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SOUNDINGS



Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW | Issue 27, Winter 2016

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Cover Image

A whale stages a spectacular welcome for Marine Rescue Port Stephens' new vessel, *Port Stephens 31 (John Thompson)* as it enters its home waters for the first time. *Photo: Lisa Skelton of Imagine Cruises.*

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Printing

Printing, binding and mailing by Galloping Press Pty Ltd
Unit 29/398 The Boulevard, Kirrawee NSW 2232

Marine Rescue NSW is pleased to acknowledge the invaluable support of our *Soundings* advertisers.

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From the Commissioner

History repeats as storms again belt the coastline and our units.



Commissioner
Stacey Tannos ESM

This time a year ago, we were reporting on the damage and destruction caused when severe storms whipped up by an East Coast Low pelted the NSW coastline.

Our members displayed fortitude and commitment in the face of appalling conditions to help boaters in trouble, including crews at Port Stephens, Hawkesbury and Cottage Point.

A number of our unit facilities and a range of equipment sustained damage, the worst of which was the Newcastle unit's heritage-listed cottage, which was unroofed by the cyclonic winds.

A year later, we are mopping up after the coastline was again punched by a fateful combination of huge swells, high winds and driving rain. This time, the MR Terrigal unit bore the brunt of waves smashing its ocean-front base, causing significant structural harm and ruining equipment. The Tuross unit's AirBerth was dragged from the wharf and over the bar, ending up on the beach. Other units have suffered varying degrees of minor damage and inconvenience.

Crews at MR Coffs Harbour worked in the early morning darkness and winds gusting up to 50 knots to rescue boaters left stranded when a finger wharf was ripped off the marina boardwalk. At Port Macquarie, crews untangled a pontoon from ferry cables and assisted other boaters in need.

Thank you to all those members who braved the conditions to assist their communities and also those who faced up to the grimy and odorous task of cleaning up sodden carpets, shovelling out seaweed and patching leaks.

This weather emergency precedes the seventh anniversary of the establishment of Marine Rescue NSW on July 1, 2009.

Throughout this time, the organisation has benefited from the stable and experienced leadership of the Board of Directors.

The Board has been remarkable for its consistency, understanding of the various complexities of our organisation and considered decision making.

The continuing development and success of our organisation depends

positions are vacant and cannot be filled from within the unit also are included. It is proposed to move meeting procedures to the associated MRNSW Rules so that these can be amended as necessary without the time and expense involved in a full membership vote. As we look forward confidently to a robust future as a professional and respected emergency service, I urge all eligible members to vote in favour of these amendments.

I'm keen to talk to many members about the amendments and a range of other matters. Member Services Manager Mat Smith and I are visiting a number of units in the Monaro, Illawarra, Northern Rivers and Mid North Coast regions in June. I have recently had surgery on my right shoulder,

We must take a long-term approach to planning for a strong and sustainable future for MRNSW.

to a large extent on its ongoing good governance. We must take a long-term approach to planning for a strong and sustainable future for MRNSW, putting in place the strategies and policies necessary to ensure those at the peak of the organisation remain equipped to respond to the responsibilities of leadership.

The MRNSW Constitution is the guiding document in which our foundations are set. To ensure this document reflects our ongoing needs, the constitution at times will need to be refreshed.

Members will soon be asked to vote on a series of proposed amendments to the constitution. These include requiring members nominating for the Board to bring strong skill sets and/or qualifications to the table and removing the maximum term limits for Directors. Amendments enabling the Commissioner to appoint a unit administrator if the local leaders'

meaning I'm unable to drive, type or tie my shoelaces without considerable difficulty. I suspect the Headquarters staff might be waving me off just a little too cheerily as Mat and I hit the road.

Recent surgery also rules me out of donating blood as part of the Red25 Emergency Services Blood Challenge but I encourage anyone who is able to take part in this worthwhile event. It's a great opportunity for us to support another lifesaving cause - and also to engage in a bit of friendly competition with our emergency services colleagues.

Once everyone's had some down time after the storm operations, why not drop by and issue a challenge to your local counterparts in the Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW and the State Emergency Service?

Tell them I sent you!
*Stacey Tannos ESM
Commissioner*



Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Fleet Manager Jody Hollow with two of the new MRNSW plates now on show on unit trailers.

Art Union prizes delight lucky winners

Units work hard to raise more than \$408,000 in first campaign.

Avril Heitia's unlucky streak was broken when she won first prize in the inaugural MRNSW Great Outdoor Getaway Art Union.

Avril, from Northmead, couldn't believe her luck when Commissioner Stacey Tannos rang to congratulate her.

"I never win anything," she said.

The Art Union was drawn by Grant Thornton partner Neville Sinclair at MRNSW Headquarters on April 26.

Commissioner Tannos said the Art Union had been a successful first venture, with units raising - and keeping - more than \$408,000.

"I want to thank all our units and members who worked so hard to sell tickets and meet the Art Union requirements," he said.

"On behalf of our units, a huge thank you, too, to all the members

of the community who supported us by buying tickets, both online and in person."

Commissioner Tannos and Suzuki Marine Specialised Business Manager Simon Bochenski presented Avril, who bought her ticket from MR Cottage Point, with her Haines Seachange 595 Off Road Caravan and VW Amarok CORE 4WD Dual Cab Ute on June 6.

Her first planned Great Outdoor Getaway in her prize is a camping trip to Port Macquarie in late June.

Second prize, a Haines Signature 525F S-series boat and Suzuki 4-door Grand Vitara Sport 4WD, was won by Rolf Zerbes, of Narrawallee, with a ticket sold by MR Ulladulla.

MR Port Kembla Radio Club member Neil Craddock, from Wollongong, won third prize with



Congratulations ... Great Outdoor Getaway Art Union winner Avril Heitia and Commissioner Stacey Tannos inspect Avril's new caravan.

an online ticket: a Sea Jay 3.7m Nomad boat, trailer, Suzuki motor and Suzuki S-Cross GLX Auto.

The Commissioner also presented Paul Lewis and his daughter Aleigha, of Crookwell, with fourth prize, a Suzuki Swift GL Navigator. The Lewis

family bought their winning ticket while on summer holidays at Kioloa.

Fifth prize, a Suzuki KingQuad ATV, was won by Peter Morley, of Hornsby, who was sold his ticket by neighbour, Stores Manager Graham Foy, on behalf of MR Middle Harbour.



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From the Chairman

Vale Mike Stringer, a harbourmaster's grandson born to service and the sea.



Chair
James Glissan ESM, QC

MRNSW Foundation Director and Middle Harbour member Mike Stringer AM, ESM was farewelled at a memorial service in Sydney after passing away on May 5. The service was attended by Planning Minister Rob Stokes, Industry Minister Anthony Roberts, current and past Directors, a contingent of volunteers and members of the emergency services. MRNSW Chair Jim Glissan delivered the eulogy, telling of Mike's commitment to the land, the sea and service.

John Michael Armstrong Stringer was born in Brisbane General Hospital on the 16th of January 1939. He was involved in, and kept himself current with, a number of lifelong interests. He described himself as of an inquiring mind, with a policy of saying 'yes' to any opportunity that presented itself and in an interview he once stated "I always say 'yes' and then figure out how to achieve what has been asked of me as I'm doing it, keeping 'fun' part of the mix of learning and doing", a practice that created many great days in a lifetime of achievements.

The son of a soldier killed in action in 1941 and grandson of Sydney's Harbourmaster, Mike was born into a family of service and of the sea. In 1952, after living in Sydney, including in Phillip Street in the City and Bellevue Hill, the family moved to Elanora Heights, where Mike lived for the rest of his life.

He was educated at St Andrews Cathedral Choir School in the city. Those of us who knew Mike only as an adult may find it difficult to conceive of him as a self-described 'angel' and chorister.

After school, he pursued a range of careers, from apprentice

builder to stock and station agent, finally settling into a long career in business.

Throughout his life he was involved in three major pursuits: the sea, the land and commerce. The confluence of those three interests made us friends. We shared those ultimately Australian loves of horses, of yachts and of that need to be busy and involved in the interests of the community at large.

Michael began his working life as an apprentice carpenter and joiner after leaving school at the Intermediate Certificate level. On completing his apprenticeship, he was offered a position with Antill Ranger & Co. Pty Ltd as the foreman for the construction of the new transport depot at Alexandria.

Michael went on to be branch manager with Antill Ranger and then with Mayne Nickless Ltd on their takeover. He was part of the team that developed the North Queensland road transport service of Antill Ranger, studied Transport Administration and became a Member of the Institute of Transport.

In 1964, recognising the commercial potential of the emerging computer industry, he joined Data Card Australia, later to become Computer Resources Company, where he became the National Product Manager for manufactured products, responsible for all manufacturing, profitability, warehousing and distribution of standard products, with a budget of over \$40 million, a huge sum in 1993. He retired in May 1994, at the age of 55, to become a full-time carer for his aged mother. This was, of course, retirement in name only and he continued to work with more commitment and energy than most of the fully employed.

In 1961, Michael became a licensed Stock & Station Agent, Real Estate Agent, Business Agent and Auctioneer. He traded as



MRNSW Foundation Director,
Mike Stringer.

J.M.A.Stringer & Co until 2004 and sold properties in conjunction with Elders and Dalgety. He organised, in co-operation with Wesfarmers Dalgety, the 1995 Classic Alpaca Auction at Wm. Inglis, Newmarket. He worked with commercial primary producers, concentrating on alpaca, wool, sheep and beef cattle production. He believed that rural tourism had significant market potential for the rural sector and was an early advocate of cell grazing, fodder silage, water and soil conservation, Landcare and whole farm planning. These are very modern and progressive aspects of agriculture and show Mike's indefatigable energy and modernity.

He was a member of the Angus Society (beef cattle) and the NSW Stud Merino Breeders Association.

Despite that mainstream agricultural understanding, Michael established an alpaca stud, Grantham Alpacas. In the industry since 1994, he believed alpaca better than wool and many other natural fibres. He established the Alpaca Fashion House as a retail outlet for high fashion Australian made alpaca products.

He was, as well, a horseman and driver and manager of horses. No-one who has not bred and trained equines can ever really understand how instant a bond there is between one horseman and another.

Continued Page 43.

Directors will need to bring skills to table

Members to vote on proposed changes to strengthen leadership.

Future MRNSW Directors will be required to bring strong skills and experience to the Board table under a proposed change to the organisation's constitution to be put to an Extraordinary General Meeting.

Eligible members can have their say on a series of proposed amendments to the MRNSW Constitution by casting a postal or proxy vote or vote in person at the EGM at Headquarters on August 20.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos urged members to vote yes to the changes to ensure the ongoing good governance of the organisation.

Chair Jim Glissan flagged the proposed new requirements for Board nominees at the 2015 Unit Commanders and Deputy Unit Commanders Conference.

"We shouldn't leave the

leadership of the organisation to chance. We ask for no qualifications to direct this company and that, in my opinion, is not a sound basis for going forward," he said at that event.

Another proposed amendment would remove the maximum term limit on Directors' positions. The fixed limits mean there is no safety mechanism if a director has served the maximum term but no other member nominates for election to the position, leaving a director's seat vacant. Arbitrary time limits also have caused the loss of experienced and knowledgeable directors who had made recognised contributions to the Board and were prevented from re-nominating.

A series of other changes being put to the vote would enable



Chair Jim Glissan addresses the 2015 Unit Commanders and Deputy Commanders Conference on the need for amendments to the MRNSW Constitution.

the Commissioner to appoint an administrator to run a unit if both the Unit Commander and Deputy positions were vacant and no other members were able or willing to act in these roles. A number of "housekeeping" amendments also

have been proposed to ensure the constitution remains a consistent and high-level guiding document.

Voting documents will be sent to members in mid-July. Postal votes must be returned by 4.30pm on August 17.

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ON THE RADAR
Weather chaos



It's a team effort ... all three MR Port Macquarie vessels were tasked to assist boaters in trouble on the Hastings River. Andrew Bellott and David Arthur provided a highly-maneuvrable response on RWC *Port Macquarie 10*, with Reg McGlashan, William Richardson and David Bigeni on RIB *PM 20* and Geoff Shelton, Tony Hallett, Trish Hallett, Peter Heuttner and Kate Shelton crewing *PM 30*. *Photo: David Targett.*



Smashed beyond repair ... the remains of MR Tuross' AirBerth, which was dragged off the unit's wharf and over the bar, before ending up in pieces on the beach (see Page 39).



Not the day for a harbour cruise ... this yacht broke its moorings and ran aground on the rocks below the tower at the point of Garden Island in Sydney Harbour on Sunday, June 5. *Photo: Matt Sims.*



Tossed like toy boats on the sea ... one of a number of vessels that were torn from their moorings and washed up in the bays of Port Stephens at the height of the storms. *Photo: NSW Maritime.*



View from the hill ... MR Port Kembla Deputy Unit Commander Graeme McCrudden snapped this shot of the coastline below the unit's Hill 60 radio base on June 6.

Havoc as winter storms whack coastline

Units and crews feel brunt of monster swells and high winds.

NSW boaters heeded repeated warnings to stay on shore but the damage toll from the severe storms that hammered Australia's east coast on the first weekend in June included ruined MRNSW facilities and equipment.

Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey said MRNSW crews had been on high alert for emergencies in the savage conditions but commended boaters for putting safety first and staying off the water.

"Boaters took a responsible approach along the length of the coastline. There was no way you could have gone out safely in those conditions," he said.

The Bureau of Meteorology reported average wave heights above 5m along the coastline, with a 13m monster recorded off Crowdy Head on the Mid North Coast.

Rescue crews at Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie braved the conditions to provide emergency assistance.

In a 2.30am operation on Sunday, June 5, MR Coffs Harbour crews worked in winds gusting up to 50 knots to ferry boaters to safety after a boardwalk on the marina collapsed and the first of several finger wharves was torn adrift, stranding them on board their vessels with no way to reach shore. Volunteers on board *Coffs 30* worked with Police and the State Emergency Service to rescue a dozen passengers on boats tied to the finger wharf.

Further south at Port Macquarie, all three MRNSW vessels were out on the water on Sunday morning as four yachts broke their moorings and were washed on to rocks and another was blown on to a sandbar.

Port Macquarie 20 helped clear a pontoon boat that became entangled in the cables of the Hibbard Street ferry across the Hastings River.

That afternoon, a crew from MR Central Coast rescued a man in a 6m punt at Koolewong when



Coffs 30 in the midst of destruction on the Coffs Harbour marina, where a boardwalk collapsed and several finger wharves were torn adrift, stranding boaters on their yachts. Photo: *Sail With Us Facebook*.

his engine failed in the appalling conditions. On Wednesday, crews from MR Port Jackson and Middle Harbour joined a search for a missing swimmer off Bondi.

A number of MRNSW units in exposed coastal locations sustained damage to their bases and equipment from heavy surf and driving rain.

On the Central Coast, the oceanfront base of MR Terrigal suffered the most serious of the damage.

Deputy Unit Commander Czes Lawicki said the base had borne the brunt of large swells battering the building, causing significant structural damage and flooding equipment including its fuel tender. Roller doors were smashed and a structural stud split when the boat shed doors were destroyed.

In the Monaro Region, MR Tuross' AirBerth, only recently installed, was destroyed when it was dragged off the unit's wharf and over the bar, ending up in pieces on the beach.

A savage wind and swell from the north swept away five floating pontoons where *Jervis Bay 40* had until recently been moored at HMAS Creswell.

DUC Peter Kielar reported that

about 9pm on Sunday, a surge of nearly 2m hit the rescue vessel and there was a real concern it would be lost. At least seven lines parted, two cleats were destroyed and there was damage to the hull.

Damage to Lake Macquarie, Port Jackson, Botany Port Hacking, Shoalhaven, Batemans Bay, Merimbula and Eden unit facilities as a result of flooding and leaking roofs and windows is being assessed.



Crowds gather to watch nature vent her fury over the Coffs Harbour marina. Photo: *Frank Redward*.



The oceanfront MR Terrigal unit sustained serious damage to its building and equipment from a relentless swell buffeting the base.

National honours for distinguished service

Three volunteers from the coastline to the high country recognised.

Three members of MRNSW have been awarded the Emergency Services Medal in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours.

MR Jervis Bay Training Systems Officer and former Director Tony Drover, Mid North Coast Regional Director John Lynch, from MR Forster-Tuncurry and MR Alpine Lakes Unit Commander Les Threlfo received the prestigious award, presented to recognise distinguished service by members of the emergency services.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos congratulated the trio, who have contributed a combined total of 39 years' service to volunteer marine rescue, along with Botany Port Hacking member Bruce Bell, who was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia on Australia Day (see Page 34).

"These awards are a valuable opportunity for our nation to thank these volunteers for their commitment and the contribution they make to the safety and wellbeing of the boating community," he said. "These four members are a credit to our organisation. Along with all their fellow volunteers in MRNSW, they deserve our thanks and praise for their service, through which they demonstrate the finest characteristics of the Australian volunteering ethos."



ANTHONY DROVER

Mr Drover has served the volunteer marine sector

with drive and commitment in both NSW and Queensland. After joining the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard's Port Jackson flotilla in 2003, he transferred to Southport on the Gold Coast and later to Marine Rescue Jervis Bay.

He was elected to the MRNSW Board in 2010 and 2012, contributing to the leadership and governance of the new organisation, particularly through his work on the Constitutional Review Committee.

As a member of the MRNSW Training Consultative Group, Mr Drover has played a pivotal role in setting in place the framework for the organisation's professional training curriculum and delivery. A Master 5 and experienced Trainer/ Assessor, Mr Drover has assisted with the development of new training materials and supported activities to strengthen operational capacity across the Illawarra and Monaro regions. In his role as the Training Systems Officer at MR Jervis Bay, he has taken a leading role in training activities, leading to the successful qualification of 33 members in the past two years.



JOHN LYNCH

Mr Lynch joined the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol at Forster-

Tuncurry in 1995 and has a record of exceptional service at both operational and organisational levels. He has served in numerous roles to assist the boating community and contribute to the development of marine rescue capability on NSW waterways.

As Unit Commander for six years, he worked with a dedicated team to develop the Search and Rescue Coordination Centre on the Forster breakwall.

He also held a number of senior and representative roles, including as the Senior Regional Officer North Coast and member of the State Rescue Board accreditation team for three years, delegate to the Mid North Coast Marine Advisory Committee for more than 12 years and Great Lakes Emergency Management Committee delegate for 15 years.

Mr Lynch was elected to the MRNSW Board as the Mid North Coast Regional Director in 2011 and 2013, drawing on his professional finance industry experience to provide sound financial input to Board deliberations.



LES THRELF0

Mr Threlfo has been at the forefront of the emergency services sector

in the Snowy Mountains for more than 15 years, demonstrating leadership and commitment to his community through his tireless work as a member of the Cooma State Emergency Service and Marine Rescue Alpine Lakes. Moving to the Mountains in 2001, he realised the SES was about to close due to lack of members, joined and became Unit Controller, building it up over 12 years to more than 60 members.

Recognising this ability to build and improve volunteer organisations, MRNSW and the NSW Police approached Mr Threlfo in 2011 to establish the first MRNSW unit on inland waterways. He became the founding member and Unit Commander of MR Alpine Lakes, providing the first dedicated marine rescue capability on the treacherous Lake Jindabyne and Lake Eucumbene. Mr Threlfo continues as Unit Commander and since 2011 has built the unit to its current strength of 56 members. A former Police officer, he is recognised for his dedication to his members, sector-wide knowledge and emergency experience.



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Sven Johnson

Member, Swedish Sea Rescue Association.



Saving lives on European waters ... clockwise from above, Sven Johnson throws a line during training, a Swedish Sea Rescue Association vessel sights a refugee boat and a perilous night operation to rescue 94 people from cliffs.

Photos: Andreas Bardell, Sven Johnson & Peter Wixstrom.

Sven Johnson was a member of Marine Rescue Newcastle from 2012 to 2014, before returning to his Swedish home and rejoining the volunteer Swedish Sea Rescue Association, Svenska Sjoraddningsallskapet SSRS. In November, Sven was deployed to Samos in Greece on a mission mounted in response to the refugee crisis that has seen thousands of people drown trying to cross the Mediterranean to Europe.

■ **Two of our rescue vessels were dispatched to Greece for at least six months.** The boats were equipped and serviced in Sweden before being transported by road to Greece. The boats have been manned by eight to 10 SSRS crew from various stations in Sweden in two-week deployments, together with a local crew from the Hellenic Coast Guard (HCG). About 100 crew have been deployed to Greece during the operation.

■ **Our teams have rescued and assisted about 1900 people since the beginning of the**

operation and 250 during my tour. We had an extensive training program where we honed our skills in rescues, person in water, CPR and safety procedures, leaving the base at least once or twice a day for exercises. Almost daily we spotted rubber boats coming from Turkey. On some occasions we had to guide them ashore or just supervise them over a distance that they managed safely by themselves.

■ **To our knowledge, the refugees were picked up at midnight from Turkey, taken to the launch site and loaded on to rubber boats for transport over the Aegean Sea to Samos, a journey of 8-12nm, which took them three to five hours.** They landed their boats - on some occasions guided by the people smuggler, who then returned to Turkey - and got ashore on cliffs and waited for daylight.

■ **One major method of rescuing people off the cliffs was to put crew in the water to swim ashore with a line, pulling a life raft ashore to be used as a**

shuttle transport to the rescue vessel. We trained on this method repeatedly to ensure we could perform it well in poor weather conditions at night. A major problem, especially close to shore, was the need to look out for the numerous lifejackets, plastic bags and rubber rings floating in the water. We had a few occasions where rubber rings got sucked into the water jets, meaning we had to stop the engines. We always worked in pairs and the second vessel would stay offshore with a towline at ready on deck to pull the first vessel to safe waters.

■ **Our team assisted some rubber boats, escorting them in to a safe harbour where people could walk to the collection centre and get registered before they could continue their journey.** Some teams experienced boats that were sinking, where people had to be rescued off boats and transported to shore. On some occasions, unfortunately, the boat had sunk or capsized with people

in the water and deceased people on arrival.

■ **My team was called out on one of the last nights when the HCG had lost radar contact with two targets south of Samos in bad weather with 2-3m swells.** We took two hours to arrive and begin our search. On arrival, we spotted a light on an island; one of the two vessels went to investigate and found 94 people on a cliff, including families with children, around a fire. They had arrived during the night in an ancient lifeboat and been left there by the people smugglers. We transported them to the nearby port of Agathonisi to be taken care of by authorities and Medicin Sans Frontiers. We returned to search the area to ensure there were no more boats or people in distress.

■ **It was a tremendous experience being part of this operation, not only being able to assist people in distress but also to gain experience I can now use in my "normal" duties.**

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Winners ready for an outdoor getaway!



Ready to hit the road ... Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Suzuki Marine Specialised Business Manager Simon Bochenski present Avril Heita with first prize in the inaugural MRNSW Great Outdoor Getaway Art Union, a Haines Seachange 595 Off Road Caravan and VW Amarok Core 4WD Dual Cab. Avril has her first holiday in her prize already planned: "It will definitely be glamping."



Years before she can get behind the wheel ... Paul Lewis and his daughter Aleigha travelled from Crookwell, in the NSW Central West, to collect fourth prize, a Suzuki Swift GL Navigator. The Lewis family bought their winning Art Union ticket from MR Kioloa during their summer holiday. Photo: Florian Glajcar.



Thanks neighbour ... Peter Morley, from Hornsby, bought his ticket from MRNSW Stores Manager Graham Foy, who lives next door and sold the lucky ticket on behalf of MR Middle Harbour.



And the winner is ... Grant Thornton partner Neville Sinclair draws the winning ticket with Commissioner Stacey Tannos at MRNSW Headquarters on April 26. Photo: Ken McManus.

Four volunteers vie for Rotary awards

Emergency services officers of the year announced in July.

Volunteer members from four MRNSW regions have been named as finalists in the 2016 Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards.

Emergency Services Minister David Elliott announced the Awards finalists from six NSW emergency services at an event at NSW Parliament House on June 8.

"It takes a special type of person to work for an emergency service organisation, either as a volunteer or staff member," Mr Elliott said. "It takes someone who is dedicated, selfless, with drive and commitment, and who has the desire to help fellow members of our community. The NSW Government sincerely appreciates your efforts."

The four MRNSW finalists are MR Terrigal Deputy Unit Commander

Czes Lawicki, from the Hunter-Central Coast Region, Life Member Peter Taylor from MR Shoalhaven in the Illawarra Region, new MR Broken Bay Unit Commander Vic Lawrence from Greater Sydney and MR Port Macquarie member Ken Fletcher, from the Mid North Coast.

The four will vie for the honour of being named the Rotary MRNSW Volunteer Officer of the Year and then for the overall Volunteer of the Year award, to be announced at a gala dinner in Sydney on July 23.

Fire and Rescue NSW, the Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service, Volunteer Rescue Association and Ambulance Service of NSW also take part in the awards.

Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey congratulated the four MRNSW finalists.



Emergency Services Minister David Elliott (centre) and emergency services officers at NSW Parliament House.

"These members all have made an important contribution to the leadership of their units in various roles," he said. "It is gratifying to see their service to their communities recognised by those who nominated them and the Rotary panel of judges

who selected the finalists from the six agencies."

Funds raised through the awards support a Rotary Health PhD Research Scholarship investigating Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in emergency services personnel.

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Race safety focus of new yachting initiative

MRNSW keen to work with sailing fraternity to support events on our waters.

A safety briefing for yacht clubs and peak sailing bodies is the first step in a new MRNSW initiative to support race coordination and safety.

Representatives of clubs and organisations including the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club, Yachting Australia and the CYCA SOLAS Trusts, will attend the Briefing at State Headquarters in late June.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos said MRNSW was keen to establish a stronger working relationship with the yachting fraternity.

"We have identified opportunities to assist yacht clubs with the planning and coordination of race safety procedures, including those for competitors making their return journeys after race events," he said.

"We will brief clubs on our operational capabilities, vessel monitoring technology, radio communications and other services."

The event follows the aftermath of this year's Pittwater to Coffs Harbour race, when wild weather hit returning competitors, leading to the death of one sailor, the beaching of *M3* and a triple knockdown for rescue vessel *Port Stephens 40*.

Commissioner Tannos said safety was a joint responsibility for clubs, racers, rescue services and other maritime agencies working together.

The Safety Briefing also will be attended by NSW Police Marine Area Command Marine Search and Rescue Coordinator Sergeant Paul Farquharson and Director of NSW Maritime, Angus Mitchell.



Planning for safety ... Marine Rescue crew members attend an operational briefing ahead of the Sydney-Hobart yacht race.

A number of MRNSW units play a key support role for events such as the Sydney to Hobart yacht race.

Commissioner Tannos said greater coordination could be achieved by encouraging race organisers to contact MRNSW early

in the planning stages of events.

"This will help ensure there is a consistent approach to notifying units, coordinating the use of appropriate marine radio channels, testing yachts' radios and checking communications coverage," he said.

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Saving lives is in Marine Rescue's blood

Members encouraged to roll up sleeves for emergency services challenge.

Marine Rescue NSW is embracing a challenge to save lives on land, as well as the water.

Saving lives is in MRNSW members' blood - and now's their chance to prove it in the Red25 Emergency Services Blood Challenge.

Every year, Australia's emergency services compete by state to donate the most blood during the Emergency Services Blood Challenge.

With many of its personnel witnessing daily the need for blood, the emergency services community truly understands the importance of blood donation and the impact it makes on patients' lives. During last year's challenge, emergency services members registered with Red25 made more than 7000

donations, equating to around 21,000 lives saved.

This friendly competition pits MRNSW against our colleagues in the NSW Police Force, Fire and Rescue NSW, Rural Fire Service, NSW Ambulance, State Emergency Service and CareFlight.

MRNSW Headquarters leapt at the chance to take part in early June, with six staff rolling up their sleeves for the good cause.

Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey, Member Services Manager Mat Smith, IT Director Florian Glajcar, Personal Assistant to the Commissioner Marree Doherty, Fleet Manager Jody Hollow and Corporate Services Director Kate Woods took part.

Deputy Commissioner Storey encouraged all emergency services



Who said they have no heart? MRNSW Headquarters personnel leap into the Red25 Emergency Services Blood Challenge.

members - and particularly MRNSW volunteers - to take up the challenge, which runs until August 31.

"The emergency services family is tight-knit but like most families, we're not shy of a bit of friendly

rivalry and we'll all be out to win," he said.

"I'm keen for all our units to get involved and turn their local blood donor centres from red to blue. This is a great way for us to support a life-saving cause."

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FURUNO

Training staff supporting volunteer learning

New crew take a seachange from meat industry and fireground.

Two new training and education staff have been appointed to MRNSW Headquarters.

Kate Christensen has joined the team as Training Manager and Steve Raymond will be assuming the responsibilities of Regional Training Manager Central while incumbent Jane Shirriff is on maternity leave.

Kate comes to MRNSW following nine years with the not-for-profit National Meat Industry Training Advisory Council, where she was responsible for a training package for industry personnel, from livestock yard workers through to butchers and retailers.

After regularly spending her school holidays on relatives' property near Tamworth, the Sutherland Shire local gained an agricultural degree with a teaching major and joined Meat and Livestock Australia, writing training manuals

and delivering courses on live animal work, including biosecurity.

"It was time for a seachange from the meat industry. We had a boat when I was growing up and I always enjoyed fishing and yabby pumping," she said. "I'm looking forward to meeting our volunteers."

Kate's key focus will be on supporting the management of the MRNSW Registered Training Organisation, training resource quality assurance and scoping additional options to make the training pathway simpler and more user friendly for members.

Steve comes to MRNSW from the NSW Rural Fire Service, where he most recently was engaged in Emergency Management, after 17 years as the Fire Control Officer at Upper Hunter/Liverpool Plains and the Lake Macquarie/Wyong area.

A volunteer with the Braidwood



New training team members, Steve Raymond and Kate Christensen with Assistant Director Chris Butler.

RFS for nine years, he served for five years as Vice-President of the RFS Volunteers Association, representing 70,000-plus volunteers.

"I managed 80 brigades at the Upper Hunter and 36 at Lake Macquarie and training was a large component in both areas,"

he said. "I'm impressed with the variety of members we have and the commitment they make, especially to our 24-hour radio operations. I'm keen to get out working with our volunteers on a day-to-day basis."

A keen sail boater, Steve is joining MR Lake Macquarie.

MRNSW curriculum an Australian benchmark

Volunteer experts play key role in development of training resources.

The MRNSW training curriculum and resources continue to attract interest from our colleagues in other marine rescue services around Australia.

The organisation's professional training materials were showcased at the April meeting of the National Volunteer Marine Search and Rescue Committee in Adelaide.

Representatives of Volunteer Marine Rescue South Australia subsequently visited Headquarters to discuss our comprehensive education programs and Western Australia and Northern Territory services also have expressed interest in adapting the materials for use by their members.

Assistant Director Training and Education Chris Butler said the MRNSW training programs and resources were a benchmark for

other services and jurisdictions.

"We have worked hard with our Volunteer Training Consultative Group and other members who have experience and expertise in training and specific subject areas to produce professional training resources that are clear, accurate and easy for members to use," he said. "I want to thank all those members who have contributed to this painstaking and time-consuming process."

Mr Butler said MRNSW trained above the minimum requirements of the new national Scheme R to ensure its volunteers had the specific knowledge and skills they needed to work safely and competently.

A suite of new and refreshed education resources has been funded by a \$65,480 Emergency



The array of refreshed MRNSW training materials for radio operators, crew and RWC operators.

Volunteer Support Scheme grant.

A bound copy of the resources has been provided for unit libraries and also to unit Training Officers. All documents also are available on OTTER. All new members starting training will be provided a folder, which they can then populate with their various course workbooks and

manuals as they progress along the training pathway. The resources have a standard format, they're easily identifiable and they set out a clear course through our training processes, whether that's from Crew to Leading Crew to Coxswain or Radio Operator to Watch Officer to Search and Rescue Support Officer.

New manager's focus on generating revenue

Grants role an exciting opportunity to have a positive impact.

As a not-for-profit organisation, Marine Rescue NSW is always searching out new sources of funding to help deliver our vital services to the boating community.

This will be the focus of Emily Watson, who has joined MRNSW Headquarters in the newly-created position of Grants Manager.

With experience in the government and not-for-profit sectors, Emily brings a strong understanding of both community-based service providers and funding agencies.

She has a proven track record in stakeholder engagement, securing corporate sponsorship, research and analysis, project management and governance.

Most recently with NSW Family and Community Services, Emily has

worked as a senior Governance Manager with the Audit Office of NSW, Sydney Metro and Sydney Light Rail over the past six years and previously with organisations including the Benevolent Society, Department of State and Regional Development and NSW Health's Aboriginal health branch.

She will now be working closely with our units and Headquarters personnel to develop and manage a robust and effective grants program targeting a range of funding sources, including government and private sector bodies, trusts and foundations.

"I was really excited by the opportunity to work for MRNSW," she said.

"The more I learned about the work undertaken by MRNSW and



Looking forward to becoming a valuable member of MRNSW ... new Grants Manager Emily Watson.

its extensive reach along the NSW coastline and inland, the more I could see the scope of opportunities available to me in my role.

"I'm keen to provide support to our units in seeking funding and exploring options available to attract, retain and grow revenue.

"I bring a personal commitment

to my role. I'm looking forward to becoming a valuable member of MRNSW and having a positive impact on the sustainability of the organisation. I'm also looking forward to getting to know the unit members and working with them to achieve the funding they need to do their jobs."

Units win \$26,000 in government funding

Seven MRNSW units have received Federal Government grants worth a total of more than \$26,000.

The MR Norah Head unit has received a Stronger Communities Program grant of \$7700 from the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development towards its Norah Head Remote Channel Changer project.

The project involves the purchase and installation of remote communications equipment to enhance local marine radio coverage.

Six units have received a total of \$19,000 in 2015 Department of Social Services Volunteer Grants.

About 5300 organisations will benefit from \$20 million in funding under this program, receiving grants of between \$1000 and \$5000.

Social Services Minister Christian

Porter congratulated the units on their successful applications.

"Volunteers help to shape our communities, freely giving their time and skills to benefit others and without the expectation of reward," Mr Porter said.

MR Evans Head will invest \$5000 in tools for its base, while MR Wooli, which operates on solar panels because there is no grid supply to its radio base or wharf, will spend \$1000 on 12 volt power equipment.

MR Coffs Harbour and Lake Macquarie will upgrade their units' computer technology with grants of \$2753 and \$4850 respectively.

The Forster-Tuncurry unit will spend \$3588 on office equipment for its Search and Rescue Coordination Centre on the Forster breakwall and MR Hawkesbury will commit its \$1823 grant to volunteer training.

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ON THE RADAR

Things to look out for

Financial transition project progressing well

New cloud-based system will save unit Treasurers time and effort.

The redevelopment of the MRNSW accounting system is progressing, in a transition that will help save unit Treasurers both time and effort.

MRNSW is moving its financial systems from MYOB to the new cloud-based NetSuite system.

Chief Financial Officer Alan Skelley said the project, drawing together the resources of MRNSW auditors Grant Thornton, NetSuite specialists and MRNSW Finance and Information Technology personnel, was progressing well.

“Our chart of accounts has now been replicated in the NetSuite system and we have started exporting historical data from MYOB,” Mr Skelley said.

“This will be the most consuming

part of the changeover, as the project team needs to ensure all this data is accurate before it is converted to a format suitable for us to use in the new accounting system.”

All financial records from units and Headquarters dating back to the establishment of MRNSW will be transferred to the new system, providing a comprehensive picture of the organisation's ongoing financial position and allowing easy comparisons from year to year.

As NetSuite is a cloud-based system, Treasurers will be able to use an iPad, other tablet and/or smartphone, as well as a computer, to access data from any location.

“The system allows you to easily upload documents such as fixed

asset invoices or grant-related expenditure into the system by scanning or photographing them,” Mr Skelley said.

“One benefit that will definitely save our Treasurers time and hassle is that Headquarters will be able to access documents, removing the need for us to take up their time chasing this sort of information at a later date.”

He said unit Treasurers had provided an enthusiastic response to a survey to help the transition team understand their experience and expertise.

“The responses we have received to date indicate that we have an experienced and willing team, with many of our Treasurers having accounting and bookkeeping

backgrounds. A number of Treasurers also have generously put up their hands to help support less experienced Treasurers within their regions after the system is rolled out,” he said.

NetSuite training will occur in stages across the MRNSW regions, with the units requiring least support first off the rank to migrate to the new system. The training schedule will be issued as soon as possible.

Mr Skelley said at this stage, it was envisaged that the Greater Sydney and Illawarra regions' training would be held first, at the MRNSW Headquarters at Cronulla, followed by the four remaining regions at suitable locations to be determined.



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New bling for jet ski trailers, training vans



Marine Rescue Trial Bay Rescue Water Craft operator Josh Woodhead (*above*) was one of the first to secure a set of the new MRNSW-branded trailer plates, released in March.

Josh adorned his own jet ski trailer with the plates, while a number of MRNSW units also are changing to the new trailer bling.

The MRNSW mobile training vans and trailers for Rescue Water Craft and the two X-Ray vessels also are displaying the new plates.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos thanked NSW Roads and Maritime Services and myPlates for developing the new trailer plates and directing the proceeds to MRNSW.

Trailer owners around the State are being encouraged to make the shift, with RMS inserting advertisements for the new plates in all annual registration renewal notices for a year. There is a one-off fee of \$149 for redesigned plates. Headquarters is reimbursing units the cost of plates for their trailers.



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Spotlight on benefits of volunteering

Our members gain valuable insights at national conference.

Australia's volunteers contribute a conservative \$17 billion worth of value to our national economy - but what is less well recognised is the value to the individual of their volunteering experience.

The benefits of volunteering were highlighted at the 16th National Volunteering Conference in Canberra in April.

Seven MRNSW volunteers attended this year's conference with Member Services Manager Mat Smith: Gabrielle Boermans (Ulladulla), Rebekha Brown (Crowdy Harrington), Vicki Buchanan (Tuggerah Lakes), Lyndy Powell (Middle Harbour), Zoe Tylee (Lake Macquarie), Simon Woodward (Cottage Point) and Nick Wythe (Point Danger).

"Quite often we are keen to measure the impact volunteering has on the broader community, but it's not often we consider the benefits it has on the individual volunteer," Mr Smith said.

"It was interesting to discover

that 93 per cent of volunteers saw personal positive changes as a result of their volunteering efforts. The most common improved skills identified included patience (60 per cent), teamwork (55 per cent) and problem solving abilities (40 per cent)."

Mr Smith said the MRNSW team had attended an insightful presentation from University of Canberra Associate Professor Dr Thomas Nielsen, whose studies had helped demonstrate that giving and providing service to others directly increased your own wellbeing and sense of fulfilment.

"He showed that the positive impact extended beyond mental health to having a direct impact on your physical health via the different chemical responses within your body.

"This fulfilment often prompts people to want to volunteer and help others more and more. But while this is fulfilling, the important thing is that you must also take good care



Mat Smith, Gabrielle Boermans, Nick Wythe, Zoe Tylee, Lyndy Powell, Vicki Buchanan, Rebekha Brown and Simon Woodward flying the MRNSW flag at the 16th National Volunteering Conference.

of yourself at the same time.

"Our members need to ensure they take the time to do the things that bring them joy, like spending time with their families and friends, undertaking hobbies and getting good rest.

"If you're not taking care of yourself, you are likely to start feeling drained and resentful of the volunteering work that brought you so much fulfilment in the first place.

"It's OK to put yourself first.

"If anything, Dr Nielsen's research indicated that this is a must and that when you do, you will continue to reap the mental and physical benefits of helping others."

Members can read more about Dr Nielsen's research at <http://www.thomaswnielsen.net/>

Mr Smith said the conference heard that 86 per cent of volunteer organisations needed more volunteers but commonly struggled to find enough suitable members.

Technology showcase for rescue experts

Marine Rescue NSW's technological solutions to help keep boaters safer on the water were showcased at a forum of Trans-Tasman search and rescue specialists on the Gold Coast in June.

The Australia and New Zealand Search & Rescue Conference brings together members of the search and rescue community to share new ideas, highlight best practice and discuss recent events.

Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey led the Technology and Operations forum, during which Emergency Systems Manager Andrew Cribb addressed delegates on the online Seahawk vessel logging and tracking system and the

MarineRescue mobile app.

The integrated technology was purpose-developed, providing rescue crews with swift access to vessel and location information vital to an emergency search operation.

When minutes can mean the difference between a successful rescue and a tragedy, embracing technology to work smarter helps MRNSW fulfil its mission to save lives on the water.

Deputy Commissioner Storey said the MRNSW technology had attracted widespread interest from other rescue services at ANZSAR.

"We also had extensive displays of our operational, training and promotional resources, including a Rescue Water Craft and its



Emergency Systems Manager Andrew Cribb outlines the integrated MRNSW technology at the Australia and New Zealand Search & Rescue Conference.

dedicated crew Personal Protective Equipment, a mobile education trailer, marquee and our Raymarine navigation training stations, which

provided an impressive introduction to MRNSW as a modern, professional emergency service," he said.

What we've been up to



Crashing through ... Port Stephens 40 (Daniel Thain), soon to be retired after 17 years' service and the new Steber 38 Port Stephens 31 (John Thompson) power towards their home base under leaden skies ahead of the East Coast Low storms on the first weekend in June. (See story Page 29.) Photo: Geoff Clark.



Well deserved recognition ... Cowper MP Luke Hartsuyker presents MR Port Macquarie Assistant Treasurer Wendy Young with a Federal Member's Award for her 23 years' service (see story Page 25).



Meet MRNSW members of MR Evans Head were an eye-catching presence at Beef Meets Reef, marching in the street parade and greeting the public at their colourful street stand (see story Page 23).



That's a lot of time ... Commissioner Stacey Tannos and Charlestown MP Jodie Harrison present 15 Lake Macquarie members with awards and National Medals for 180 years' service.



Watching over boaters ... outgoing MR Cape Byron Deputy Unit Commander Clare Hamilton and Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey at the unit base below the Byron Bay lighthouse.

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PROUD TO SUPPORT MARINE RESCUE NEW SOUTH WALES

New Ballina tower rising over breakwall

Building team working hard to meet October completion date.

Thanks to good weather conditions and hard work from the project team, construction is progressing quickly on the new MR Ballina radio tower and unit base.

Glazed bricks, chosen for their hardiness in the wearing seaside conditions, are now being laid and the building could be finished as early as October.

Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey and Emergency Systems Manager Andrew Cribb visited the work site with Unit Commander John Donoghue to inspect progress on the tower in early June.

Building work began on the \$2.28 million project on February 1.

Ballina Shire Council project manager Chris Allison said work was "going along well".

He said he expected the car parking, landscaping and demolition of the old leaning tower building would be finished by October or November.



Unit Commander John Donoghue, Civil Services Group's Chris Allison, MRNSW Emergency Systems Manager Andrew Cribb, Karera Communications' Trevor Lee and Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey inspect progress on the new MR Ballina unit.

The new, state-of-the-art building has been designed by architects Dominic Finlay Jones and is being built by Woollam Constructions.

It is under construction on the northern breakwall of the Richmond

River and will have better views of the ocean and the river than the old tower.

Council says it has supported the project because it will improve safety for commercial and

recreational fishing and boost the regional economy.

Council is publishing time-lapse videos of the construction on its website each week. To see the videos, visit ballina.nsw.gov.au

No beef with surprise Vice Regal visit to reef

NSW Governor drops in to thank Evans Head volunteers for their work.

Governor of NSW, General David Hurley and his wife Linda caught Unit Commander Karin Brown and the volunteers on duty at MR Evans Head by surprise when they paid an impromptu visit to the unit's radio base on Sunday, May 22.

The Vice Regal couple were in the Northern Rivers Region to officially launch 2016 Casino Beef Week.

After opening Evans Head's annual drawcard event, Beef Meets Reef, General and Mrs Hurley dropped by the unit base to meet the volunteers and thank them for their work.

UC Brown said the pair had been impressed not only with the unit's facility and operations but also the amazing views of the village, bar, river, beaches and ocean.

Children were the major focus of Beef Meets Reef, with activities including face painting, camel rides and a jumping castle, while the adults enjoyed food stalls, markets and an amazing street car and hot rod display.

Volunteers from the Evans Head unit joined in the street parade, which was the highlight of the day's celebrations, along with members of Surf Life Saving, Fire and Rescue NSW and service organisations, local schools, a pipe band and others.

The unit had a high-profile presence with the region's eye-catching marquee and mobile classroom van attracting a great deal of interest from the public, helping build greater awareness of



Governor of NSW General David Hurley and his wife Linda meet MR Evans Head UC Karin Brown during their impromptu visit to the unit.

the unit and its volunteers' work to serve the community.

UC Brown thanked members for their help with organising the unit's participation in the parade, working on the unit's

stand and packing up after the event.

"A special thanks, too, to the public for their financial support and praise for our cause," she said.

Bill Wardrobe

Five services in marathon relay operation

Couple injured when cruiser broadsided on challenging Clarence River bar.

An elderly couple who sustained injuries when their 16m cruiser was struck by large swells on the Clarence River bar were brought safely to shore in a relay rescue operation stretching into the early hours of the morning in late May.

The eight-hour operation, which finished at 1.30am, involved resources and crews from three MRNSW units, the Police Marine Area Command, Ports Authority at Iluka-Yamba, NSW Ambulance and Westpac Rescue Helicopter.

The cruiser was hit broadside twice, injuring the two people on board as they were tossed around in the cabin.

A crew from MR Iluka-Yamba immediately prepared rescue vessel *Iluka Yamba 30* to assist and the Ports Authority cutter was placed on standby. The Westpac helicopter provided aerial support, locating the cruiser and lighting up the bar.

The cruiser skipper, who had

suffered a head injury, decided not to try to re-enter the river and headed south to anchor at North Solitary Island, off Wooli.

With the two vessels from Iluka-Yamba stood down, *Woolgoolga 30* was deployed, with MRNSW and Police personnel on board, to meet the cruiser and transfer the boaters to shore for medical treatment.

Mid North Coast Regional Controller John Murray threaded *WO 30* through the islands and reefs to reach the vessel on the eastern side of North Solitary Island. In difficult conditions with the prevailing strong winds and seas, Sergeant Don Stewart and Senior Constable Josh Shaw transferred to the cruiser to give immediate first aid and take control of the vessel.

In the testing conditions, it was decided to continue on to Coffs Harbour.

Further south again, a crew from MR Coffs Harbour was deployed on



MRNSW and Police personnel were deployed aboard *Woolgoolga 30* to transfer two injured boaters to shore for treatment.

board *Coffs 30* to meet the cruiser north of Split Solitary Island and provide a safety escort into Coffs.

After a 60nm journey, the cruiser was assisted to a berth at the public wharf in the Coffs Marina about 1.30am, with waiting paramedics assessing the injured couple before transporting them to hospital.

Vital communications port for the operation was provided by Barry Storey and Ross Minchin at MR Iluka Yamba before handing over to John

Lang at Coffs Harbour.

Deputy Commissioner Dean Storey praised the skill and commitment of all personnel involved in the marathon operation in the dark and difficult conditions.

"The cooperation and coordination between the MRNSW and Police crews, in particular, is a testament to the enormous value of the joint training exercises we regularly undertake along the NSW coastline," he said.

Risk management focus on Northern Rivers

AMSA workshop highlights requirements under national legislation.

Members of four Northern Rivers units gathered at MR Point Danger for an Australian Maritime Safety Authority risk management presentation in May.

AMSA Liaison Officer Justin Williams conducted the Commercial Vessel Risk and Safety Management System Workshop at the unit's Duranbah Beach training centre.

Senior members travelled north from the Wooli, Ballina and Evans Head units to attend, along with their Point Danger hosts.

Northern Rivers Regional Controller Stephen Reading and Regional Training Manager North Rodney Page also attended the day's sessions.

The workshop helped strengthen the four units' awareness of

the need for appropriate safety mechanisms to manage the risks inherent in operating in ever-changing weather and water conditions.

Under national legislation, all domestic commercial vessels, including MRNSW rescue boats, are required to have individually-tailored Safety Management Systems (SMS).

Marine Rescue's comprehensive SMS documentation for its vessels provides vital information for crews, such as vessel and contact details, risk assessments, the owner and master's responsibilities and authorities, personnel requirements, procedures for onboard operations, emergency preparedness, procedures in the event of hazardous occurrences and



AMSA Liaison Officer Justin Williams presents a risk management workshop for Northern Rivers units at MR Point Danger.

maintenance regimes.

The AMSA workshop helped units to identify potential risks, develop strategies to minimise these and structure their vessels' SMS accordingly.

Feedback on the day's session has been positive, with units reporting a greater understanding of their risk management responsibilities.

Nick Wythe & Stephen Reading

\$150,000 donation for new rescue vessel

Westport Club's welcome boost for Port Macquarie fundraising campaign.

Marine Rescue Port Macquarie has received a major funding injection of \$150,000 from the Westport Club towards the cost of its new offshore rescue vessel, due for delivery in July.

The Westport Club's generous donation will go directly towards the \$840,000 cost of the Steber 38.

Club General Manager Anthony Westman presented unit members with a cheque for the funding on June 6, telling them how much the club appreciated their work to help keep the community safe and save lives on the water.

Unit Commander Neil Yates said the unit had set an ambitious \$200,000 fundraising goal to help pay for the replacement for its 17-year-old Steber 38.

"This fantastic donation has taken a tremendous load off

the shoulders of our volunteers, who work tirelessly to fundraise for our unit, in addition to their emergency response and training commitments," he said. "On behalf of all our volunteers, I want to thank the Westport Club for its extraordinary generosity."

The Westport Club Community and Sports Manager Jenny Edmunds praised the tenacity and commitment shown by the unit's volunteers to raise the necessary funds on behalf of the community.

"It is quite remarkable how much this volunteer organisation cares for and commits time to the safety of our local community and I am beyond delighted to see our funds being put to such exceptional use," she said.

Meanwhile, it is gratifying to see the unit's hard-working assistant



The Westport Club's Jenny Edmunds and Anthony Westman present a cheque for \$150,000 to MR Port Macquarie UC Neil Yates and unit members. Photo: Port Macquarie News.

treasurer and Radio Club coordinator Wendy Young recognised for her commitment. Wendy joined the former Sea Rescue service in 1993 and has held many roles, including Radio Operator, Treasurer and Sea Rescue Vice President.

Cowper MP Luke Hartsuyker

has presented a Federal Member's Award to Wendy in recognition of her outstanding volunteer record.

Wendy also was named as one of three finalists for the local Rotary Emergency Service Volunteer of the Year awards in April.

Neil Yates

Hot property and cold fish at Coffs Harbour

Marine Rescue Coffs Harbour has carefully watched over competitors in five ocean events, thrown its trainees in at the deep end and been lured into receiving stolen property in recent months.

Coffs 30 conducted marshalling and escort duties for the Banana Coast Union Triathlon and Coffs Coast Outrigger Canoe Club marathon race on the same day in March, with the crew even managing two quick diversions to assist a yacht and a cuddly cabin with battery problems.

The Easter Fishing Classic saw members involved in the usual frenetic activity in the watch room, handling 264 vessel Log Ons with 470 people on board over three days, as well as at the fish cleaning tables. The fish generously donated by the competitors netted the unit close to \$6000 at the charity auction. This was made possible with the ongoing support

of auctioneer Glenn Aylward, from Aylward Auctioneers, the Coffs Harbour Deep Sea Fishing Club and Faircloth & Reynolds, which provided the cool room.

Coffs 30 also provided a safety watch for the Coffs Coast Ocean Swims and took part in the NSW Ambulance Marine X-treme exercises, assisted by the crew of *Woolgoolga 30*.

Two unit members took part in a TAFE National Volunteer Week promotion in early May.

Three recent rescue operations also stand out. In the first, night duty Radio Operator David Flemington received a phone call from a yacht off Brooms Head with broken shrouds and no motor.

David spent the night on the radio and phone, keeping in contact with the yacht as it drifted closer to shore, as well as with the crew of *Iluka Yamba 30*, who were tasked to the operation. In a sterling effort, he



In the drink ... MR Coffs Harbour member Trevor Ryan (right) goes the extra mile to help recover an overturned runabout.

continued monitoring the operation until the MR *Iluka Yamba* base opened at 5.45am.

When a small runabout overturned off Muttonbird Island, the two occupants were rescued by Surf Life Saving jet skis. *Coffs 30* was tasked to retrieve the boat. The tow back to the boat ramp and retrieval were achieved with some land-based assistance from Police Marine Area Command officers, with our

trainee crew member Trevor Ryan ending up taking a swim to help get the boat on to land.

The strangest assist was when *Coffs 30* was asked to receive stolen property and stow it away carefully – by MAC! Police launch *Fearless* retrieved a stolen 8.5m party pontoon off Urunga and after a difficult tow required our assistance to raft it up to the Police Wharf.

Lindy Powells



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Troubled trawler towed to safe Haven

Mid North Coast units' search exercise 'tremendously beneficial'.

The weather was remarkably mild in the months leading up to winter, with a healthy number of vessels still on our waterways.

This led to several calls for assistance, mostly due to mechanical or battery problems.

Radio Operator Ken Clancy took a call for help from a skipper's wife requesting help for her husband, whose 10.6m fishing trawler had broken down with mechanical problems 12nm east of Camden Haven and was drifting south.

Skipper Rob Sargent and crew Brian Burton, Gordon Gray and Ross Davidson were quickly deployed on *Camden Haven 30*, towing the larger trawler back safely in a major operation over three hours.

The emergency proved a real-life test for member Graeme McKay, who was undergoing his final assessment for his Radio Operator qualification at the time and provided valuable communications support to Ken.

Our unit hosted the annual Mid North Coast Region Search and Rescue Exercise on May 14 and 15.

The SAREX brought together 40 members from the Coffs Harbour, Trial Bay, Port Macquarie, Camden Haven, Crowdy Harrington, Forster-Tuncurry, Woolgoolga and Nambucca units, along with 10 representatives from Surf Life Saving and officers from the Coffs Harbour Police Marine Area Command (MAC).



Marine Rescue and Surf Life Saving crews head out in glassy conditions for the Mid North Coast Regional Search and Rescue Exercise. Photo: Michael Davis, on board *On Scene Command* vessel *PM 30*.

The weekend began at the North Haven Bowling Club, where MAC's NSW Marine Search and Rescue Coordinator Sergeant Paul Farquharson, MRNSW Mid North Coast Regional Controller John Murray and Regional Training Manager Rodney Page gave presentations on the relevant search and rescue agencies' responsibilities, multi-asset and agency operations, search planning and chart work.

On Sunday, a Search and Rescue Coordination Centre was set up at our base. Rescue boats from the Port Macquarie, Camden Haven, Crowdy Harrington and Forster-Tuncurry units, as well as MRNSW and Surf Rescue Water Craft and Surf IRBs, were given a search scenario involving a vessel that had



MR Camden Haven's Rob Sargent and Gordon Gray watch over the tow line for a 10.6m stranded trawler the crew returned to shore.

overturned while returning from a fishing trip 4nm north-east of Camden Haven, with two people in the water. In excellent conditions with glassy water and a slight breeze, crews headed offshore to conduct a grid search north of the Camden Haven River for two

mannequins deployed earlier in the morning and any flotsam or debris. The RWCs and IRBs searched the shoreline north as far as Lake Cathie for any targets that drifted inshore.

The exercise was of tremendous benefit for all involved.

John Mountier



Charting their success ... John Peers, John Single and Kevin Nicholls put their search and rescue planning skills to the test.



Home from the sea ... *Forster 30* returns to the Camden Haven unit's base at the conclusion of the SAREX. Photo: Michael Davis.



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MAKING WAVES

Mid North Coast News

Crowdy crew quick to catamaran capsize

Four kids rescued in two operations.



Samantha Lawson, Eva Arambala and Tia Lawson, safe after their Hobie Cat capsized, with rescue crew members Kevin Bailey, John Peers and Aaron Orton on board Crowdy 30. Photo: Keith Richardson.

Crews at MR Crowdy Harrington have demonstrated their versatility and skill in recent months, returning boaters on board a runabout, yacht and Hobie Cat to safety.

The unit has also trained with dolphins acting as an escort for the rescue vessel.

Two children were among boaters rescued in two emergency operations on April 22. Just before 1pm, the unit received a call for help from a boat that had lost battery power 3nm off Old Bar, about 11nm south of Crowdy Head.

Crowdy 30, with Skipper John Peers, Kevin Bailey, Chris Burdett and Aaron Orton on board, was quickly on the scene.

The crew used the vessel's battery pack to jump start the stricken vessel and get it under way but it soon ran out of power again and was subsequently towed back to Crowdy Harbour just as a southerly was hitting.

Unit Commander Keith

Richardson, who was on the breakwall as CB 30 berthed, noticed that a Hobie Cat with two adults and two children appeared to have capsized on the bay about half a nautical mile offshore, with another vessel assisting.

As he alerted the CB 30 crew to the emergency, a family member of the Hobie Cat crew arrived at the rescue vessel seeking urgent help.

CB 30 rapidly headed to the scene, taking two young girls and a woman on board before towing the boat, which had broken a stay, to Crowdy Beach.

UC Richardson congratulated the crew, along with Radio Operator Morrie Agius and Watch Officer Bek Brown, who provided vital communications support.

In other operations, crews rescued a 5.5m runabout with five people on board, including two children under five, and a yacht that was becalmed and then suffered engine failure.

Kevin Nicholls

Pt Stephens welcomes latest vessel to fleet

Widow names new \$850,000 Steber after unit's foundation member.

June has proven a big month for MR Port Stephens as it welcomes its new rescue vessel, *Port Stephens 31* - the 66th vessel to be delivered, at a total cost of \$15.5 million, under the MRNSW fleet modernisation program.

The \$850,000 11.5 metre Steber, built by Steber International at Taree, was accompanied in a sail past in Port Stephens by Police and other emergency services boats and a Westpac Rescue Helicopter, ahead of its June 25 commissioning ceremony.

A migrating whale even put on a spectacular welcoming display for the vessel's delivery crew.

The Steber replaces *Port Stephens 40 (Danial Thain)*, which has given sterling service to the unit since 1999.

Unit Commander Colin Cahill said *Danial Thain* had been a wonderful asset over 17 years.

"It has now reached the end of its economic life as a rescue vessel, although it still has plenty to offer for other purposes," he said. "It is virtually unsinkable, as we found out earlier this year when it survived



Smile ... Port Stephens volunteers join dignitaries, boat builder Alan Steber and Steber International staff as the newest vessel in the fleet, *Port Stephens 31*, is readied to enter the water for the first time.

three knockdowns. However, the time has now come for us to retire *Danial Thain* and we are looking forward to deploying our new boat."

PS 31 has been named after the late John Thompson, who was a member of the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol and subsequently MRNSW for 44 years until his death in 2012. He was responsible for the establishment of the Port Stephens Division after he and his wife Monica

moved to Nelson Bay in 1982.

In a moving ceremony at Taree on May 23, Monica officially named the new vessel as it entered the water for the first time ahead of its sea trials. The event was attended by members of MR Port Stephens and Mid North Coast Region units, along with a number of dignitaries.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos attended the unit's April monthly meeting. He presented

Commissioner's Commendations for Courage and Commissioner's Citations to the boat crew and radio operators who were involved in the rescue of two men on a yacht during the April 2015 storms.

UC Cahill said all members appreciated the Commissioner's visit, especially his personal presentation of the awards to the boat crew and radio operators.

Colin Cahill

'Doylo' to the rescue for Norah Head unit

The Doylson Wyee RSL Club has come to the rescue of MR Norah Head, helping ensure the unit's rescue vessel can be on the scene of an emergency in swift time.

The 'Doylo' has provided a club grant for \$4061 for much-needed repairs to the tractor used to launch and retrieve *Norah Head 20*.

The tractor has been completely rebuilt, thanks to a wonderful restoration by Doylson Welding.

The 'Doylo' continues to provide generous support to MR Norah Head each year and we are very appreciative of its efforts for the unit, as well as the community.

NH 20 and the tractor are

currently stored off-site, due to an engineer's report that the apron in front of our base, where they are usually kept, is susceptible to collapse in a major storm or inclement weather. Other options, including building a new boat/tractor shed are being investigated.

Jim Thomson has taken over as the unit's Training Systems Officer from Peter Hazeltine, who unfortunately had to step down due to other commitments.

Jim joined the unit in 2015 with a wealth of knowledge. He has spent the past 25 years in industry training and has also worked for local government and in the timber



MR Norah Head UC Trevor Burkett and DUC Matt Bade thank Doylson-Wyee RSL Club Director Tony Twomey for the club's ongoing support. Photo: Lee Deacon.

industry. Jim currently works as a community services case worker. Best wishes to Deputy Unit

Commander Matt Bade, who has recently undergone back surgery. *Lee Deacon*

Community visits help unit raise its profile

Tuggerah Lakes revamps its catering van to provide extra shelter.

After spending several months basking in the warm weather, the autumn cool provided opportunities for members of MR Tuggerah Lakes to visit several local community groups and upgrade unit resources.

These visits are valuable chances to raise the profile of the unit and build awareness of the services the volunteers provide the community.

A member of both MR Tuggerah Lakes and The Entrance Lions Club, Greg Lazarus, invited members Vicki Buchanan and Stewart Masters to address the Lions Club, which subsequently presented a much-appreciated donation.

Unit Commander Tony Younglove recently spoke to the Toukley Senior Citizens' Club, outlining MRNSW services.

Sue Younglove visited the

Red Cross Ladies Auxiliary at Cooranbong for a morning tea and brief talk.

Residents of Berkeley Village visited the unit's North Base and enjoyed a turn on rescue vessels *Tuggerah Lakes 20* and *TL 21*.

The residents were treated to morning tea and a barbecue lunch, which was accompanied by many laughs.

Several unit members took part in the annual commemorative service held by the Tuggerah Lakes branch of the National Servicemen's Association at North Entrance on May 14.

The service is held to remember the National Servicemen lost during and since the Vietnam War.

The unit has continued upgrading the catering caravan it uses at community functions and charity



Members of MR Tuggerah Lakes attended the annual commemorative service for National Servicemen.

events around the Central Coast.

The van's interior had been revamped earlier.

The exterior has recently been painted and a new two-metre extendable awning attached to the front, affording extra shelter not only for customers but also those

working inside.

In a major training exercise aimed at helping to build the unit's capability, Tony Younglove, Stewart Masters and two crew recently conducted offshore operations on board *TL 20* for the first time.

Sue Younglove

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National honour for century of volunteering

Fishing clubs support Central Coast unit with funds and building work.

Five volunteer members of Marine Rescue Central Coast have been recognised for more than a century's diligent service.

At a ceremony attended by a large number of members and family at the Point Clare base on April 31, Robertson MP Lucy Wicks presented three volunteers with the National Medal for 15 years' service and another two with clasps to the Medal, acknowledging their contribution over 25 and 35 years.

Ms Wicks said the honours were richly deserved.

"Each of the three new (National Medal) recipients, Alan Howes, Anthony Porter and Brian Warburton, has selflessly served the community on the Central Coast for at least 15 years," she said. "It is an honour to pay tribute to their dedication to

Marine Rescue and to the safety of boaters in our area. Al Morris has served a further 10 years since receiving his National Medal and has now achieved 25 years' service and Norm Smith has served 20 years since receiving his Medal and has now completed an extraordinary 35 years' volunteer service.

"The awarding of these medals and clasps is to enable the community to say thank you for the services rendered."

Two local fishing clubs have made generous contributions to the unit. Ettalong Bowling Club Fishing Club President Cliff Thompson presented Unit Commander Roger Palmer with \$1000 towards the running costs of the unit's rescue vessels. The Bloody Seagulls Fishing Club built an all-weather extension to the unit's



105 years' service ... National Medal recipients Anthony Porter, Alan Howes, Brian Warburton, Al Morris and Norm Smith.

outdoor BBQ facilities. The BBQ is put to good use catering for the many visiting groups that tour the unit base and vessels. Both fishing clubs enjoy group membership of the unit's Radio Club.

Fundraising is always front of mind. The unit aims to generate \$150,000 a year towards its

operational costs. Art Union sales raised \$9000 and a new boat raffle is now under way.

With only one nomination for each role, Unit Commander Roger Palmer will continue for a second term and Geoff Hawes has been elevated to Deputy Unit Commander.

Ron Cole



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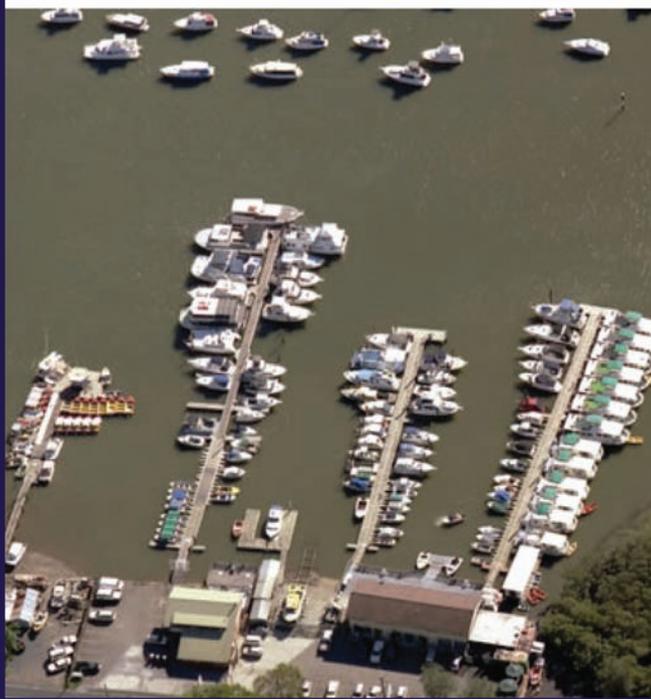


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MAKING WAVES

Greater Sydney News

Broken Bay boosts its training strength

Members shine in regional courses.



Members take part in a regional sea survival training course at MR Broken Bay, monitored by the crew of *Broken Bay 20*.

A concerted effort to increase the training capability of MR Broken Bay is helping meet the course demand from new recruits and existing members seeking to upgrade their qualifications.

The unit's Training Officers, Stuart Spurduti and Keren Muir McCarey, are working closely with the unit's members to support their training.

Damian Fehon and Mark Nuttall have successfully completed their operational assessments to gain their Marine Rescue Coxswain rating and it is hoped more members will gain this qualification over the coming months.

A number of Broken Bay members have also completed the Commercial Coxswain ticket, most recently Mark Nuttall. In addition to operating his own business, Mark also skippers water taxis on Sydney Harbour to gain more experience on the water. A former pilot and observer with the New Zealand Coast Guard's air wing, Mark brings a great deal of experience and enthusiasm to the unit.

Regional Training Manager Central Jane Shirriff has validated Damien Fehon as a Regional Trainer for two courses, firefighting on board a vessel and sea survival.

Twenty-three crew members successfully completed these courses during a recent weekend regional training activity. Thirteen crew undertook the firefighting course on the first day, with 10 succeeding in the sea survival course the following day.

The safety support vessel for this course was crewed by Joh Vos, Antony Hendel and Zubin Irani, monitoring the wellbeing of members completing life raft and other in-water exercises.

These courses were a great networking opportunity for members, with volunteers from units including Terrey Hills, Cottage Point and as far afield as Trial Bay taking part.

MRNSW Trainer/Assessors need a Certificate IV TAE in Training and Assessment and to hold the qualification they are teaching.

Keren Muir McCarey

Minister on board for rescue introduction

Official party tours new Sydney vessel to learn about members' work.

Emergency Services Minister David Elliott and members of his staff were introduced to the work of MRNSW crews during a recent inspection of one of the newest vessels in the rescue fleet.

The Minister and seven staff boarded *Cottage Point 30* at the Man o' War steps alongside the Sydney Opera House to learn more about our vessels and operations.

Commissioner Stacey Tannos, MR Cottage Point Unit Commander Paul Millar, Cottage Point Duty Officers Chris Gillett and David White and MR Port Jackson Unit Commander David Hand accompanied the official party for a journey on the harbour.

UC Millar gave the visitors a safety induction, highlighting the importance of lifejackets as a vital safety measure, before familiarising them with the features and operation of the new Sailfish.

"We discovered some had boat licences and put them on the helm to feel first-hand what it is like to

drive a 40-foot boat," he said. "We placed our members in different positions to demonstrate the equipment we have on board to our guests. The hour passed too quickly and we returned them safely to the Man o' War Steps, where they departed with smiles, ready to tell everyone what they had just done."

Mr Elliott said one of his favourite things to do as the Minister for Emergency Services was to get out of the office and meet frontline volunteers.

"I eagerly accepted an offer from my long-time friend David Hand, the Unit Commander of Marine Rescue Port Jackson and Cottage Point Unit Commander Paul Millar to inspect the brand new 12m rescue vessel. We were shown the thermal imaging cameras and the process volunteers use when locating and assisting a vessel in distress. I got a chance to sit behind the wheel, which was fantastic.

"Whether it's responding to



Emergency Services Minister David Elliott and MRNSW Commissioner Stacey Tannos aboard *Cottage Point 30* on Sydney Harbour.

boaters in distress or any other emergency, the community can be assured that their Marine Rescue volunteers are equipped with the best resources to help them.

"On June 24, I will attend the commissioning of another new rescue vessel at Port Stephens."

Commissioner Tannos thanked the Minister and his staff for their

commitment to learning about the roles of MRNSW volunteers.

"The Minister has always been a staunch supporter and shown great interest in the work of Marine Rescue NSW. He was keen to gain a greater personal understanding of the skills and training of our members and the risks they face in their roles on the water," he said.

Deputy one of 50 faces of Northern Beaches

Marine Rescue Cottage Point Deputy Unit Commander Luke Andrews is one of 50 faces featured in a photographic portrait celebrating Sydney's Northern Beaches community and raising funds for a local children's charity.

Jennifer Polixenni Brankin's 50 Faces: A Portrait of the Northern Beaches exhibition and accompanying portrait book were funded by a Warringah Council cultural grant and are raising funds for Bear Cottage.

The professional photographer met Luke at the MR Cottage Point base.

"The day of our shoot was fast and furious as it was sprinkling with rain," she said. "Luke was friendly and helpful and showed me around.

I didn't realise how much training was involved to be a Marine Rescue volunteer."

Luke's profile in 50 Faces tells of his introduction to MRNSW after buying a boat and joining the Cottage Point unit, giving him the opportunity to protect the community while learning.

Luke said it had been an honour to represent MRNSW in 50 Faces and help raise funds for Bear Cottage at Manly, given its great work for children with life-threatening illness.

"The exhibition itself showcased 50 people contributing significantly to the community, from nurses volunteering their own time to care for sick children through to people working on making a difference



One face ... Cottage Point DUC Luke Andrews features in a portrait of the Northern Beaches community. Photo: Jennifer Polixenni Brankin.

to climate change and people dedicating their lives to fundraising for cancer cures," he said.

"It was certainly humbling, as Marine Rescue volunteer, to be put in the same group of people.

"I hope that my participation in the exhibition has raised the profile of MRNSW on the Northern Beaches, so people know a little more about what we do and why we do it."

Prestigious award for Botany Life Member

Mass search operations mounted for two fishermen missing in Sydney's south.

Marine Rescue Botany Port Hacking volunteer Bruce Bell has been awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in honour of his 33-year commitment to volunteer marine rescue and the Botany Bay community.

A Life Member of MRNSW, Mr Bell initially joined the Coast Guard in 1983, serving in numerous roles, including coxswain, vessel master, Unit Commander and training officer.

In 1994, he and his wife were on their own boat when they were called to help rescue school students travelling to a Norfolk Island Anzac Day ceremony when their plane ditched into Botany Bay soon after take-off.

Mr Bell told the *Liverpool City Champion* he was surprised to receive the honour.

"We just like helping people out and also passing on knowledge. You enjoy what you are doing and it just becomes part of your life," he said.



Three decades of service ... Bruce Bell OAM. Photo: Simon Bennett, *Liverpool City Champion*.

Crews from MR Botany Port Hacking and three other units joined comprehensive searches for two missing men. Vessels from Botany Port Hacking, Middle Harbour, Port Jackson and Port Kembla, along with Police and Roads and Maritime Services boats, PolAir and Police divers, searched off Voodoo Point at the north end of Bate Bay, Cronulla,

for a missing rock fisherman swept into the ocean on March 18. Police said the man, 27, and a companion were rock fishing at Kurnell, when he was swept into the ocean.

Three crews from the Botany Port Hacking and Port Kembla units joined a mass search for a man missing on Botany Bay after his small runabout capsized in a

2.5m swell near Bare Island about 6.45pm on March 31. The 37-year-old and two friends were fishing when the boat was thrown on to rocks. Two of the men were found at the base of the cliffs.

Both searches were suspended without locating the missing men, neither of whom was believed to have been wearing a lifejacket.

Hawkesbury stalwart steps away from helm

Merv Collins lauded for contribution to river unit's development.

Marine Rescue Hawkesbury has undergone a change of shift on the bridge, with stalwart Merv Collins standing down after four years as Unit Commander and several more as Deputy leader.

Merv has made a significant contribution to the unit over this lengthy period.

His knowledge of all things associated with MR Hawkesbury, the river and its people is vast and he is likewise well-known throughout the Hawkesbury community.

The new leaders were elected unopposed at the unit AGM on June 7 and welcomed by Sydney Regional Controller Chris Gillett.

The new Unit Commander is former Deputy Ken Edwards, with Derek Whorlow replacing Ken in

this role.

UC Edwards said the new leadership team had big shoes to fill.

"The new team is looking forward to the many challenges that face our volunteers and we are confident that given the firm base provided we will be up to whatever tasks are put before us," he said.

He said the team was a good mix of both newer and longer-term members, each of whom brought enthusiasm, energy and experience to their role, providing a strong foundation that would ensure the unit continued to move forward and grow.

During the last few years under Merv's stewardship, the unit has been successful in achieving several significant milestones, including



New Hawkesbury DUC Derek Whorlow and UC Ken Edwards with Sydney Regional Controller Chris Gillett.

the purchase of the 7.5m Ocean Cylinder, *Hawkesbury 22*, and the total refurbishment of the 7.2m Broadbill catamaran, *HW 21*.

It has experienced a steady and manageable increase in recruitment recently and existing members have been successful in attaining their Crew and Leading Crew ratings.

Several members now hold Trainer/Assessor qualifications covering first aid, advanced resuscitation, sea survival and fire fighting, as well as being part of the MR Crew, Leading Crew and Coxswain training and assessment panels.

Ken McManus

Kioloa trio goes the extra mile for training

Cross-unit opportunities ensure new recruits gain Crew qualifications.

One of the smallest units in MRNSW, MR Kioloa is located on the NSW South Coast between Ulladulla and Batemans Bay. The area's quiet community, pristine beaches and excellent fishing make it a favoured holiday destination, especially for keen boaters.

With only a small local community from which to draw volunteers, the unit has worked hard over the years to maintain its operational membership of radio operators and vessel crews.

However, 2015 saw a welcome influx of motivated new members, who quickly achieved their Radio Operator ratings under the tutelage of Watch Officers, Unit Commander Louise Andrews and Deputy Unit Commander Joan Noble.

Helping the recruits gain their vessel ratings has proven a more challenging exercise for the unit. With new members Lee Kennedy, Kalman Kis and John Stevenson becoming an integral part of the on-call crew for *Kioloa 20* and keen to progress their training, the unit looked outside its own resources for a solution.

The training teams at the neighbouring Ulladulla and



Kioloa members Lee Kennedy, Kalman Kis and John Stevenson, with Cottage Point member Patrick O'Brien (second from right), prepare CP 30 for departure for their operational assessments.

Batemans Bay units came to Kioloa's assistance, with the three recruits incorporated into Ulladulla's boat crews for weekly training and operational duties.

The trio also attended vessel training exercises and search and rescue training with both MR Batemans Bay and Jervis Bay and MR Cottage Point trainer David White conducted one-on-one classroom and operational training for the trio at Kioloa in readiness for

their operational assessments.

The three travelled to MR Cottage Point in Sydney to undertake their assessments. Joining the unit's duty crew for a busy day on Broken Bay, they were put through their paces in all the required competencies. After travelling more than 40nm throughout the day, they participated in two late assists that finished well into the night. All three were assessed as soundly competent and were awarded their

MR Crew epaulettes at a Kioloa unit meeting.

UC Andrews said she was proud of the achievements of the new crew, all of whom were now keen to build on their success by working towards their Leading Crew qualifications. She thanked the Ulladulla, Batemans Bay, Jervis Bay and Cottage Point unit trainers and boat crews for their support and assistance for the new recruits.

David White

Tireless trainer recognised for achievement

Marine Rescue Jervis Bay training officer John Gallimore has been recognised for his outstanding contribution to the unit and the Shoalhaven boating community.

John received a Shoalhaven Senior Citizens Local Achievement Award as part of the Shoalhaven Senior Citizens Festival held to recognise the efforts of Senior Citizens who contribute to the local community.

John certainly fits that role. He never stops with his training portfolio.

He ensures the unit's volunteers are up-to-date with the essential procedures set down by MRNSW and keeps us trained at a high standard in areas such as first aid, watch keeping, radio operation, boat crew procedures and search and rescue.

He is also a Marine Rescue Coxswain, skippering our rescue vessels to assist many boaters in trouble in past times.

As well, John conducts weekend boat license courses for the public at the radio base in Huskisson and is in high demand to assist with the



South Coast MP Shelley Hancock and Minister for Ageing John Ajaka present John Gallimore with his Local Achievement Award.

unit's fundraising activities.

On behalf of your fellow volunteers, well done and

congratulations John, we are all very appreciative of your input.

Lester Shute

Lake Illawarra refuses to give up its secrets

Pt Kembla gives cooking show audience a taste of life in an emergency service.

A three-day search following the discovery of a drifting fully-stocked kayak with fishing gear and bait has turned up nothing and remains a secret of Lake Illawarra.

The alarm was raised at 6.30am on Saturday, May 7, when a member of the public noticed the kayak adrift in the channel at the entrance to the lake with no one onboard. While a witness had seen a kayaker fishing under the Windang Bridge about 2.30am, there were no reports of a missing person or any cars left at nearby boat ramps.

Emergency services flooded the area, including MR Port Kembla crews on board *Port Kembla 20* and *X-Ray 22*, scouring the area for the rest of the day.

The crews were stood down late in the afternoon before the search resumed the following morning. The StructureScan echo sounder on board *X-Ray 22* was of great use in providing incredibly clear and defined pictures of the seabed.

Nothing was found on Sunday and in a last hope, MR Port Kembla

crews onboard both vessels covered every possible inch of the lake.

As they were returning to base, a false alarm was raised when reports of a body floating on the lake turned out to be a log. The search was called off and remains a mystery. This is the second unresolved incident in a few months, following a similar case on Port Kembla Harbour.

The unit's offshore rescue vessel *PK 30* has been re-powered with two new 250hp Suzuki outboards and a fly by wire throttle system. The vessel's navigation package also has been upgraded to the new Raymarine E-series multi-function display screens and chequerboard livery added.

On a sunny May morning, Port Kembla members prepared and deployed *PK 20*, *X-Ray 22* and *X-Ray 23* for a shoot of the Illawarra-produced television show, *Alive and Cooking*, which airs across Australia on the WIN network and NBN.

The crews were in fine form,



Working up an appetite ... members of MR Port Kembla conducted a training exercise with host of *Alive and Cooking*, James Reeson.

taking to the water with show's host James Reeson to give him and his audience a taste of life as a member of a vital emergency service.

After James dished up breakfast of pancakes with mixed berries and cream, the three crews staged a search exercise for two rescue mannequins, demonstrating operations on board our vessels and the conditions and risks our members can face out on the water.

After the targets had been successfully retrieved from the water and administered with first aid, the famished crews returned to base,

where James cooked up a storm, producing a delicious and much appreciated lunch of barbecued lamb, beef and pork with tomato chili relish.

The shoot was suspended early afternoon when the wind picked up, before resuming early the next morning with all vessels out on an absolutely perfect day on Lake Illawarra.

The shoot wrapped up with everyone keen to see the episode, part of the new season of *Alive and Cooking*, due to air in July.

Tom Dragutinovich

Unit on the road for the Blessing of the Fleet

Members of MR Ulladulla took to the road as well as the water over Easter, joining the town's Blessing of the Fleet Festival and responding to two call-outs.

For the first time in many years, the unit entered a float and vehicles in the festival's street parade on Easter Sunday, accompanied by unit members and students from Shoalhaven Anglican School. MR Kioloa also joined in, towing vessel *Kioloa 20*.

MR Ulladulla skipper Dave Lindley drove the unit's truck with Wear a Lifejacket and Log On signage and member Chris Wood drove a golf cart decorated as a small vessel, the *SS Rescued*. Members also volunteered for crowd control along

the parade route, were on hand at the information marquee and sold raffle tickets.

After the parade, *Ulladulla 30*, with Dave Lindley at the helm and Unit Commander Dave Hall, Peter White, Lisa Hardwick and Gabrielle Boermans on board, ferried Father David Anthony Davies and Italian community representative Joe Basile around the harbour to bless the local fishing fleet.

On Good Friday afternoon, a 12m mono hull sailboat with five people on board suffered a collapsed mast and called for help. Dave Hall, Dave Lindley, Lisa Hardwick and John Taber, on board *UL 30*, met the vessel south of Warden Head. It was able to make way slowly to harbour



Good Friday operation ... the crew of *Ulladulla 30* escorted this yacht back to harbour after its mast collapsed. Photo: Lisa Hardwick.

at 7 knots, escorted by *UL 30*.

Next morning, the same crew headed out to assist a 4.5m Quintrex with a flat battery that had anchored offshore on the western

side of Brush Island. The crew provided a battery jump pack to restart the boat, before shadowing it on its way to Kioloa boat ramp.

Lisa Hardwick

Eden marks 30 years' service in clifftop base

Past and present members reflect on the good times and the dark days.

Members of MR Eden have reached a significant milestone, marking 30 years providing vital safety coverage for seafarers from their Bramble Street base, perched high above Twofold Bay.

The unit held an afternoon tea at the base on Sunday, May 1, to mark the anniversary.

Forty former and current members enjoyed a relaxed get together, talking about old times and the future.

MRNSW Monaro Regional Controller Bob Herbert also presented 10 year Long Service Medals to Eden stalwarts, Glenda Wood and Tony Heriot.

The Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol established a presence in Eden in early 1980 with five radios located at various sites, most notably on the back veranda of Jean Whiter's house in Cocora Street.

A grant awarded by then NSW Minister John Akister helped fund the construction of the base, which was built with mostly donated

In 2009, the Eden volunteers joined the members of the other water-borne volunteer rescue organisations in NSW that merged to form the new single service, Marine Rescue NSW.

With the installation of a new radio mast in 2012 and state of the art computerised radios in early 2015, the Eden base continues to provide a high level of safety service to those venturing out to sea.

Our highly skilled volunteers make the best use of the technology.

Our radio coverage has been enhanced to enable communication to be maintained with vessels down into Bass Strait, providing coverage over a notoriously fickle part of the Tasman Sea.

The Eden base was directly involved in the rescue coordination for the tragic 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, during which six crew members lost their lives.

Seventy boats retired from the race, six yachts were abandoned and 50 crew were evacuated from

'The Eden community, particularly the professional fishing fleet has supported the unit'

materials and labour from various local businesses and individuals.

Members John Helmore, Allan Whiter and Fred House supervised the building work and installation of radio equipment ready for the base's opening on April 19, 1986.

The initial roster featured 45 volunteer radio operators, who monitored the radios 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Many of these volunteers were related to members of the professional fishing fleet, often family members of the trawler crews, or were recreational fishers willing to participate in maintaining the safety of life at sea in our area.

The unit currently has 23 members and there is always a need for new volunteers.

six yachts - 42 by helicopter, six by Eden fishing trawler *Josephine Jean* and two by *HMAS Newcastle*.

Lessons learnt during the 1998 race showed the value of having not only the best available equipment but also skilled and dedicated volunteers.

To this end, a large sum of money has been invested in ensuring the the Eden base is well equipped for its role, with significant contributions from the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Trusts, administered by the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia.

The Eden community, particularly the professional fishing fleet, has supported the unit financially, enabling our operational costs to be covered and equipment maintained to a high standard.



Thirty years' service ... past and present members of Marine Rescue Eden celebrate the unit's anniversary. Photos: Eden Magnet.

During busy times of the year, it is not unusual for the base to handle in the order of 2000 routine radio calls a month and to provide safety coverage to large numbers of vessels, both those fishing locally and yachts in transit.

During the Sydney-Hobart race, the base hosts representatives from the Cruising Yacht Club, who monitor radio schedules kept by the yachts, while MRNSW provides the safety coverage.

Regular weather forecasts keep those on the water up-to-date with conditions.

MR Eden works closely with the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command and also with Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Victoria and TasMaritime in Tasmania in fulfilling

its safety role.

The busy season is now behind us, although the continued spell of warm weather has seen a lot more boats out than is normal for this time of the year.

We will make the most of the eventual winter slowdown in activity to carry out much-needed maintenance to the base.

MRNSW Headquarters is negotiating to upgrade the VHF facilities on Mt Imlay and plans are in hand to enhance our coverage from Timbillica Hill using Coast Guard Victoria infrastructure, providing secure communication channels for transiting vessels from Tasmania or Victoria.

Safe boating.

John McKinnon



Monaro Regional Controller Bob Herbert presents Eden stalwart Glenda Wood with her 10 year Long Service Medal.

Foolhardy flare use prompts fruitless search

Bermagui unit tasked to late night operation in response to false alarm.

Members of MR Bermagui have given a big thumbs down to the people who recently set off flares, apparently for fun, on land, sparking a late night response operation.

The unit was forced to call out a rescue vessel crew and radio operator at 9pm in response to the flare sighting.

While it seemed likely from the outset that the flare had been set off on land, a rescue crew still had to put to the water to be sure.

While the emergency services do not take a “boy who cried wolf” attitude in response to likely false alarms, this may not be true for members of the public, who may not bother to report a flare next time.

There is also the cost to the unit of deploying *Bermagui 30* for no real purpose. Volunteers also have justifiably started to relax by that time of night and then need to re-boot themselves back to full alert mode.

Once on the water, crews face the dilemma of deciding when to stop searching. Fortunately, in this case, information from commercial fishing vessel *Consolato*, which sighted the flare and judged it was over land, assisted in this decision but *BG 30* was out until about 11pm. People need to be aware of the implications of foolhardy flare use on crews who will be tasked to respond.

Training is the key to ensuring our crews are fully prepared for operations such as this.

Our ongoing training schedule at Bermagui is ably organised by Training Officer Ray McLeod and Training Systems Officer Steve Angelo, who dedicate considerable time and effort to their training duties.

The unit has been fortunate to attract a number of new members, so our training activities have been concentrated on bringing the recruits up to speed on radio



Turning water into art ... MR Bermagui radio operator, trainee crew member and photographer Di Manning with her exhibition entry.

and crew requirements, as well as building our Watch Officer numbers.

The unit is gearing up to take part in Harbour, a “for fun” art exhibition, in conjunction with a neighbouring gallery. The Bermagui unit display, called Flotsam and Jetsam, will run from August 4 to 31. We hope this will help raise our profile in the community and perhaps even some welcome funds.

The Bermagui unit is fortunate to have a lot of talented members, who have turned their minds and skills to producing works, not necessarily nautical, to include in our display. Our resident art photographer, Di Manning, who will be shortly holding her own exhibition, has created a promotional poster for us and everyone is welcome.

Denise Page

Incident management on training agenda

Narooma Watch Officer course gives members extra operational insight.

A seven-week training course at MR Narooma has boosted the unit’s incident management awareness and capability.

Eight members undertook the Watch Officer training course, including radio operators, rescue vessel crew and Rescue Water Craft (jet ski) operators.

Although the main objective of the course was to certify new Watch Officers, it also aimed to provide unit members in various roles with enhanced knowledge of incident management requirements.

The course not only covered the required theory of effective incident control but also basic navigation and Marine Rescue’s role in working with other services in large-scale, multi-agency operations.

Some of the radio operators who took part were still quite early in their MRNSW roles but were keen to undertake the course to increase their knowledge of operational management and better understand how they could support the crew members on the unit’s rescue vessels and RWCs.

As well as *Narooma 30*, a Naiad RHIB, the unit is equipped with two RWCs, *NA 11* and *NA 12*, providing the local boating community with reliable and flexible rescue resources.

The course included two incident scenarios designed to enable the members to practise and test their knowledge of required documentation and procedures, navigation and communication with



Enhanced understanding ... MR Narooma radio operator Pat O’Shea, who undertook Watch Officer training.

on-water crews.

One of the course participants was Pat O’Shea, a relatively new Radio Operator who joined the unit last November.

“As a Radio Operator, to know all

the elements required to manage an incident enhances your role as an effective operator and increases your understanding of the attending rescue team’s needs,” she said.

Bronwyn Roll

Agency cooperation vital in two searches

Mostly smooth sailing at Merimbula in extended summer boating season.

Fine, warm weather and consecutive Victorian and New South Wales school holidays effectively extended the boating season on the Far South Coast. But unlike the same time last year, there was no upsurge in emergency calls to MR Merimbula.

Two recent incidents, however, highlighted the importance of inter-agency cooperation in emergencies and the all-encompassing nature of our role to save lives on the water.

A report of a missing swimmer on the Merimbula Bar triggered a multi-agency response involving MR Merimbula, the Eden Police Marine Area Command, local police, NSW Ambulance, Surf Life Saving and the Westpac Rescue helicopter.

Coordinated by police, *Merimbula 30* and a Pambula Surf Club inflatable boat and rescue water craft launched an immediate search of the adjoining Merimbula Bay.

In the absence of any missing

person report, the search was called off after three hours, following an extensive sweep of the area by the rescue helicopter and vessels.

In a second incident, *MB 30* supported a police search for a boat with a person on board reportedly threatening self-harm.

MB 30, with a police officer on board, joined the search for the vessel, which was located off Long Point, before transferring the person concerned safely to a waiting ambulance and towing the boat to shore.

In one of the more unusual incidents to prompt a call-out, a solo fisherman in a 4m runabout who was fishing just off Tathra, called Triple Zero for help when he attempted to start his engine and broke off the key in the ignition switch.

After a pounding trip north into a north easterly swell, the crew of *MA 30* located the drifting vessel



MR Merimbula and Pambula Surf Life Saving members search for a swimmer reported missing. Photo: Merimbula News Weekly.

less than a nautical mile offshore and took it in tow to the Kianinny boat ramp, skilfully negotiating the narrow entrance to Kianinny Bay, with the aid of leads painted on the cliff face.

Unit members joined others in the community to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first Anzac Day commemorations at the Dawn Service in Merimbula, with Acting Deputy Unit Commander Rod Studholme laying a wreath in

remembrance of those who had served.

The unit has recognised a number of its supporters with Certificates of Appreciation. Sapphire Marine and Automotive owner Wayne Holding and his staff were acknowledged for their outstanding maintenance support of *MB 30* and regional radio station 2EC for its promotion of unit activities.

Rod Studholme

• *Lifeline 13 11 14.*

AirBerth dragged out to sea and smashed

National Medal fitting recognition for former leader who led unit to change.

Long-standing MR Tuross member David Campbell has been presented with the National Medal, recognising his lengthy and dedicated service to the community.

David began his volunteer career with the Volunteer Rescue Association Tuross marine unit and was instrumental in its transition from the VRA to MRNSW. He holds the distinction of having been a Unit Commander in both organisations.

David was presented with his National Medal at the Tuross base, surrounded by many of the members who worked with him to make the unit what it is today.

The early June storms have caused significant damage to our newest asset, a floating wharf and AirBerth that had only been recently

completed, providing a rapid launch for our primary rescue vessel, *Tuross 20*.

Donated to the unit by NSW Roads and Maritime Services, the AirBerth had been linked to a new floating dock built by our local metal fabricator and installed by members.

Given the weather forecast, we had taken the precaution of moving *TU 20* on to a trailer on higher ground. During the night of June 6, however, the AirBerth, chained to the wharf, was dragged by the current, washing out through the entrance of Tuross Lake and over the bar before ending up in pieces on the beach.

This will be factored into our schedule of planned future developments, including an upgrade and overhaul of our



Well deserved recognition ... MR Tuross Unit Commander Blaise Madden presents David Campbell with the National Medal.

radio systems and a berth on the Moruya River for *TU 20*. As always, these developments would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of our fundraising group. These members have spent

many hours selling raffle and Art Union tickets and running events to fund developments such as the work to accommodate the AirBerth. Congratulations and well done to all.

Blaise Madden

Aquatic champions protecting our waterways

Mandarin speakers take environmental message to their community peers.

An innovative community engagement program aimed at protecting the aquatic environment was staged at MRNSW Headquarters in late April.

The Multicultural Aquatic Champion Peer Education Program helps multicultural communities to learn how to minimise impacts on the marine environment when they are boating, fishing or taking part in other recreational activities near and on waterways.

Many multicultural communities have strong cultural traditions surrounding water, including activities such as boating, rock fishing and fishing from wharves and boats.

The Aquatic Champion program is conducted by the State Government's Greater Sydney Local Land Services in conjunction with NSW DPI Fisheries, Transport



Aquatic champions ... members of the Mandarin-speaking community learn about protecting our waterways during a community engagement program held at MRNSW Headquarters.

for NSW, the Recreational Fishing Alliance, Boat Owners Association and Multicultural NSW.

Local Land Services has engaged with members of the Mandarin and Arabic-speaking communities who are recreational boaters and/or fishers in the Sydney metropolitan

area, with almost 40 Mandarin-speaking participants attending a day-long course at MRNSW Headquarters, on the Port Hacking waterfront.

The "champions" learn how to protect the aquatic environment when they are boating, fishing or

recreating near and on waterways and are then encouraged to spread key messages to their peers on how they can help protect our waterways for future generations.

The champions are mentored for a year after the training to help them engage with their communities.



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What we've been up to



Rapid response fleet ... eleven Rescue Water Craft operators and three vessel crew from the Nambucca, Port Macquarie and Trial Bay units attended an RWC training weekend with Mid North Coast Regional Controller John Murray, camping overnight at Trial Bay and exercising on the scenic Macleay River. *Photo: David Arthur, Aquatic Images.*



Kodak moment ... Port Jackson 20 passes a famous Sydney landmark as the crew heads out for an offshore navigation and inshore pilot training exercise with PJ 30.



Easter parade ... MR Ulladulla's Barrie Lovell-Davis and Chris Wood in the unit's float, the SS Rescued, in the parade for this year's Blessing of the Fleet festivities (See Page 36). *Photo: Lisa Hardwick.*



Tight formation ... crews from four MRNSW units and the Police Marine Area Command search for a rock fisherman swept into the sea at Kurnell on March 18 (see story Page 34).



Wear Your Lifejacket to Work Day ... Marree Doherty, Chris Butler, Dean Storey, Lewis Stockbridge, Andrew Cribb, Jody Hollow and Matt Sims grin and wear it at MRNSW Headquarters on May 20.

Painful sting will make you seriously blue

Put away the vinegar, tea, beer and metho: hot water the best treatment.

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.

Bluebottles are one of the most common stinging sea creatures that we are likely to come in contact with in Australia.

They are found around the entire Australian coast and go by different names, depending on the particular species and where they are found. For example, in the Pacific Ocean they might be called the Pacific Man o' War, while in the Atlantic, the Portuguese Man o' War, but the common name is bluebottle.

Habitat: Bluebottles drift around the oceans on the surface but cause most problems when they arrive in the surf and come into contact with people surfing. They can also sting if you contact them after they have been washed up on the beach. They can arrive in their thousands.

A bluebottle is actually a colony of marine organisms but to the naked eye, it consists of a blue tinted floating bladder with a sail and one or more tentacles hanging from it.

These tentacles are loaded



Masses of bluebottles washed up on La Perouse beach. Photo: Kim Colville, of Elsee Photography.

with stinging organs known as nematocysts and a simple brush against them causes them to discharge tiny venomous barbed "darts" into the victim's skin and flesh. The tentacles tend to stick to the skin.

If you have contacted a bluebottle, you will know all about it! The pain is extremely distressing, particularly for children and raised welts are common.

First aid treatment: The treatment of bluebottle stings has varied over time. It has included dousing the stung area with methylated spirits, vinegar, cold tea, warm beer and urine. It has now been shown that

these treatments are of no proven value and vinegar, in particular, can make the problem significantly worse. You should read the entire Australian Resuscitation Council Guideline 9.4.5.

Note: The following treatment is for non-tropical Australia and when the bluebottle has been recognised as such. In the tropics, it is possible the sting is due to other, far more lethal, "jellyfish".

1. Keep the victim at rest, under constant observation and reassurance.
2. Do not allow rubbing of the sting area.
3. Carefully pick off any tentacles (this is usually not dangerous

to the rescuer) and rinse the sting area well with seawater to remove invisible nematocysts.

4. Place the victim's stung area in hot water (no hotter than the rescuer can comfortably tolerate) for 20 minutes.
5. If local pain is unrelieved or hot water is unavailable, apply a cold pack or ice in a dry plastic bag.
6. If pain persists or is generalised, if the sting area is large (half a limb or more) or involves sensitive areas (eg the eye) call Triple Zero and seek help from a lifesaver/lifeguard, if available. Call Triple Zero early rather than later, particularly with children.

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A life well lived, with not a moment wasted

Volunteer Guard of Honour farewells MRNSW founding Director.

From Page 4.

Horses are like the sea; you can pretend to another person that you can sail or ride but you cannot pretend to a horse or to the sea - they are true judges. Mike was the real thing for both.

In 1995, he was elected to the National Committee of the Australian Alpaca Association and was on the Research and Development sub-committee. He was chair of the Royal Agricultural Society committee for alpacas for the Royal Easter Show in Sydney and an RAS Steward from 1998 to 2000.

Mike joined the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol in 1973, attending all its training programs and completing every course, including watch keeper, seamanship, rescue boat operations, coastal navigation, celestial navigation, meteorology, first aid, radar, firefighting, GPS operation and AYF Ocean Going Yacht-master Certificate. He was appointed to many positions including Regulating Officer, Special Projects Officer, Divisional Commander of Sydney Division, National Councillor, National Secretary, Chairman of Council (1982-1988), Flag Officer Commanding (1988-1994), Chief Officer, National Medal and Awards, Government Liaison Officer and delegate to the Volunteer Marine Rescue Council of NSW and Australian Emergency Management Volunteer Forum. He attained the RVCP rank of Commodore 1st Class. He represented Australia at the International Lifeboat Conference in 1983 at Gothenburg, Sweden. In the early 1980s he negotiated for the RVCP to partner with the Australian Yachting Federation on national training.

He was directly instrumental in having His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, accept the position of Patron in Chief of the RVCP and now of Marine Rescue NSW.

Michael was the operational commander of the Coastal Patrol fleet at the Royal Australian Navy 75th celebrations, the Bicentennial and the Sydney Olympic Games. He was a committee member of the City of Sydney Sesquicentenary celebrations in 1992 and a member of the Central Sydney Operations Group of the Premier's Department, which oversees events and activities in Greater Sydney.

For his work as a volunteer supervisor in the Public Inquiry and Information Centre during major disasters in 1992, Michael was awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) and in 1993 he was awarded the Australian Service Order (ASO).

He was an inaugural recipient of the Emergency Services Medal (ESM) awarded in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2000. The ESM had been established in late 1999 in recognition of distinguished service in the field of emergency services. He was the first to be invested in NSW. In 2001, he was awarded the National Medal with Clasps and in 2003 the Centenary of Federation Medal. He was awarded the Australian National SAR Award for outstanding contribution to search and rescue for 2006.

He was recognised in the 2007 Australian of the Year Awards in the NSW Metropolitan Local Hero category. In 2009, Michael was awarded the NSW Maritime Medal for Bravery, including for the rescue of an injured sailor from rocks in heavy seas off Pittwater, having swum a line to the sailor and recovered him. In 2009, he was awarded a third clasp to the National Medal. In 2010, he was invested as a Member of the Order of Australia.

He was a foundation member of the facilitation group that was brought together to create Marine Rescue NSW and later a founding Director of the new MRNSW,



MRNSW members form a Guard of Honour at the Memorial Service for founding Director and Middle Harbour member Mike Stringer.

which amalgamated three differing services into an integrated, seamless rescue organisation, of which he was justifiably very proud and from which only his ill health took him. His contribution cannot be overestimated.

Any one of these may be regarded as a significant achievement and indicative of that positive attitude and inquiring mind of which he was possessed.

To have achieved all of them in one lifetime of service is, simply, remarkable.

My father always said it is better to wear out than to rust out.

The wonder is not that Michael has died at only 77 but that he did not wear out years before. Had he not suffered from this terrible illness, I feel he would have been indestructible, for he showed no sign of wearing out. Even in the extremity of his illness he was always positive, optimistic and indomitable. He was never in despair and he never abandoned his grip on life and on his friends. He was in every way a remarkable - indeed, a great - Australian.

I knew Mike for only a few years, but his infectious enthusiasm, inexhaustible energy and persistent good humour made us immediate friends, far more

than mere colleagues. During the establishment of MRNSW we travelled the whole of NSW together, preaching the conversion from many to one and swapping anecdotes and experiences. We each shared interests and extensive histories, as I have said, in farming, grazing, sailing, travel and frankly, good living.

Beyond that I did not know him. He was, for all his public persona and his well-known love of pomp and ceremony, an intensely private man. His personal life was just that - a personal life - and for that I respected him even more. It is always easy to be public but to maintain a separation and still do all that is needful in both, is difficult to achieve and immensely valuable to the man and to his private family.

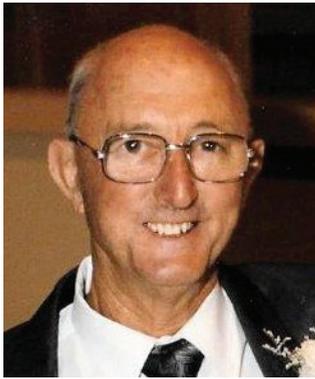
When we die, as we all must, we leave behind memories and if we are blessed, a legacy. The memories of those who loved us are transient, as we are, but a legacy may be long lasting and enduring.

Michael Stringer has gone before us but he leaves a legacy that few men can aspire to. We should here recognise the value of that legacy, and give thanks for a life well lived, with not one moment wasted.

Jim Glissan
Chair

Life Member sadly missed at Ulladulla

Rex gave 34 years to marine safety.



Rex Pymble

Rex Pymble gave 12,500 days' service to the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol and Marine Rescue NSW before his death in late March.

Rex joined the RVCP at Ulladulla on January 4, 1982, going on to tally up 34 years and three months' commitment to marine safety.

For most of this time, Rex was the unit's treasurer, a position that could be quite onerous at times. His capability in this area was recognised by the RVCP and Rex was called upon to lend his expertise to other units. His willing assistance and commitment were recognised with the award of Life Membership of the RVCP, which was carried over to MRNSW.

He remains Ulladulla's only

recipient of Life Membership.

Rex had an early affinity with the water; he was an active member of Burning Palms Life Saving Club for some 35 years, filling a number of executive positions during this time.

He was also a member of Rotary. It is obvious that Rex was a committed volunteer.

Prior to the destruction of our base by fire, Rex's skill as a sign writer was evident in many areas.

Unfortunately, this valued part of our history has all been lost, however, Rex's skill as a model builder can still be seen.

When a former member passed away, his family donated a model of HMS Belfast to the unit.

Rex took on the job of restoring damaged sections of the model boat, which is now on display at the base.

In recognition of his lengthy and diligent service, Rex was awarded the MRNSW Long Service Medal with two clasps and the National Medal, falling just short of receiving a clasp to this medal.

Members of MR Ulladulla have many fond memories of their friend and colleague. He will be sadly missed by all.

Kev Marshall

Former Commander farewelled on water

Daughters' thanks for unit's care.

To: Unit Commander Roger Palmer
Marine Rescue Central Coast

I wish to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the special day you and the members organised for us. You and the other members of Marine Rescue made it so much easier. We are very grateful Duncan was there to record this emotional, but beautiful day. I think Dad would have been humbled by the attention but also proud of us all.

We would like to offer special thanks to Ian. He made things go so very smoothly and took a load off us all. Gail and I were delighted he read the poem, *Crossing the Bar*, because we are both very familiar with it.

Special thanks to Karl and Alan for taking us out on the boat. You are very lovely men and accompanying us meant a lot because you knew our Dad. Thank you Shea for the delightful afternoon tea. Your warm happy smile helped lighten our day. Thank you also to Terry for your presence and contribution. We know Pat Fayers would have liked to be there, but she has already done so much by her heartfelt eulogy at Dad's funeral. I will always remember what she said and her salute to honour him.

Roger, you and your team are a credit to Marine Rescue NSW not just in rescues, but in your teamwork and consideration of others. Thank you once again for helping us grant Dad's wish and making a difficult day a special and beautiful day we will always remember fondly.

Lorraine, Gail, Carol and Helen

• Stan Oakes was twice Divisional Commander of the Central Coast RVCP. His ashes were scattered on Brisbane Water from Central Coast 21.

To: Unit Commander Jim Wright
Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie

Just a quick thank you to you and all your volunteers on April 13. My motor blew a head and after radioing in to your base I was towed back to Blacksmiths ramp from Redhead.

The service I received on that day and every other fishing trip when I Log On and Off is and has always been of the highest standard.

It's not until you are in a predicament such as that I found myself in on the above date that one realises what a valuable and life saving service you provide, so once again I cannot thank you enough.

Robert Rossi

To: Marine Rescue NSW

Please find enclosed a cheque for a \$100 donation to MRNSW from Kiama Gamefishing Club. Our club recently held our annual Gamefishing Tournament with 31 boats participating over two days. We would like to acknowledge the great work of Port Kembla Radio Base and in particular Mr Bruce Mitchell, who was the radio base operator for the duration of the Tournament. We are grateful to MRNSW for all you do to keep Kiama Gamefishing Club members and visitors to our harbour safe on the water at all times throughout the year.

Gai Delavere, Treasurer

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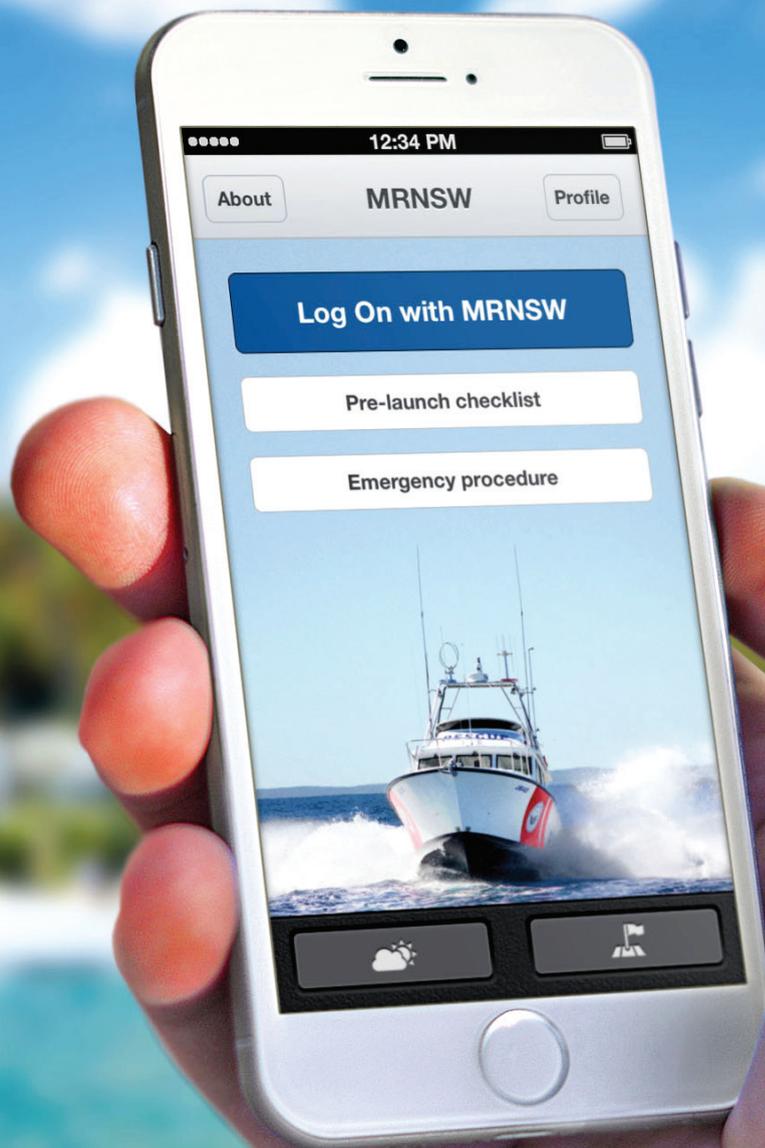
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Volunteers saving lives on the water

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