recognised potentially deadly marine creature.

The venom can cause muscle paralysis and respiratory arrest within minutes of a bite and this can lead to cardiac arrest. Early first aid treatment is essential. Despite being



The octopus will display its fluorescent blue rings when threatened. Photo: T J Paris, My Blue Ringed Octopus Encounter.

unable to move, the casualty may be able to hear spoken comments.

Symptoms: These may include a bite that is often painless, usually on an extremity and possibly with a spot of visible blood; numbness of the lips and tongue and progressive weakness of respiratory muscles, leading to inadequate or halted breathing.

First aid treatment: See Australian Resuscitation Council (ARC) Guideline 9.4.6.

1. Remember DRSABCD (Danger, Response, Send for help, open the Airway, check Breathing, CPR,

attach Defibrillator). Sending for help ASAP is essential.

2. Keep the casualty at rest, reassured and under constant observation.

3. Wherever possible, apply a pressure immobilisation bandage ASAP (the same as for snake bite).

4. The casualty should be transported to a medical facility, preferably by ambulance, as soon as possible.

5. If the casualty is unresponsive and not breathing normally, start CPR and continue until medical/paramedical help is available.

Training courses now at your fingertips

Online booking system available to members and boaters.

A new online registration system is providing members of MRNSW and the boating public alike with easier access to greater boating skills.

MRNSW has launched an electronic training calendar, accessed via its website, making it quicker and simpler for unit members to enrol in internal courses.

Many MRNSW units run boating safety education courses for their local boating communities, such as boat and PWC drivers licences, marine radio and first aid courses.

Members of the public can register for these classes via the training calendar.

The calendar displays available courses, dates, times and venues, the maximum number of attendees and the trainer delivering the course, along with any class requirements or costs.

Once a booking is made, a confirmation email is issued.

Assistant Director Training and Education Chris Butler said the calendar was a boon for members, who could now more easily plan their training schedules by tracking

the availability of joint unit or regional courses.

"The calendar provides an electronic enrolment statement for the trainer so they can see the number of participants and plan their course delivery accordingly, including the training aids and resources they will need," he said.

Once a course is completed, all participants are able to provide feedback on the training via the system.

To access the training calendar, visit the MRNSW website, mrnsw.com.au and click on the Portholes

tab. MRNSW volunteers should then click on the Training Calendar icon and log in using their MRNSW N Number.

Members of the public can easily book a place in a unit course by clicking on the Public Training Courses icon and then on the course in which they are interested.

"We are keen to make it as easy as possible for both our members and boaters to access our valuable training and education courses to help them build their safety skills and knowledge on the water," Mr Butler said.

New 'mobile classrooms' set for roll out

Suite of resources to support training and recruitment activities.

Marine Rescue NSW training, education and recruitment programs are receiving an eye-catching boost with the delivery of the first of six new mobile classrooms.

The new lightweight trailers will be rolled out to each of the MRNSW operational regions to support a range of unit training, public education and member recruitment activities.

The trailers were produced with the assistance of Water Safety Black Spots Fund and Emergency Volunteer Support Scheme (EVSS) grants worth a total of \$85,300.

Built on a galvanised steel base, the aluminium trailers are kitted out with a DVD player, large screen TV and audio system, with ample room for storage of training and

promotional resources.

Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey said the trailers would be used by the organisation's training personnel when delivering courses for members.

"Units will also be able to put them to great use during their many public education, promotional and recruitment activities throughout the year," he said.

"They will provide a great, high-profile presence for our regular boat ramp programs, during which our members head out to speak to their local and visiting boaters about the need to wear lifejackets, the importance of Logging On with MRNSW, required safety equipment and other aspects of boating safety.

"The trailers can also be easily transported to community events



Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey inspect the first three trailer classrooms to be delivered.

such as local boat shows, festivals and market days." The trailer classrooms will be accompanied by a suite of other recruitment and marketing resources, including new 3m x 3m branded marquees and pull-up banners. Each unit will receive its own marquee and banners, which were funded through

a separate EVSS grant.

"At a time when people are so busy, you need to stand out from the crowd in order to attract new members," Deputy Commissioner Storey said. "These new materials tell our story at a glance: join us, make a difference and help save lives on the water."

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What we've been up to



Watch out ... *Maritimo* flies past *Woolgoolga 30*, helping provide the safety net for the fourth round of the Offshore Superboat Championship off Coffs Harbour on August 15 and 16. Crews from both Marine Rescue Woolgoolga and Coffs Harbour spent hours patrolling for errant whales and recreational boats during the weekend event. *Photo: Mick Davis.*



Helping hand ... Wyong Mayor Doug Eaton presents a \$10,000 grant towards new radio infrastructure to MR Norah Head Deputy Mal Fletcher (left) and Unit Commander Trevor Burkett (see page 25).



Steering a careful path ... MR Lake Macquarie Rescue Water Craft operator Garry Sullivan ferries one of four anglers stranded on a rock shelf in a rising tide and swell to safety (see story page 26).



A model supporter ... MR Camden Haven Unit Commander Ken Rutledge thanks Keith Nabb for his continuing support, making the unit two model boats to raffle (see story page 23).



Moving on ... MR Newcastle members plan radio communications at their new home, generously made available by the Newcastle Coal Infrastructure Group after damage to their base in the April storms.

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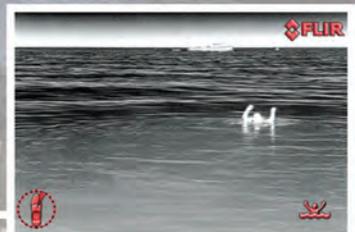
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Harrowing operation earns bravery citation

Ballina crew caught in capsized during midnight rescue on notorious bar.

Three members of Marine Rescue Ballina have been honoured with a Group Bravery Citation for their efforts during a 2013 rescue operation in dark and dangerous conditions.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos said the Citation was well-deserved recognition for Tony Hancock, Rodney Guest and David Nockolds, whose vessel capsized when hit by a large swell during the operation to save two men on a stricken motor cruiser on the Ballina bar.

“Our three members demonstrated selfless courage in going to the rescue of the men in the pitch dark, with a large swell on the bar,” he said. “We congratulate Tony, Rodney and David on this fitting national acknowledgement of their bravery and service to our community. The safety of our

members is our highest priority but this incident served as a reminder of the dangers all rescue crews face on the water.

“We are immensely grateful that Tony, Rodney and David escaped and are today continuing to assist and protect boaters on the Northern Rivers as members of MR Ballina.”

The three men responded on board *Ballina 30* when the motor cruiser’s crew called for help just after midnight on April 15, 2013, navigating through turbulent conditions on the outgoing tide. As *BA 30* attempted to tow the cruiser off the breakwall, one of the boaters was thrown overboard and the other leapt into the water. One man was retrieved but before *BA 30* could reach the second, it was swamped and capsized. David and Rodney fought their way out of the cabin



Honoured for their bravery ... MR Ballina members David Nockolds, Tony Hancock and Rodney Guest.

to cling to the upturned hull. Tony and the rescued man were trapped inside as *BA 30* washed over the bar and out to sea, before eventually struggling free. The other boater was in the water nearby.

Commissioner Tannos again

thanked the Ballina Jet rescue crew who sped to the men’s aid, plucking them from the water and, with conditions on the bar too rough for a second crossing, beaching on nearby Shelley Beach so the five could be transferred to hospital.



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You can shop for safety equipment and some useful boating and fishing gear, too. Discounts apply for MRNSW volunteers and Radio Club members. Show your support today!

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shopmrnsw.com.au

Boogie boarder rescued from rocky 'Tour'

Byron Bay services combine to reunite youngster with anxious family.

Bastille Day, Cape Byron: A deep low down south sends a strong southerly swell, as well as light off-shore winds, producing clean and attractive conditions for surfing at Cosy Corner, Tallow Beach, just south of the MR Cape Byron base.

The tide was dead low at lunch, providing easy access to the waves via the shallow sandbank at the Corner. Unbeknown to visiting surfers was the strength and speed of the current: the littoral drift running north up the gutter next to the shore.

If surfers don't exit the rip at just the right time, by paddling to the south towards the waves, they're caught and they've just bought a ticket for the 'Tour de Cape', forcing them to negotiate large waves heading north towards the bommie as they are swept around Australia's eastern-most point to Wategos Beach, a journey of less than 1nm that can take just 20 minutes, depending on the current's speed.

Lifeguard Steve Mills, on Byron Support Ski, first picked up a board rider "enjoying" the Tour on his

way to Wategos. He was smart and stayed out wide in the swift flowing northerly current outside the impact zone. Steve picked him up and gave him a lift back to Tallows, saving him a long walk back to his car.

Half an hour later, passers-by alerted MR Cape Byron to a young boogie board rider who had decided climbing the Cape's rocky cliff was less daunting than the Tour.

He had managed to clamber up next to Groper Rock without getting picked off by a set of waves, which was the fate of a visiting surfer at the same spot a year ago. Fortunately, it was low tide and the well over-head waves that broke outside dissipated a little before reaching the rocks.

The unit alerted Surfcom, which sent Steve back out to assist. Deeming it too risky to attempt picking up the rider in the eight-foot-plus waves, he stood by on the jet ski just outside the impact zone, as Police tasked a rescue helicopter to assist. Jim Keogh, from Surfcom, and a police officer walked down to the hilltop above Groper Rock to



Cosy Corner at Byron Bay's Tallow Beach, the starting point for unwary surfers' 'Tour de Cape'.

offer support to the stricken surfer, using the Cape Byron unit's loud-hailer to communicate to him. The unit purchased this equipment, like an electric tuba, as a response to the surfer's death in 2014.

The boy's mother and sister were among a large crowd watching on, reassured by unit members that he was safe as long as he stayed put.

You could almost feel his relief when the chopper arrived. It had been a long day for the Support Ski, too, idling on standby in the cold water, motor noise and fumes.

The boy was rescued none too soon as the tide came in and the waves began maintaining their size right up to the cliff base and splashing over the top of the rock. Despite his wetsuit, he would have been chilly in the shade and it wasn't known if he was injured.

The chopper extraction proceeded smoothly in the 10-15 knot winds, with the boarder ending his Tour at the Butler Street Reserve in Byron Bay before being reunited with his anxious family.

Clare Hamilton

Yachtie comes unstuck in Evans River sand

The skipper of a traditional Boden 38 yacht had an unexpected extension to his journey from Southport to Ballina during August.

The skipper Logged On with Queensland Volunteer Marine Rescue on departure, before making radio contact with MR Point Danger and later MR Ballina.

Unfortunately, due to an increasing swell and the state of the tide at Ballina, prudence dictated a change of plan and he decided to head the extra 14nm to cross the bar into the Evans River, where the conditions were calmer.

After an uneventful entrance, however, he found himself stuck fast on the northern sand bar. He tried,

with the help of a passing tinnie, to kedge himself off, but the long keel and 15 tonnes of steel were not budging.

Skipper Scott Mohr was in the MR Evans Head tower and wasted no time responding on *Evans 30* with DUC Kira Hartland, Bruce Pedder, Adam Visner and Bill Bates on board, while UC Karin Brown was Watch Officer. The crew had no time to lose as it was just past the top of the tide.

The first tow rope parted under the strain but hooking up the heavy hawser and skillful helming saw the yacht come free of the sand and into the narrow channel. Retrieving the anchor meant risking another



Evans 30 works to free a 15 tonne yacht wedged on a sand bar in the Evans River.

grounding so Bill Bates steered the yacht while the owner operated the anchor winch.

The action was close to the river's south bank, which quickly filled with

cheering locals. The yacht's skipper has since taken a berth in the Evans Head marina and presented the unit with a generous donation.

Bill Bates

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PROUD TO SUPPORT MARINE RESCUE NEW SOUTH WALES

Pt Danger rescues three from catamaran hull

Unit celebration to look back on half-century of saving lives on the water.

Three people managed to clamber on to the hull of their catamaran when it overturned off Kingscliff just before noon on August 9.

A nearby skipper alerted MR Point Danger to the emergency after seeing the catamaran capsize, throwing the passengers into the water.

PD 30, which had just returned from a training session, was immediately despatched with Coxswain Nicole Lockie and crew Gordon Wood, Gil Thomas, Michael van Runt, Craig Bilbrough and Cale Blinco Doffinny.

With the provided coordinates pinpointing the catamaran's location, *PD 30* took the three people on board for the journey back to Tweed Heads but could not take the catamaran under tow, with the radio base issuing a SECURITE warning of the overturned vessel.

The *PD 30* crew was supported by Radio Operators Tony Alps,

Shirley Williams, Watch Officer Phil Pickering and Unit Commander Glenda Ashby.

"Congratulations to all for a rescue well done. This is why we do all our training and monitoring of the marine radios - to help save lives on the water," UC Ashby said.

When the catamaran was later recovered, six volunteers sorted out the equipment and belongings on board on behalf of the owner's insurance company, which provided the unit with a donation for the fuel used during the rescue operation.

The unit has also benefitted from a generous donation of more than \$1900 towards equipment for its upgraded communications room.

Seagulls Club approached the unit as part of its donations program for not-for-profit organisations, staging a number of events to raise funds.

The club held a sausage sizzle, its fishing club a separate fundraiser



Members of Seagulls Club present a \$1915 donation to MR Point Danger volunteers on board *Point Danger 30*.

and its Darts Club ran a challenge match between its members and Point Danger volunteers and Seagulls staff.

Representatives of each group gathered on board *PD 30* to present the proceeds to unit members.

MR Point Danger will celebrate its 50th anniversary with a lunch, featuring a "then and now" retrospective, at its Duranbah base on October 24.

"Fifty years is a major milestone

for the unit. This will be an occasion to look back at the journey that began with the founders of Point Danger through to today's volunteers and the challenges that lie ahead," UC Ashby said.

"We look forward to continuing as a committed MRNSW unit, saving lives on the water for the next 50 years. Thank you to all those past and present who helped make Point Danger the great unit it is."

Glenda Ashby

Upgraded Brunswick tower back on the air

Family foundation's generous donation funds essential building repairs.

The MR Brunswick radio tower is back in operation after a two-month closure for significant repairs.

Neighbouring MR Cape Byron took over the unit's radio operations during the work, made possible with a generous \$10,000 donation from the Knappick Foundation.

Coordinated by unit maintenance officer Doug Manning and carried out by local firm Staff Building, the project involved replacing the tower's steel balustrade and ageing roof, which was heavily rusted and breaking off in biscuit-sized pieces.

The balustrade was manufactured locally, a source of pride for Doug and the contractor, and of equal importance for David Knappick.

"It is important for us to give where it is needed. We are a family

foundation, we look to support charities that are local and built by volunteers," David said.

The Foundation supports a number of local volunteer organisations, donating to MR Brunswick since 2009. Originally from Sydney, David surfed the NSW coast as a teenager and always remembered stopping at the St Helena lookout. Many years and a highly successful career later, he has retired in the region and is quietly giving back to the area he has loved since his youth.

Deputy Unit Commander Rex Fisher thanked the Foundation, saying donations were essential for repairs, maintenance, equipment upgrades and running costs of the rescue vessel.



MR Brunswick radio operators are back watching over the Brunswick River bar in their refurbished tower, thanks to a generous donor.

"We could not operate without the community's support," he said.

As the whales continued their pilgrimage along the coast on glorious late winter days, the tower was back on air. "Both the roof and

balustrade have been replaced with stainless steel, which will hopefully last quite a bit more than 15 years and save the local asset for years to come," Doug said.

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Identical offshore vessels join rescue fleet

\$740,000 investment in Mid North Coast boating safety in one weekend.

Twin offshore rescue vessels worth a total of \$740,000 were commissioned on the Mid North Coast at the end of June.

Crowdy 30 was officially welcomed to the MRNSW fleet on June 27, followed the next day by *Coffs 30*.

The *Crowdy Harrington* and *Coffs Harbour* units took delivery of the new 9.5m Naiad RHIBs (Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats) in late 2014.

Port Macquarie MP Leslie Williams, Lyne MP David Gillespie, Greater Taree Deputy Mayor David West, Commissioner Stacey Tannos and guests joined unit members for the commissioning of *Crowdy 30* at Crowdy Head Harbour.

Commissioner Tannos said the two state-of-the-art vessels were able to travel up to 30nm offshore.

"They are among 61 new and refurbished vessels delivered to our units to date, at a cost of more than \$14 million, under our comprehensive fleet modernisation



MRNSW Director John Lynch, Unit Commander Keith Richardson, Port Macquarie MP Leslie Williams, Commissioner Stacey Tannos, Greater Taree Deputy Mayor David West, Manning Great Lakes Police Inspector Christine George and Lyne MP David Gillespie on board the newly-commissioned *Crowdy 30*.

program," he said.

"Built by Yamba Welding and Engineering, they also are a valuable investment in local business and jobs in Northern NSW."

Unit Commander Keith Richardson said *Crowdy 30* was now the unit's primary offshore response vessel, supported by *Crowdy 20*, which provided a

rapid response to incidents on the Manning River.

"It's a tremendous boost to our resources," he said.

Both new boats are powered by twin 250hp Suzuki engines and can reach speeds above 40 knots (74 km/h).

UC Richardson and Commissioner Tannos thanked the local community

and visiting boaters for supporting the volunteers' fundraising efforts.

The Commissioner acknowledged the financial support of the State Government and the boating community for MRNSW services.

"Even with this welcome support, we still rely on our volunteers' energetic fundraising to help provide our world-class service," he said.

Agencies gather on lake for search skills test

Camping show boosts Forster-Tuncurry unit's fundraising push.

A multi-agency exercise on Wallis Lake, south of Forster-Tuncurry, gave rescue agencies a valuable insight into the lake's tidal movements and their effect on objects in the water.

Jointly conducted by the NSW Police Marine Area Command and Local Area Command, the exercise also involved MR Forster-Tuncurry and NSW Roads and Maritime Services (RMS).

Radio communications for the exercise were controlled from the Police vessel *Intrepid*, with two RMS boats, *Forster 10* and a MRNSW Rescue Water Craft, operated by Mid North Coast Regional Controller John Murray, also taking part.

The mannequin was located after

a two-hour search.

Soon after, MR Forster-Tuncurry staged its own exercise, setting its duty crew a scenario in which two divers became separated, with one calling for help.

Observers on the water and in the radio room were able to escalate the exercise, adding different elements to the test.

This training is vital preparation should we ever face a similar real-life test.

July and August were quiet on the water, with the unit assisting just two vessels.

There were 1800 contacts by radio, telephone and fax.

The unit's fundraising is progressing strongly, with a \$2000-



MR Forster-Tuncurry members John Imrie, Keith Herdon and Grant Maxwell take to Wallis Lake aboard *Forster 10* for a joint exercise.

plus boost from the Nabicar Caravan and Camping Show in July.

Sadly, the unit has lost two treasured and long serving members, Mike Crawford and

Maureen Marlin, who both served MRNSW and the community with distinction (see *In Memoriam*, page 39).

Ray Mazurek

Piper draws crowd to commissioning event

New Coffs Harbour Naiad named after coastal island's birdlife.

A bevy of dignitaries assembled at the Coffs Harbour Marina on June 28 to commission and name the Coffs Harbour unit's latest pride and joy, *Coffs 30*.

The 9.5m Naiad was welcomed to its berth by piper Geoff Rogers from the Coffs Coast Pipes and Drums. The stirring sound of the bagpipes echoing across the water drew a crowd of interested onlookers.

Coffs Harbour MP Andrew Fraser, Deputy Mayor Dr Sally Townley, MRNSW Mid North Coast Regional Director John Lynch and Commissioner Stacey Tannos, Chaplain Graham Whelan, Unit Commander Graeme King and the vessel's builder, Bill Collingburn, of Yamba Welding and Engineering, joined the Coffs Harbour volunteers for the ceremony.

Members of the Woolgoolga, Wooli, Iluka/Yamba and Camden Haven units also attended.

Commissioner Tannos said *Coffs 30* and its twin, *Crowdy 30*, were a valuable investment in the safety of local and visiting boaters in the busy Mid North Coast region.



Ready for my close-up ... a polished *Coffs 30 (Shearwater)* at its commissioning ceremony in June.

"This new vessel is able to travel up to 30nm offshore, giving it a much wider area of operations than its predecessor," he said.

He thanked MRNSW volunteers for their enormous contribution to the safety and well-being of the boating community.

Unit Commander Graeme King confirmed *Coffs 30* provided a much more efficient and effective platform for assisting vessels in distress.

"Its increased range and level of

technology allow the new vessel to be tasked throughout the Solitary Islands to the north and as far south as South West Rocks, if required," he said.

UC King thanked the community for supporting the volunteers' efforts in raising funds to meet the cost of a new AirBerth and a substantial part of the vessel's purchase price.

Mr Fraser congratulated and thanked the unit and reinforced the essential role MRNSW played in

safeguarding lives on the water.

Mr Collingburn presented an inscribed commemorative brass bell before Mr Lynch handed over a defibrillator and oxygen set, which can be a life saver in an emergency.

Splashing a liberal amount of champagne across the bow, Dr Townley then officially named the vessel *Shearwater*, after the birds that breed on nearby Muttonbird Island.

Tony Rigney

Unpleasant exercise in trying sea conditions

Forty members of eight MRNSW units on the Mid North Coast took part in a Regional Search and Rescue Exercise at Port Macquarie in late June.

The exercise began with a theory day at the local Emergency Operations Centre, with sessions on Search and Rescue datum planning and search techniques, along with presentations from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, Surf Life Saving and MRNSW Hunter/Central Coast Regional Trainer Leigh Carmichael.

Next day, MRNSW vessels from the Crowdy Harrington, Camden Haven, Port Macquarie and Trial Bay units, along with the NSW Police

launch *Intrepid* searched offshore for four targets reported "missing" earlier that morning.

Port Macquarie 20, *Port Macquarie 10* and two Surf craft conducted an inshore search of the coastline for the targets in some trying conditions for the smaller craft.

The weather conditions on the day were not the most pleasant for the offshore crews, who were pleased to see dry land at the end of the search.

During the exercise, a simulated collision was staged on the Hastings River bar, with one vessel rolling and the other vessel's two occupants sustaining injuries. Two people were



Rescue Water Craft crew pull a 'victim' from the water after a simulated capsizing during the Mid North Coast SAREX.

pulled from the water by Rescue Water Craft and the "injured" were transported to Town Beach for assistance.

A debrief and BBQ were held at the MR Port Macquarie unit before members headed home.

John Murray



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Way of Life!



Crew speeds injured yachtie to medicos

Man loses fingers in winch accident.



MR Camden Haven's Ken Clancy assists seriously injured Philip Wold en route to a NSW Ambulance on board *CH 30*.

A yachtie who lost two fingers in a winch accident while sailing down the coastline reached medical assistance quickly thanks to the swift response of MR Camden Haven.

The yacht's crew radioed MR Port Macquarie for help with a medical emergency on July 26 but with the Camden Haven unit closer, skipper Ken Rutledge and crew Ken Clancy, Robert Sargent and Brian Burton rapidly launched *Camden Haven 30*.

Radio operators Stan Stevens and Alan Malcolm maintained radio communications from the base.

"We received the information that a crew member on board the yacht had injured his hand while using a winch, losing two fingers," UC Rutledge said.

"The yacht crew had already treated their colleague's injury and placed his fingers in ice. We transferred the patient, Philip Wold, and his son on board *CH 30* and all we needed to do was add a support bandage and keep him comfortable for the trip back to shore, where a NSW Ambulance was waiting to transfer him to hospital."

At 6.30pm on August 2, the unit was alerted to the plight of a man stranded on an island in the delta where Camden Haven River enters

Watson Taylor Lake. He had come off his jet ski and was unable to re-start it.

CH 30 is usually unable to enter the lake due its draft but police asked the unit to go to the lake to try to make contact with the rider. He was able to use his mobile phone to provide his GPS and signal the crew with the torch function to show his location.

The SES, which has a flat bottomed boat, was called in to rescue the man and tow his jet ski back to Dunbogan boat ramp. UC Rutledge, Brian Burton and Rob Sargent returned to base at midnight after a busy day that had started with two tows at 7am and 10am.

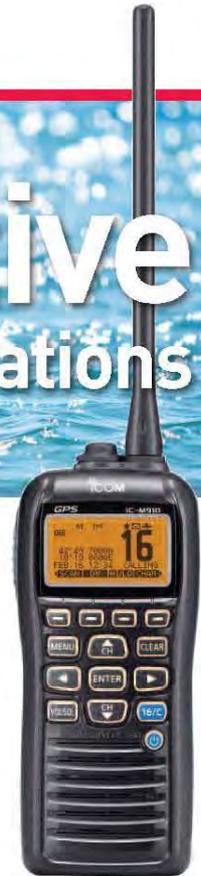
The unit has presented prolific model boat and plane builder Keith Nabb with a Certificate of Appreciation for his support. Keith has spent thousands of hours on his beloved hobby after starting to carve models in wood as a boy in England.

Keith last year donated a model of John F Kennedy's patrol boat, *PT109*, to the unit to raffle, followed this year by a WWII battleship, *Yamato*. He said he supported MRNSW because of its volunteers' work saving lives at sea (see photo page 13).

John Mountier

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Cold or costs keeping boaters on shore?

Central Coast boosts training and fundraising during quiet winter months.

The Central Coast unit has experienced few marine radio contacts throughout winter, with recreational boaters scarce on the water over the past three months.

Is this due to the seasonal cold weather or have the pace of modern life and the costs involved led to a decline in boating?

During winter, the unit always prepares its people and equipment for the busier time to come.

Training never ceases but in the cooler months, we have time for more specialised training.

Members of the Lake Macquarie and Tuggerah Lakes units joined Central Coast volunteers in a Sea Survival and Fire Fighting on Board a Vessel course.

Training Officer Geoff Hawes took the trainees to the Peninsula Leisure Centre pool to practice the use of a life raft and survival techniques.

This was followed by a flare exercise on the jetty at the Central



Shining bright ... Allan Mott and Bill Schwartz watch on as Russell Hutchins and Adrian Davies light up the sky during a flare exercise at the Central Coast unit's Point Clare base.

Coast unit's Point Clare base and fire fighting drills using equipment from the MRNSW fire and sea survival trailer, supervised by Regional Trainer Leigh Carmichael.

The unit also starts its annual boat raffle in winter. All members are rostered for this intense fundraising

effort, selling tickets from 8.30am to 5pm four days a week from July to November at a range of local venues. This concentrated activity aims to raise \$30,000 towards our \$100,000 annual operating costs.

Damage from the April storms has now been repaired. Some key

electronics on principal rescue vessel *Central Coast 21* have been replaced to make the fit-out identical to that of the newer boat, *CC 22*, providing greater efficiency in training and operations as crew can be assigned to either vessel.

Ron Cole

Lakes Commander brings Naval experience

Community members learn about volunteers' work during visits to base.

New Tuggerah Lakes Unit Commander Tony Younglove brings 32 years' experience in the Royal Australian Navy to his role.

UC Younglove was elected unopposed at the unit's Annual General Meeting. Deputy Unit Commander Ken Lawry was re-elected, also unopposed.

Ken also is the Treasurer and Fundraising Officer, working tirelessly with his wife, Lorraine, to keep the bases, boats and fundraising activities ticking over.

A Coxswain, Tony has been an active member at the North Entrance base (formerly MR Toukley) since becoming a member of MRNSW in January 2011. His Navy career saw him travel the world with the RAN Band, including postings to HMAS

Sydney, HMAS Melbourne and HMAS Stalwart.

Upon his retirement from the RAN, Tony ran a VIP lawn mowing franchise for several years before becoming State Manager for VIP NSW and ACT. His qualifications include Certificate IVs in Frontline Management and Workplace Training and Assessment and a Graduate Certificate in Business Management.

Residents of Berkeley Vale Village visited the unit in June, enjoying morning tea, followed by a short ride around Budgewoi Lake for the more adventurous.

The unit also welcomed nine teenagers taking part in the Wyong Aged Care and Disability Services' Break-Thru Program. This



Berkeley Vale Village residents are looking forward to another visit to MR Tuggerah Lakes in better weather.

Government initiative helps young disadvantaged people aged 18-24 to gain valuable work experience and merge them into the workforce.

The youngsters also were treated to a trip around Budgewoi Lake.

In July, the unit took part in an event to raise funds for a young boy suffering from Batten disease, a debilitating condition that has dramatically cut his life expectancy.

Suzanne Younglove

Endangered petrel hitches ride to freedom

No flapping as Norah Head crew helps wildlife carer release giant bird.

Marine Rescue Norah Head has played its part in helping preserve an endangered species.

Members of the unit's crew joined Cathie Stubbs, from Seabird Rescue, to release an endangered Northern Giant Petrel on the morning of Saturday, July 11.

The exhausted bird had been handed in to Seabird Rescue three weeks earlier, with Cathie feeding it and returning it to a healthy state.

Several attempts to release the petrel from rocks on the water's edge had proven unsuccessful, with the bird reluctant to leave. Cathie contacted the unit, whose members were only too happy to help.

Cathie joined Skipper Ross Iserif and crew members Lee Deacon and Ray Zahra on board *Norah Head 20*, travelling a few nautical miles out from Magenta (between The



Call of the wild ... a giant petrel is encouraged to leave *Norah Head 20* and again fly free. Photo: Lee Deacon.

Entrance and Norah Head) to release the bird.

Although hesitant at first to leave her cage, after a bit of encouragement the bird entered the water and swam about for quite a while.

Cathie told the crew the bird would stay until the wind became stronger when it should fly away.

Wyong Council has donated the unit \$10,000 to assist with the cost of installing a Remote Channel Changer to enhance the VHF radio

signal at the unit's radio base and eliminate a blackspot south-east of Norah Head lighthouse. Mayor Doug Eaton presented the grant to Unit Commander Trevor Burkett and DUC Mal Fletcher (see page 13).

Lee Deacon



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MAKING WAVES

Hunter/Central Coast News

Members pitch in to islands clean-up

Rock fishers rescued from rising tide.



The crew of *Lake Macquarie 21* ferries volunteers to three Swansea Channel islands for a major environmental clean-up project.

Members of Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie have been working to save people at risk and their local environment in recent weeks.

The unit responded rapidly to rescue four rock fishers stranded on a rock shelf off Swansea Heads on August 9.

Radio operators Lyn Cousins and Thelma McCard and trainee Richard Rule, on duty in the unit's Swansea Heads radio tower, spotted the foursome on the shelf about 2.45pm.

Concerned about their location and the risk they would be swept off the rocks in the rising tide and swell, the volunteers quickly deployed Rescue Water Craft (RWC) *Lake Macquarie 13* and rescue vessel *Lake Macquarie 11* to the scene.

RWC operator Garry Sullivan and *LM 11* skipper Warren Collins and crew Zoe Tylee and Kevin Ableson were on the scene in 10 minutes.

Navigating carefully through the difficult and rocky waters to the shoreline, the RWC successfully picked up the two men and two women, one-by-one, and transferred them to *LM 11*.

After their condition was assessed by the skipper and crew, the anglers - none of whom was wearing a lifejacket - were

transferred safely to shore with no injuries.

Footage of the rescue, captured on a Go-Pro helmet camera can be seen on the MR Lake Macquarie and MRNSW Facebook pages (see photo page 13).

On Saturday, August 15, nine volunteers joined the Combined Hunter Underwater Group (CHUG), Lake Macquarie City Council, members of the public and Swansea MP Yasmin Catley in a project to clean up Elizabeth, Pelican and Spectacle Islands on the western side of Swansea Channel.

In all, 23 participants collected 55 bags of rubbish, plus canopy frames, tyres and lamps.

Unit Commander Jim Wright and fellow members Zoe Tylee, Geoff Fittes, Bob Suttie, Vicky Richey, Tony Auckett, Glenn Dowey, Roger O'Dwyer and Gerard Wheeler took part, transporting willing cleaners to the islands on the unit's vessels and helping cart away 420kg of general waste (an estimated third of which was plastic) and 80kg of metal.

This was a fantastic initiative by the CHUG and a great example of MRNSW working with other organisations to achieve results for the community.

Garry Sullivan

Two Deputies earn their Coxswain's stripes

Hawkesbury and Cottage Point duo fly through gruelling assessments.

The Deputy Unit Commanders of two neighbouring Sydney units have qualified as Coxswains after a gruelling series of assessments.

MR Hawkesbury DUC Ken Edwards, who has become his unit's first Coxswain, and Cottage Point DUC Luke Andrews were exceptionally well prepared for their assessments after drilling and practising their skills for months in preparation for their final checks.

Ken was assessed by Tony Whybrow, from MR Middle Harbour, on *Hawkesbury 22*, and Luke by Hunter Regional Training Officer Leigh Carmichael on *Cottage Point 20*.

The test scenarios included emergency drills and deployment for an offshore search and rescue, together with fire and emergency situations. Other members suffered simulated broken limbs, burns from



Safety net for the Hawkesbury River, Cowan Creek and the entrance to Broken Bay ... *Cottage Point 30* leads *Hawkesbury 22* and *Hawkesbury 21* in a 20 knot sail past.

fires and power failures throughout the testing.

Almost a quarter of Hawkesbury members are now qualified as Leading Crew, with three members - Russell Harvey, Andrew Davey and Greg Rottinger - attaining the qualification since May and several

more actively progressing along the path to two stripes.

MR Hawkesbury volunteers took the opportunity for a comprehensive briefing and test run on *CP 30*, the newest addition to the MRNSW safety net for boaters of Cowan Creek, the lower Hawkesbury and

the entrance to Broken Bay (see feature, pages 36 and 37).

The unanimous verdict was that the Sailfish catamaran was "very impressive".

The size of *CP 30* easily accommodated its three crew and the nine Hawkesbury visitors.

All hands to the pumps at Middle Harbour

Marine Rescue Middle Harbour didn't have to travel far on a late-winter rescue operation.

The unit received a call at 8.30am on August 26 from the neighbouring Middle Harbour Yacht Club to report that a large catamaran had taken on water and was sinking at a nearby marina at the Spit.

By 9am, Deputy Unit Commander Joseph Battaglia had met the Yacht Club's Wayne Rando at the Middle Harbour base. Transferring the unit's high-capacity diesel pump to its small tender, they transported it to the marina to begin a major pump-out operation.

With five pumps and extensive help from all the local boatsheds, marinas and *MY Collette*, the catamaran was levelled in about two hours.

Booms were placed around the



Pumped ... this catamaran might have sunk without the assistance of MR Middle Harbour's fire pump.

vessel and oil absorption pads in the water to prevent diesel spreading into Sydney Harbour.

With a smaller pump on board and internal pumps working, the large vessel was transferred to a

boatyard to investigate the cause of the leak.

DUC Battaglia said that in the past three months the Middle Harbour unit's fire pump had been used to pump out three vessels,

saving their owners considerable salvage costs.

He said that without the timely assistance from the Middle Harbour Yacht Club personnel, the catamaran might have sunk.

Sydney voice of Batemans Bay operation

Terrey Hills radio operator link between rescue crew and drifting houseboat.

A dramatic early morning rescue operation involving MR Terrey Hills and MR Batemans Bay demonstrated the benefits of MRNSW's investment in communications technology and regional cooperation.

The Terrey Hills unit's radio base uses Radio over Internet Protocol (RoIP) to monitor overnight radio traffic to MR Batemans Bay, Narooma, Eden and Point Danger.

At 2.55am on Monday, August 24, Duty Officer Sandie Henry received a MAYDAY call on 27MHz Channel 88 from a houseboat on the Clyde River at Batemans Bay.

The skipper was quite distressed, advising that the boat was dragging its anchor and heading towards Big Island with two adults and a child on board. He was not able to get the vessel under control.

Monaro Regional Controller Bob Herbert was alerted and dispatched a crew from MR Batemans Bay aboard *Batemans 20* to respond.

At 3.18am, the frantic skipper called again on Ch 88 to report the boat was about to hit Big Island. Thankfully, it drifted safely past.

Maintaining communication on the radio and mobile phone proved

difficult as the boat drifted further up the river.

With the rescue vessel and houseboat unable to hear each other on Ch 88, MR Terrey Hills provided a communications relay between the vessels, providing ongoing position and status reports as the houseboat travelled upstream.

At 5.28am, the crew of *Batemans 20* reported they had the houseboat in tow and all was well.

This is a great example of the investment in RoIP technology paying off and excellent co-operation across the regions.

Congratulations to Sandie and the *Batemans 20* crew for a job well done.

A veteran sailor from Sydney's northern beaches was one of the winners of a beautiful prize package in the *MarineRescue* mobile App competition for Radio Club members.

To mark the introduction of the App and thank units' Radio Club members for their support, MRNSW awarded a prize to one lucky club member each month from March to July.

The prize was a Suzuki 5hp 4-stroke Outboard and Raymarine



MR Terrey Hills Unit Commander John Harris presents Radio Club member Bob McClung with his App competition prize.

Dragonfly Depth Sounder and Chartplotter, valued at more than \$2500.

All club members who used the App to Log On for a legitimate voyage and used the safety tracking option went into the prize draw.

The June winner was Terrey Hills Radio Club member Bob McClung, of Forestville, who took the prize for a trip in his North Shore 38, *Serendipity*.

Unit Commander John Harris, accompanied by Deputy UC Matt King and the unit's Radio Club officer Frank Haviland, recently had the pleasure of presenting Bob with

his prize.

Bob was overjoyed with his win and spoke very highly of the App's usefulness.

"It makes Logging On and Off so easy and quick – a real boon to the sailor," he said.

Bob should know: he's been around boats all his life, from when his grandfather had a boatshed with hire boats at Nambucca.

As he puts it: "I've had a boat problem for over 60 years!"

Bob now has to solve the problem of what to do with his old outboard – we wish him well with that, too.

Matt King

Wayne rings up \$26,000 for Broken Bay unit

Member of Marine Rescue Broken Bay Wayne Hardwick had applause ringing in his ears at this year's unit Annual General Meeting.

Wayne was awarded "The Bell" for meritorious service in fundraising, adding more than \$26,000 in funds to the unit's coffers over the past year.

The Bell was presented to the unit by former Divisional Controller Bruce Webster, who led the then Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol division in the early 1980s.

In a tradition dating back to 1998, the Unit Commander presents The Bell each year to recognise an outstanding effort by an individual for the betterment of the unit.

A number of other awards also were presented at the June AGM.

David Harrison and Don Southwell each received the third clasp to the National Medal for 40 years' service and Tom Hughes the first clasp for 25 years.

John Duniam was presented with his 10 year Long Service Medal.

Alan Turner-Morris



MR Broken Bay Unit Commander Keren Muir-McCarey presents Wayne Hardwick with The Bell award for meritorious service. Photo: Alan Turner-Morris.

Welcome to your new home, Ulladulla!

'Amazing volunteers' celebrate opening of landmark \$1.4m base.

Members of MR Ulladulla have celebrated the opening of their distinctive new \$1.4 million harbourfront base, two years after their former home was destroyed by fire.

South Coast MP Shelley Hancock officially opened the base. Her fellow unit patrons, Gilmore MP Ann Sudmalis and Shoalhaven Mayor Cr Joanna Gash, MRNSW Director Tony Drover, Commissioner Stacey Tannos and members of the community also joined the unit's volunteers at the event.

Mrs Hancock said she was honoured to open the new base and thanked the "amazing volunteers" for their hard work to protect people on the South Coast.

The former base was razed on the October long weekend in 2013, just four months after the unit had held a gala opening of its new training facilities and commissioned its new Steber rescue vessel, *Ulladulla 30*.

Commissioner Tannos said the new base provided panoramic views over the water, a high-tech Search and Rescue Coordination Centre, dedicated training space, amenities and equipment storage.

"The destruction of the unit's base was really tough for the volunteers but to their great credit, they didn't allow it to disrupt their



South Coast MP Shelley Hancock opens the Ulladulla base, with Gilmore MP Ann Sudmalis, DUC Keven Marshall, UC Ken Lambert, Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Mayor Joanna Gash. Photo: Lisa Hardwick.

safety operations, relocating their radio service first to the rescue vessel on the harbour and then to alternative premises," he said.

"I thank them for their dedication to serving their community and for their resilience, working in small demountable accommodation while the planning and building work was under way."

Built by TDK Constructions, the base is now fitted out with electronics equipment to improve the clarity and efficiency of its radio communications, including an enhanced radio system for monitoring VHF and 27MHz marine radio transmissions, a voice

recording system and computer-based radio operator consoles.

Unit Commander Ken Lambert said the opening marked a new start for the unit's 110 volunteers.

"Our members have been fantastic throughout the two years since the fire," he said. "They have continued to provide their essential services to the boating community, attend training and enthusiastically fundraise, despite our less-than-optimal conditions.

"This facility is a huge boost to our morale, as well as providing our community with a valuable and attractive new asset.

"I want to thank Mrs Hancock,

Shoalhaven City Council, Cr Gash and Mrs Sudmalis for their cooperation and assistance, along with our local boaters and members of the community for their ongoing support.

"Thanks must go, too, to Bendigo Bank for a very welcome grant, Coates Hire, Telstra and Super Cheap Auto, who helped get us up and running in the fire's aftermath, and the Ulladulla Game Fishing Club, which allowed us to use its rooms."

The rebuilding project was managed by NSW Public Works and covered by MRNSW insurance, provided through the State Treasury Managed Fund.

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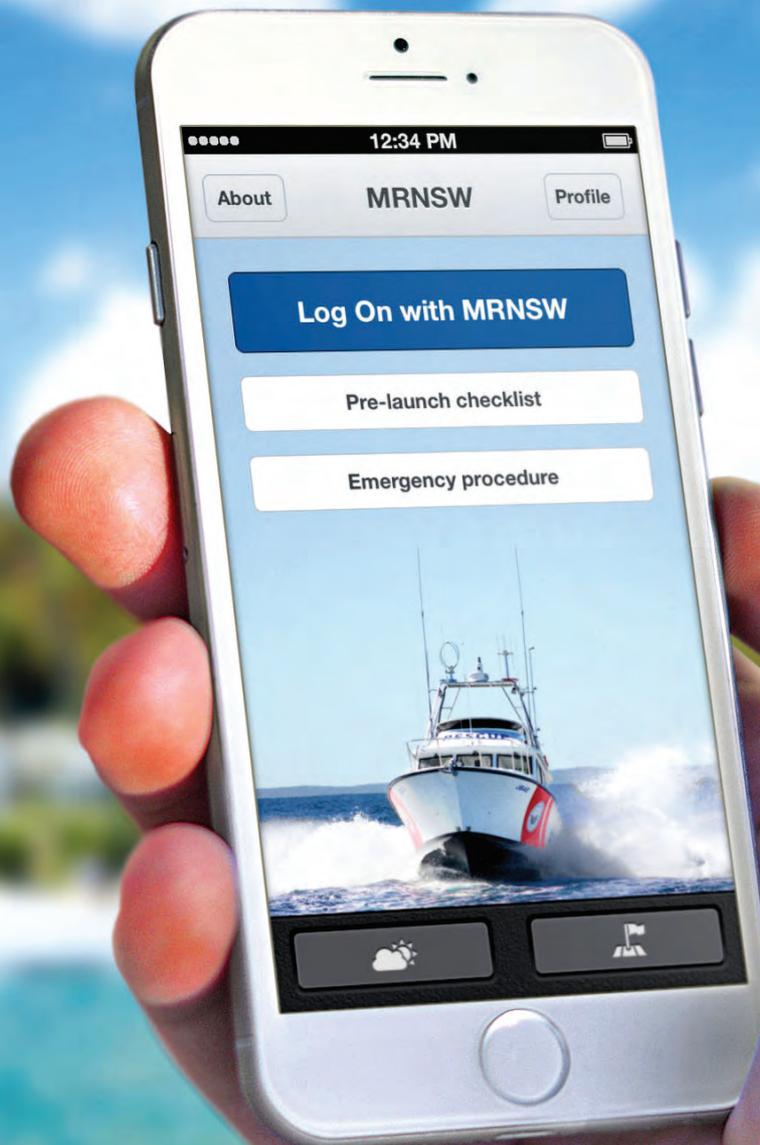
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Volunteers saving lives on the water

Crews' perfect day to train on the bay

Five Illawarra vessels stay the course in glassy winter conditions.

Marine Rescue Jervis Bay welcomed vessels and crews from four Illawarra units to a search and rescue exercise in perfect conditions on a late winter's day.

While the Bay is normally windy and cold in August, the visiting Port Kembla, Shoalhaven, Sussex Inlet and Kioloa members were greeted with little or no wind, full sunshine and glassy waters.

Illawarra Regional Controller Bruce Mitchell and Regional Training Manager South Glenn Sullivan had a lot of input to the organisation of the training exercise.

All vessels were trailered to Jervis Bay, launched at Woolamia boat ramp and met up with *Jervis Bay 20* at Huskisson, ahead of Glenn's briefing outlining the parallel search pattern, along with waypoints for starting positions.

JB 20, with skipper Geoff Barlow and crew John Gallimore and John

Carlson aboard, was lead vessel. As On Scene Coordinator, Geoff was responsible for transmitting search commands to crews via VHF radio, with further instructions issued from the Huskisson radio base by Glenn and Jervis Bay Unit Commander Allan Reidy.

All five vessels formed a line-abreast search pattern with a half-nautical mile spacing in between, maintaining a 10 knot speed.

John Gallimore kept a close watch on radar to manage the track spacing.

All vessels then turned 90 degrees starboard and followed bow to stern until a new course to steer, speed and length of new leg were set.

This procedure was repeated until the search was completed.

Jervis Bay members have had lengthy sea time over winter.

In late July, a 6.5m fishing boat



Lead vessel *JB 20*, with John Carlson at the helm, controls a parallel search during a regional exercise on Jervis Bay.

stranded 26nm (48km) offshore resulted in a long tow operation for *Jervis Bay 40*.

The skipper's distress call was received by MR Port Kembla and relayed to the Jervis Bay unit.

Skipper Greg Atkinson and crew Russell Pauley, Ross Harlen and Jurgen Kiaupa departed HMAS Creswell about 1pm in favourable sea conditions, while watch officer

Dennis Douglass maintained radio communications.

The crew located the boat after almost two hours, taking it under tow for a return journey through a light sea, reaching its launch point at Murrays Beach at 6.30pm.

Full marks to the skipper for radioing his situation without delay, supplying an accurate position fix.

Lester Shute

Emergency services race to boaters in strife

Despite an active strong wind warning, many Illawarra boaters were caught off guard when a powerful southerly front passed through, destroying the calm of an early winter's day.

Within the space of a few hours, the crews of *Port Kembla 30*, *Port Kembla 20* and *Shellharbour 30* were activated to respond to a number of distress calls received by the Hill 60 Search and Rescue Coordination Centre on June 8.

The first was from the skipper of a small 4.5m vessel offshore from Bass Point with three people on board, including a young boy, that had been hit by the weather front and pulled up the anchor, only to find that the motor would not start.

This was quickly followed by a report the boat had capsized, triggering a massive response from the emergency services.

The Port Kembla Police Marine Area Command, Lake Illawarra Police Local Area Command, MR Port Kembla, MR Shellharbour and the Lifesaver 1 Rescue Helicopter all were tasked.

As the crews sped to the rescue, a Triple Zero call was received from a pair of kayakers being swept out to sea.

PK 30 and Lifesaver 1 were diverted to rescue the kayakers but when another emergency call was received from a disabled vessel off Thirroul, *PK 30* was re-directed to assist, leaving the helicopter to search for the drifting kayakers.

Meanwhile, the police had located the 4.5m boat, which had been swamped but fortunately not capsized, freeing up *SH 30* to join the kayak search.

Lifesaver 1 found the pair, directing *SH 30* to the scene to take



A southerly front that swept through the Illawarra ruined a day on the water for many boaters. Photo: Christopher Chan, Illawarra Mercury.

the kayaks under tow. The chopper then peeled off to join the crew of *PK 30* in the search off Thirroul.

This vessel also was located and although it regained power, *PK 30* escorted it back to Bellambi Harbour.

Two vessels also ended up high and dry on Bellambi Reef, with Wollongong Police confirming the occupants were unharmed.

Later in the day, a boat on Lake Illawarra suffered mechanical difficulties and was helped back to Berkley Boat Ramp by *PK 20*.

A massive effort from everyone involved in the numerous operations throughout the day and excellent interagency cooperation resulted in a positive outcome in every case.

Tom Dragutinovich

AMSA drops in for Batemans Bay exercise

Joint air training ‘valuable experience’ for new vessel Master and crew.

Few people are more acutely aware of the need for testing and preparing for the worst than marine search and rescue crews.

As Australia’s national search and rescue organisation, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has a substantial holding of equipment that can be dropped by air to boaters in trouble on the water, often far from shore.

In mid-June, the agency asked MR Batemans Bay to help test some of this equipment.

The task for our crew was twofold: first, to provide a standby capability in case the aircraft involved encountered difficulties and was forced to ditch into the ocean and second, to recover the dropped items from the water.

Crew 2 Leader and Deputy Unit Commander Michael Kelly said the task had “offered a valuable opportunity to exercise essential skills as well as the chance to work closely with AMSA”.

Michael assigned the task to newly-appointed Master Eris Kennedy and his crew, Peter Withington, Warren Lewis and Tom Czarnik.

Also on board were two AMSA technicians, Glen Pritchard and Dan Peters.

Departing the marina just before 11am, *Batemans 30* proceeded in near ideal weather conditions (a 2m southerly swell and a 5 knot breeze also from the south) to the assigned drop point some 2nm offshore.

A chartered Cessna Caravan shortly hove into view and without delay made the first drop.

“We were required to hold position about 100 metres from the splash point until the life raft and parachute hit the water,” Eris said. “Once cleared to do so by the AMSA Sea Riders we dashed in quickly to make the recovery before any of the expensive equipment could sink.”

Once Eris had *BM 30* alongside the gear Peter, Warren and Tom



The crew of *Batemans 30* retrieves AMSA equipment dropped by aircraft in a joint training session.

assisted the AMSA staff in extracting it from the water.

BM 30 then returned to the holding location while the aircraft lined up for another run, about a three-minute turnaround in all.

The exercise was repeated six times, with the equipment rapidly recovered each time.

In line with standard practice, all the drops were made into wind from a height of about 200 feet.

Eris and his crew felt the

undertaking was a valuable experience.

“We exercised our skills with the plotter as well as ship-to-aircraft communications via the AMSA-supplied aviation band radios,” Eris said. “As a newly appointed Master it was a good opportunity to extend myself by trying something a bit different.”

The AMSA representatives were likewise satisfied with the exercise.

Mick Syrek

Busiest winter for years at Merimbula

Mechanical and electrical failures leave boaters stranded in the cold.

In a reversal of recent trends, volunteers at MR Merimbula have experienced one of their busiest winters for quite some time.

Over the past three months, *Merimbula 30* has been called out seven times, with crews also stood down after being called in on another two occasions.

The majority of call-outs have been to assist recreational boaters whose vessels needed to be towed after breaking down due to either mechanical or electrical problems.

In a recent incident, the crew located a vessel off Turingal Head whose skipper had used a mobile phone to contact AMSA in Canberra following a total failure of the on-board electrical systems.

The unit’s other priorities during winter have been to maintain crew training and *MA 30*’s operational readiness.

Unit members, along with NSW Roads and Maritime Services, took part in a local search and rescue exercise conducted by the Eden Police Marine Area Command.

Crews were tasked to respond to a simulated incident involving a fishing boat overturning off Merimbula with three people on board.

The exercise proved a success, with all missing objects located using a planned search pattern.

Eden MAC Officer in Charge, Sergeant Steve Judd, praised the professionalism of the MR



Merimbula 30 tows a vessel stranded off Turingal Head with failed electrics safely back to port.

Merimbula volunteers who took part in the search and rescue exercise, which will be conducted annually to enhance the three agencies’ interoperability.

Unit membership has now

achieved a significant milestone of 50, which Unit Commander Bill Blakeman attributes to renewed efforts to raise the profile of Marine Rescue in the local community.

Rod Studholme

Vessel preserves former leader's memory

Narooma honours inspirational Commander at commissioning ceremony.

The members of Marine Rescue Narooma paid tribute to their inspirational former Unit Commander, John Young, at the commissioning of their new rescue vessel, *Narooma 30*.

John sadly passed away only a month after the ceremony but his lasting legacy to the unit was the naming of the \$410,000 10m Naiad as *RV John Young*.

New Unit Commander Eric Hibbett and John welcomed Transport and Infrastructure Minister, Bega MP Andrew Constance, Eurobodalla Shire Mayor Lindsay Brown, MRNSW Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey, unit members and guests to the commissioning ceremony, held at the Mill Bay Narooma wharf on June 26.

UC Hibbett said the wide-beam RHIB (Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat) delivered in April, 2014, represented a major advance in the unit's capability.

"This new boat is our primary offshore rescue vessel and is supported by two jet ski Rescue Water Craft which provide a rapid response to incidents on our enclosed waters and shoreline and assist us in our training program," he said. "It has been a tremendous



Narooma Unit Commander Eric Hibbett, former Commander, the late John Young, Transport Minister, Bega MP Andrew Constance, Eurobodalla Mayor Lindsay Brown and Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey at the commissioning of *Narooma 30*, *RV John Young*.

boost to our resources, giving us greater range, power and towing capacity."

UC Hibbett said naming the vessel *RV John Young* was an opportunity to honour his predecessor's contribution.

"John has been instrumental in guiding the unit to its present high standard," he said.

"A few days after the ceremony we were able to take John and his wife, Ronja, on 'his' rescue craft on

a trip around Montague Island."

The vessel has the agility and speed required to respond quickly and operate across the Narooma bar in adverse conditions.

The boat carries a range of specialised search and rescue navigation, communications and first aid equipment, including an automated defibrillator and an oxygen kit.

Deputy Commissioner Storey said the state-of-the-art, rapid response

vessel was able to travel up to 30nm offshore and further strengthened Marine Rescue's strategic search and rescue safety net along the NSW coastline.

With UC Hibbett stepping up to the leadership, he has now been replaced as Deputy Unit Commander by Mark Jolly.

UC Hibbett thanked the local community and visiting boaters for supporting the volunteers.

See *In Memoriam*, page 38.

Eden spruces up base ahead of busy summer

The winter season has been quiet on Eden waters.

Boating activity in our region has been very low due to a number of factors.

It has been the coldest winter anyone can remember in this area and a long series of weather systems has kept both yachties and anglers at home.

The members of MR Eden have taken the opportunity to organise some needed maintenance to the base.

A contract has been let for the

replacement of our upper deck rail, suffering the ravages of long exposure to the elements.

The new work will see the rail replaced with stainless steel posts and cables, in compliance with current building regulations.

Our 27MHz Radio over Internet Protocol antennas have been replaced with models more suited to installation on the mast.

Further work is scheduled to ensure the unit is well prepared for the peak boating season and our annual communications support role

for the Sydney to Hobart yacht race.

As always at this time of the year, our roster becomes a bit thin with members heading for warmer regions for holidays.

A combined effort by members braving the Eden winter ensured that we continued to provide full coverage to those members of the boating community willing to brave the chill.

Thanks go to the unit's Administration Officer Glenda Wood and Radio Training Officer Richard Lamacraft, who have both achieved

their 10 year MRNSW Long Service Medals.

Our unit, like all others, depends on the time members like Glenda and Richard put in and their efforts are much appreciated.

As the weather improves, we are looking forward to what could be a busy spring and summer.

All signs are pointing to a good season on the water and we encourage people putting to sea to make full use of MRNSW to help them stay safe.

John McKinnon

Bermagui launches new rescue equipment

Unit benefits from Bega club grants and successful raffle campaign.

A successful annual raffle campaign and generous grant from four Bega Shire clubs have enabled MR Merimbula to purchase new search and rescue and base equipment.

The four clubs provided a grant worth a total of \$4594 to go towards a Lifetec water rescue dummy, along with a colour laser printer.

Club Sapphire Mermbula donated \$2195, Merimbula RSL \$1000, Bermagui Country Club \$899 and Club Bega \$500.

Unit Commander Alec Percival thanked the clubs for their support and all unit members, who worked so hard to raise a substantial sum from the raffle. The winner donated the \$8900 boat, trailer and motor prize back to the unit to raffle again.

The members also have thanked their colleague Mark Donnelly for his

success in seeking grants for the unit.

After focusing on raising money, the volunteers are now concentrating on spending some, much to the consternation of our Treasurer John Catterall. The first purchase was a ResQmax Line Launcher, which a crew can use to fire a tow line to a vessel in distress if their rescue vessel cannot approach closely enough to pass the line. Other units have already purchased this equipment and it immediately struck a chord, following a recent operation in which *Bermagui 30* and crew had difficulty trying to get a vessel off rocks.

Mark Donnelly filmed training sessions to familiarise crew with the equipment on the unit's Go-Pro camera.

The purchase of the ResQmax



MR Bermagui member Caron Parfitt fires the unit's line launcher.

was followed by the water rescue dummy. Training with this equipment will involve its application in man overboard and search and rescue scenarios.

The unit is now investigating purchasing a Sea Scoopa, a stretcher for retrieving people from the water, as a project for next year.

Keen new members are now working their way through their radio and crew training. Two new Watch Officers, Ray McLeod and Denise Page, are now able to train and assess their fellow volunteers at that level. *BG 30* will soon be up on the slip.

Denise Page

Tuross airborne thanks to donated berth

New equipment will save launch time and maintenance costs.

The MR Tuross unit is floating on air thanks to a generous donation of valuable equipment that will boost its emergency response and reduce maintenance time and costs for its rescue vessel.

NSW Roads and Maritime Services has donated the unit an air berth that was excess to its requirements at nearby Bermagui.

Unit Commander Blaise Madden said the unit had jumped at the chance to get an AirBerth to keep its 6.8m Naiad rescue vessel, *Tuross 20*, out of the water, rather than winching the boat in and out of the water on a trailer.

"RMS had the air berth in a dock down there at Bermagui but when they moved their boat they didn't need it anymore," he said.

"They approached our Monaro Regional Controller Bob Herbert, who suggested we could use it.

"Four of us went down and with the help of the Bermagui Slipway staff, we pulled it up and dismantled it.

"The local Mitre 10 delivery truck, which has an arm on it, then delivered it up here to us."

The unit has installed a floating wharf to reach into sufficiently deep water to accommodate the air berth ahead of re-assembling the equipment on site.

"We went to Black Swan Fabrications at Moruya and they put the wharf together for us.

"We concreted the anchors in and put it all together."

UC Madden thanked RMS for its support.

"It was very nice of them. The air berth is in good operating condition and came with the pump and the hoses we need, too," he said.

"We'd looked at an air berth



Tuross 20 ... suited for operating conditions on Tuross Lake and the inshore zone.

for the boat but it was \$15,000 plus another \$3000 to have it assembled," he said.

"That was way beyond us so we had the slipway trailer refurbished to keep winching the boat in and out."

An air berth allows a boat to be rapidly deployed in a safe and secure manner.

It also reduces maintenance costs

and the time a boat needs to be off the water for routine hull cleaning and repairs.

UC Madden anticipated the air berth would be in place and operational by the end of October.

Tuross 20, fitted with a jet engine, is suited to the 36-member unit's work on Tuross Lake and inshore conditions.

What we've been up to



Can we help? More than 51,000 people attended the Boating Industry Association's Sydney International Boat Show at Glebe Island and Darling Harbour in late July. Our volunteers were on hand to provide boating safety advice and information about the new *MarineRescue* mobile App and our work to save lives on the water.



Water, water every where ... MR Sussex Inlet's emergency generators were damaged and its jetty overtopped when a low pressure system caused widespread flooding in the region in August.



Classes on the water ... Huskisson Public School pupils and teachers learn about boating safety from Brian McPharlane, Ross Harlen and Geoff Barlow during an excursion to MR Jervis Bay (see page 40).



Radio talkback ... Shoalhaven UC Terry Watson (right) congratulates John Hinckley on recording 10,000 hours' radio duty, including many night shifts, since joining the unit in 2008. *Photo: Julie Wotton.*



Thank you ... Bendigo Bank chair Tony Hardman and Milton Branch Manager Leigh Felton have presented MR Ulladulla with a \$20,000 grant, continuing the Bank's support for the unit over six years.

LIFE SAVER

New rescue vessel



Welcome ... *Cottage Point 30* makes its way down the Hawkesbury River on its delivery voyage from Brooklyn to Cottage Point, ready to start operating on Sydney's northern waterways. Photo: Patrick O'Brien.

Sailfish the largest twin-hull to join the fleet

\$470,000 catamaran adaptable to Cottage Point operating environments.

The newest addition to the Marine Rescue NSW fleet is the Sailfish catamaran, *Cottage Point 30*, now on duty on Sydney's northern waterways.

Chosen for its adaptability to the varying conditions encountered by the Cottage Point crews, the \$470,000 11.5m aluminium-hulled vessel was delivered in early July.

MRNSW Fleet Manager Jody Hollow said the purpose-designed and built eight-tonne Sailfish was the largest twin-hulled vessel in the Marine Rescue fleet.

areas of the Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park to provide first aid and transport for patients numerous times each year.

Crew also are required to conduct offshore operations by day and night for extended periods to assist boaters in trouble on the water.

Consequently, when its 15-year-old offshore catamaran vessel was due for replacement, the unit's preference was to replace it with a vessel of similar construction, with enhanced capabilities to meet the greater offshore needs of the Broken

in mid-June and finally, on Friday, July 3, the day arrived for the eager members.

At 7.30 on a chilly winter's morning, they assembled at Fenwicks Marina at Brooklyn to get their first glimpse of *CP 30*.

The vessel had already arrived in the early hours on the morning on a low loader and was sitting resplendently in the morning sun awaiting the arrival of the marina crew to unload it.

And what a sight the new vessel was! Members were simply amazed by the size of the boat sitting on the trailer.

They had to wait patiently for the team from Sailfish to refit the mast, unrig the trailer and get the vessel on to the hoist before they could get a glimpse inside.

CP 30 was craned into the water at 10am and the delivery crew, Unit Commander Paul Millar, former Regional Controller Chris Gillett and vessel Project Officer David White, was the first to take control of the new vessel. The passage from Brooklyn to Cottage Point gave the team the opportunity to test the vessel in action, with its arrival at Cottage Point giving volunteers their first

'What a sight the new vessel was! Members were simply amazed by the size of the boat.'

It marks another milestone in the organisation's comprehensive fleet modernisation program, under which 61 new and refurbished vessels have been delivered to units, at a cost of more than \$14 million.

The Cottage Point unit's two rescue vessels are required to navigate in a variety of waterways ranging from the open, often wild, waters of Broken Bay to the tight bays of Cowan Creek and the mouth of the Hawkesbury River, and to beach in otherwise inaccessible

Bay area.

Sailfish Catamarans was the successful tenderer for the new *Cottage Point 30*, with construction beginning at its factory at Alstonville, inland from Ballina in northern NSW, in 2014.

Unit members received updated photographs of the new vessel under construction every month and by mid-2015, were itching to see their new boat.

The vessel passed its sea trials on the Richmond River at Ballina



Steady now ... *CP 30* is lowered into the water at Fenwicks Marina at Brooklyn after being trucked to Sydney from the Sailfish Catamarans plant at Alstonville in northern NSW.

chance to inspect the vessel in detail. All were greatly impressed.

The overall feedback was delight in the size and relative comfort of the vessel for the crew with increased space and sprung seats to absorb the rough seas often encountered off Broken Bay.

The boat's twin 250hp Suzuki engines enable 14 hours' operation at 21 knots and a top speed of around 32 knots (65 km/h). It is able to travel up to 30nm offshore.

The electronics and communications fit-out is well thought out and appropriate to the tasks undertaken. Navigation aids on board include three Raymarine touch screen multi-function displays for the helm, master and navigation stations and a suite of VHF, 27 MHz and DCN (MRNSW discrete network) radios. The search and rescue equipment includes radar, thermal imaging cameras, radio direction finders and spotlights.

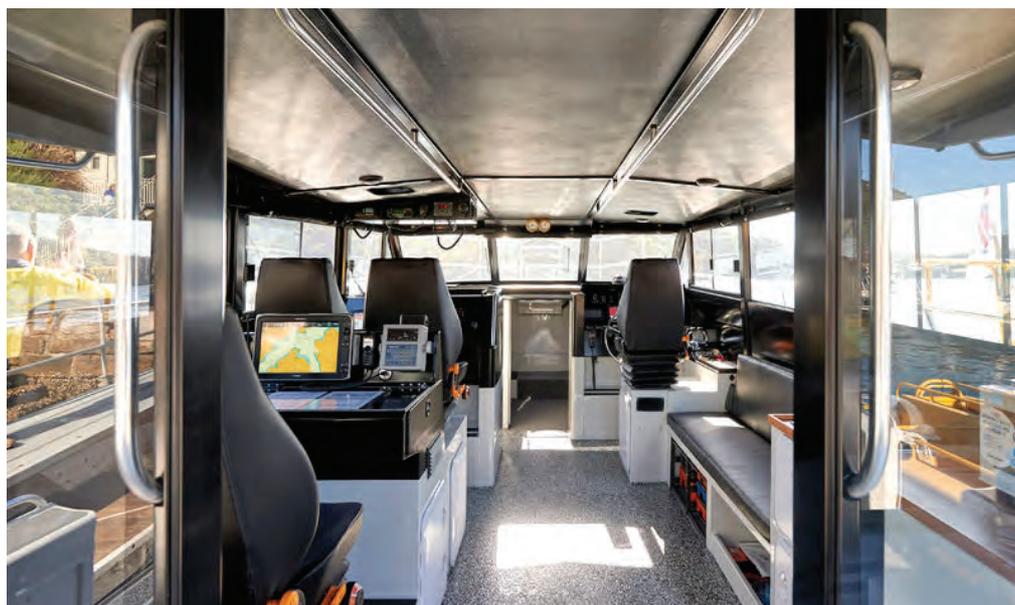
Separate Master and Navigator stations ensure that all crew members can learn and operate equipment appropriately.

Members also welcomed the provision of a flushing head and holding tank. The forward bunk will serve as a useful addition when treating casualties and provides a useful stowage area for the first aid gear, defibrillator, stretchers and other support equipment carried on board.

As well as being able to comfortably tow even the largest local pleasure vessels to safety, CP 30 will also enable the unit to support NSW Rural Fire Service operations and evacuate people at risk from remote locations during bushfires.

The vessel design allows for ample deck space for operations and good visibility from within the cabin.

The arrival of this superbly built and fitted out vessel provides an extremely potent search and rescue asset which is capable of operating by day and night in almost any conditions.



Separate Master and Navigator stations provide for a command overview of operations and space for all crew members to learn and operate equipment. Photo: Michael Nicholson Photography.

As such, CP 30 will provide the boating community in the Broken Bay region with a huge capability boost and improve the safety and surety of recreational mariners on these northern waterways.

CP 30 was kept on a mooring at Cottage Point while awaiting the installation of a larger, more stable pontoon and new piling at the unit. Funded with a 2014 State Government Community Building Partnership grant, this has ensured this capable craft is available for rapid deployment around the clock.

David White



Chloe Lynch, from Wollongong, tries the helm's seat on CP 30 for size during a visit to the Sydney International Boat Show.

TECH SPECS

Length overall:	11.98m	Switching:	FINSCAN touch display
Hull length	11.58m		Yanmar Diesel Salvage pump
Beam:	3.8m	Electronics fit-out	
Draft:	0.5m		• 3 X Raymarine e series Chartplotters/ Radar systems
Displacement:	8000kg approx		• Radio Direction Finder (RDF)
Design speed:	28+knots		• Forward Looking Infra Red (FLIR) camera
Survey Category:	Class: 2C		• Cameras forward and aft
Maximum persons:	12		• Loudspeaker
Power:	Twin 300hp Suzuki outboards		• Emergency Lights
Fuel:	2 X 700 litre tanks		• VHF, DCN, 27MHz and UHF radios
Steering:	Seastar Power Assist Unit		
Seating:	5 x Suspension Seats		

John respected across Narooma community

Unit farewells Commander who made volunteering his way of life.

If ever there was a man who displayed great courage and fortitude in the face of adversity, that man was the former Marine Rescue Narooma Unit Commander, John James Young, who sadly passed away on the evening of July 29 after a long battle with cancer.

He was well respected within Marine Rescue NSW, the local community and his own unit.

John joined the Narooma unit in September 2010, becoming a boat crew member, Coxswain and Master 5, as well as a Radio Operator/Watch Officer and Trainer and Assessor and finally, Unit Commander.

In this role he generated an excellent rapport with the

surrounding units while being the quiet achiever within his own.

He was not averse to involvement in fundraising, being a regular sausage sizzler and raffle ticket seller.

His 40-year history of volunteering culminated in John being named the 2014 overall Volunteer of the Year and Adult Volunteer of the Year for the South Coast and Southern Inland Region at a ceremony at the Cooma Ex-Services Club.

The unit's new rescue vessel, *Narooma 30*, was named *RV John Young* in a ceremony a month before his passing (see page 33).

John's final voyage on board his namesake took place on the



John Young's final voyage, on board his namesake vessel, accompanied by his family and MR Narooma colleagues.

morning of August 8, when his ashes were taken to their final resting place 3nm due east of our Old Pilot House base.

On board were Ronja Young and the three children, Rene, Sandra and John junior.

Eric Hibbett

Pt Danger high achiever will be missed by all



Don Malligan.

Don Malligan joined MR Point Danger in 2004, with his love of sailing drawing him into his volunteer work with the unit's marine operations section.

He followed this by taking on communications duties and obtained both his crew and radio operator qualifications.

He was involved in numerous call-outs and incidents, helping save lives on the water.

An excellent cook, Don was the coordinator of the unit's fundraising

barbecues, tossing sausages around on the hotplate with his wife Betty by his side. Don and Betty also worked together to collect and collate data on incident reports for the Tweed River Bypass System, which earned the unit funds towards its operating costs.

Don received his five and 10 year Long Service Medals and both he and Betty were presented with the President's High Achievement Award in 2011, recognising their commitment to their volunteer duties

at the unit.

Don performed his duties professionally and always put his hand up or his name on the list first, without hesitation, to help with any upcoming events for the unit.

He was highly thought of by his fellow volunteers and was the definition of a good bloke.

Don will always have a special place in the hearts of all at MR Point Danger.

He will be missed by us all.

Glenda Ashby

Ernie always smiling, with a joke at the ready



Ernie George.

Ernest "Ernie" George joined Marine Rescue Crowdy Harrington (then the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol) in 2005 at the age of 82.

With a background of service in the Royal Australia Air Force, a colourful career and a sharp mind, he quickly qualified as a Radio

Operator and began undertaking regular Wednesday morning watches.

Never one to shirk responsibilities, Ernie always made himself available for any fundraising, base maintenance and sundry activities required.

At the unit's quarterly markets, he

made the drink sales his domain.

Ernie was a dedicated family man, always punctual, smiling and ready with a joke or tale to tell of his lawn bowling expertise.

At the ripe old age of 92, he will be missed.

Vale Ernie.

Kevin Nicholls

Forster-Tuncurry farewells valued pair

Maureen and Mike saw hundreds of boaters safely across the bar.



Maureen Marlin.

Marine Rescue Forster-Tuncurry has recently farewelled two members.

Michael (Mike) Crawford MBE, 77, and Maureen Marlin, 69, both passed away after lengthy illnesses.

Maureen was a valued member of the unit, joining in 2009.

Following in the footsteps of husband Ray, she became a radio operator, doing the overnight watches that are not the most popular for two years until ill health forced her to stop.

She still carried on in the unit's fundraising team, the Breakwall Belles Auxiliary.

Whenever there was fundraising to be done, she and Ray worked tirelessly.

Even in the later stages of her illness she was there doing what she could to help, with Ray not far

away.

Maureen's tenacity in the face of adversity was to be admired and she will be sadly missed by us all.

The following is an edited tribute by Mike Crawford's son, Robert:

"Mike joined the then Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol in 2003 after a celebrated 30-year career in the Australian Army.

He entered Duntroon in January 1955, which brought him the same rigours of any cadet's life and many stories, ranging from motorcycle training on a freezing Majura Road to the sadness of losing classmates in a sailing tragedy on Lake George.

It was at Duntroon that his dry sense of humour emerged, something for which he will always be remembered.

He was a Colour Sergeant for most of his senior year and part of the Colour Party on his graduation parade in 1958.

Serving in Malaya in the early 1960s as a lieutenant and then captain in 103 Field Battery (in the Commonwealth Brigade) and his attachment to 20 Regiment, Royal Artillery, as the Survey Officer, Mike formed friendships that were to endure the rest of his life.

Commanding 104 Field Battery, including its tour of South Vietnam in 1968-69, for which he was



Mid North Coast Regional Controller John Murray presents Mike Crawford MBE with his 10 year Long Service Medal.

awarded the MBE, he was always thankful that every member of the Battery came home alive. As a Colonel in the early 1980s, he was the Commander Field Force Artillery, which in those days was "double hatted" as the Commander 1st Division Artillery.

Mike's final posting in the Army was as Colonel Administration, Field Force Command, which combined the logistics and personnel functions of the contemporary Forces Command.

He retired in 1995 and with Jan, re-embraced their love of travel and set about seeing Australia and the world, much of the east coast with a camper trailer in tow. In late 1999,

they made the "sea-change" to Smiths Lake near Forster-Tuncurry. In seaside life, Mike kept busy and became involved in the community, in particular with the RVCP as a radio operator. In time, he took on the responsibility for coordinating radio training for the unit. He was involved in the RVCP and MRNSW for more than a decade and found his contribution to maritime safety deeply satisfying."

The unit extends its sympathies to Ray, Janice and their families. Mike and Maureen watched over hundreds of boaters crossing the bar and they, too, have now crossed life's bar. Safe journey, friends.

Ray Mazurek

Ways to remember

An *In Memoriam* donation to MRNSW is a lasting way to remember a loved one and support our volunteers' vital work to save lives on the water.

If you would like to arrange for family and friends to make donations to MRNSW upon the passing of your loved one, this process is now more manageable.

Donation envelopes, which can be provided to mourners at the funeral

service, can be arranged by calling Headquarters on (02) 8071 4848.

Donations can be directed to your loved one's unit and all *In Memoriam* donations of \$2 or more are fully tax deductible. A thank you letter and receipt will be sent to all donors. The next of kin will also be advised of the total amount given.

Donors also can support MRNSW by donating online at marinerescuensw.com.au/donations



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FEEDBACK

Letters and correspondence

K-2 went to the Marine Rescue
on First we gathered inside to
listen to the volunteers. Next we
went on the balcony to look at
the boats. Then we talked on the
radio. Finally we went on the
Rescue boat. It was awesome
and we had Fun.



Huskisson Public School
Sydney Street, PO BOX 91, Huskisson NSW 2540
T 02 4441 5074 F 02 4441 6220 huskisson-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Dear Administrator (MR Jervis Bay)

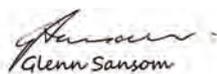
On behalf of all staff, parents and the students in Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 at Huskisson Public School, I would like to thank and acknowledge your organisation for providing a wonderful and extremely educational learning experience on Friday 5th June.

Our students thoroughly enjoyed the presentation by your staff and the 'Hands on' tour of the Marine Rescue craft. It is vitally important that our students develop an awareness of your role and the importance it plays in marine safety for their own safety in the future.

'Who helps us in the community?' is one of the learning units the students study in their first years at school. This educational experience provided by your organisation enriched the learning of our students and made their learning highly memorable.

I would particularly like to acknowledge the work of Mrs Elizabeth Beasley who initiated and organised the excursion for the benefit of the students at our school.

Once again congratulations on your organisation's generosity, commitment to our students and service to the community.


Glenn Sansom
Principal

Thanks to Evans team for skill, compassion

Pair's boat saved from serious damage.

To: Unit Commander Karin Brown (MR Evans Head), staff and volunteers

We would like to thank the organisation (Marine Rescue) all along the Eastern Coast of NSW but especially last week for the service you have provided not only to ourselves but also to all other boats crossing and returning to Evans bar.

We find your service superior to other areas that we've used and we would like to congratulate you and your team for the service you provided during the Evans Head Classic in such a busy time, especially whilst the channel was being dredged. We respect your quick response by phone to me regarding an issue when we moored our boat "too short" in the boat harbour on Tuesday.

Thank you and your members for your compassion whilst we were back at our home in Newrybar and unable to attend the release of the boat off the wharf. May you pass on our special thanks to the Coxswain you appointed (who) did a wonderful job to save our boat from serious damage.

Please find enclosed a cheque for a donation and we are most grateful and wish Evans Head Marine Rescue Unit the best for the future. Maybe when my old grey hair tells me not to drive a boat I may join you in the tower.

Warwick and Stella Reakes

To: Unit Commander Mike Thomas, MR Forster-Tuncurry

I write to thank and commend all four of your (volunteers) for their expertise and prompt assistance on the afternoon of Tuesday, June 9, 2015.

My vessel became stranded on Wallis Lake about a kilometre or so on the southern side of the bridge due to the sudden failure of the tilt mechanism on the engine after raising it in shallow water.

Upon radio contact, Brian Adair was extremely helpful and communicative on the switchboard. We weren't in any danger, although Brian's handling of the situation installed confidence. The Marine Rescue vessel was promptly launched. The crew of Bruce Findlay, Keith Herdon and Paul Miller made contact with us and reassured us with their skill and expertise. They towed us safely back to the Forster Boat Ramp near your facility.

I take this opportunity to thank all four men who were involved in our rescue and commend them for their excellent work. Thank you for overseeing and operating such a vital service for our community. Having first hand experience, I now look forward to commending your service all the more to the wider community.

Reverend David Hann, Tuncurry

To: Unit Commander, MR Botany Port Hacking

I'd like to thank the wonderful ladies and gentlemen at Kogarah. A few weeks ago my toddler threw his only bottle over the side of the marina at St George Motorboat Club. Your Marine Rescue division were in their own pen opposite. They quickly dispensed a team member with a large pole and duly rescued my son's bottle out of the water (best search and recovery ever). I'd like to say a big thank you and to recognise all their efforts - a day without a toddler's bottle on the water is just too unbearable to contemplate!

Rebecca Wilkinson-Preece (via Facebook)



IS YOUR EPIRB DUE TO BE REPLACED?



IM355E



Prepare for the extreme with GME, because your life could depend on it

Digital EPIRBs have been around for quite some time now, and many are about to reach their expiration date.

So next time you're out on your boat, double check the expiration date of your EPIRB.

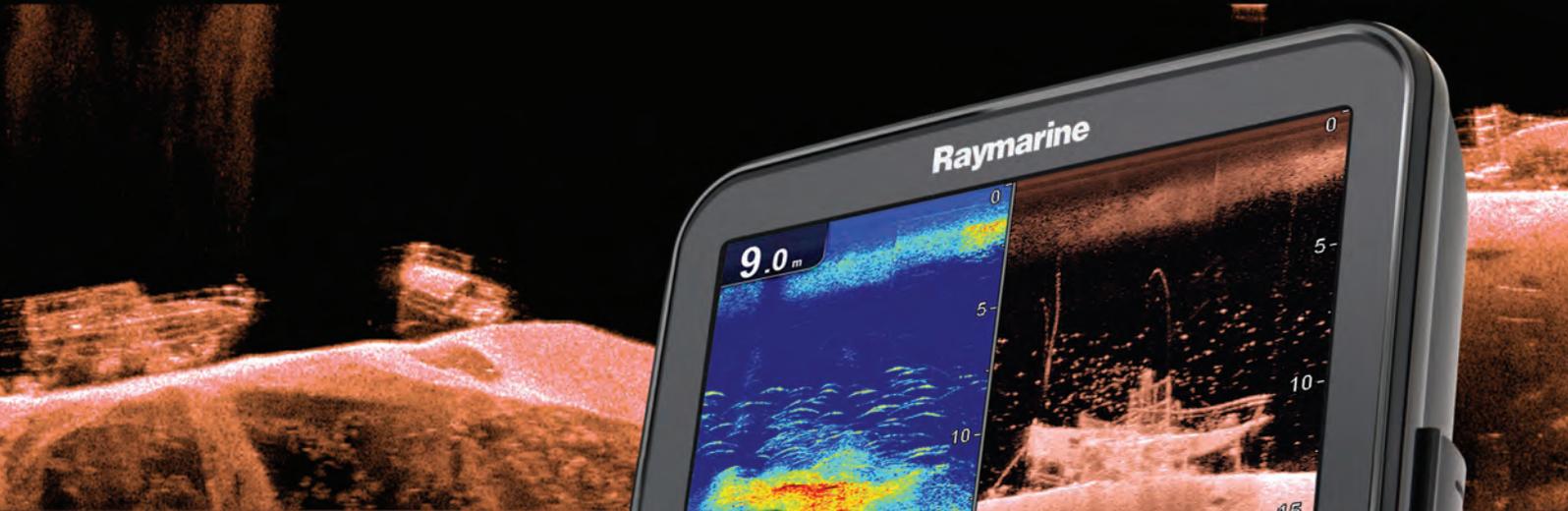
If it has expired, or is approaching expiration, contact your local Authorised GME Dealer and discuss options for replacement, including updating to the latest GPS equipped model from GME. With a GPS equipped EPIRB, you will be located faster, and rescue authorities will be able to reach you sooner. It could save your life.



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Dragonfly

Dragonfly 7

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