

SOUNDINGS



Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW | Issue 2 March 2010

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Cover photo

Marine Rescue Ulladulla's Category 3 Rescue Vessel, *Encounter*, during sea trials following its annual refit and change to MR livery. *Photo: Jamie Roberts.* *Encounter* is an all weather craft, LOA 15.85m, beam 5.2m, draft fwd 1.1m, aft 1.5m, power 2 x Caterpillar D343 diesels, speed 18 knots, range 250nm, fuel 2800 litres, crew min 6. Electronics: Furuno radar/plotter, Seiwa plotter, RDF, radios - HF/MF, VHF and 27MHz.

Editorial

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From the Editor's Desk

Well here we are with the second issue of Soundings.

There was a positive reaction from members to our first issue, and our thanks go to Ken McManus for help with production management to set the design and style standards.

Soundings is a magazine for members of Marine Rescue, its supporters and for the boating community. For it to be successful it relies on contributions from each of the Marine Rescue Units in NSW. If you are disappointed that your Unit does not have a contribution included in this issue, then it means that none was received in time. You must encourage those responsible at your Marine Rescue Unit to send in a quarterly report, to email incident stories, media releases and photos. We will welcome all these contributions, so that Soundings truly reflects the wide range of activities of all Marine Rescue NSW members and their units.

The magazine also relies on support by its advertisers. Members of Marine Rescue can assist by letting advertisers know that they have seen their advertisement and encouraging others to use the magazine to promote their products and services. We welcome new supporters and advertisers and we also welcome suggestions about potential advertisers. Please email your recommendations to the editor.

The recreational boating community has adapted quickly to calling 'MARINE RESCUE...' on the radio. Unit radio operators have also adapted to responding as Marine Rescue but not as easily. After years of use it takes a conscious effort to avoid replying with the former unit name. This will be overcome with time, as will the change of livery on rescue vessels, radio bases and stationery. In a short time Marine Rescue will be the only name to call and memories of the old khaki and orange will be part of the proud history of volunteer marine rescue in Australia. This issue has stories about cooperation between adjoining units.

This has always been the case but has become easier with a single entity for all Marine Rescue volunteers.

There is much still to be achieved in this first year. Not least is the Constitutional requirement for a Unit Annual General Meeting to be held in June each year. At the Unit AGM elections are to be held for the Unit Commander and Deputy Commander.

The constitution can be found on the MRNSW website, as well as the new Standard Operating Procedures and Regulations covering many aspects of Marine Rescue activities as approved by the Board of Directors. Unit Commanders and members should be aware of the Regulations and SOPs. But enough of this bureaucracy.

It is exciting to read and hear of the changes to the MR radio network, of new buildings being opened and the unit teamwork coming together, particularly in Search and Rescue. Volunteering is very rewarding.

**Ron Cole
Editor**

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Person with PFD (life-jacket) only



The survivor wearing a PFD and Rescue Streamer can clearly be seen at an altitude of 500 feet.



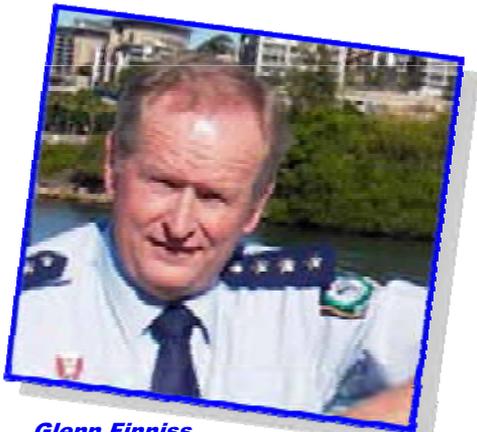
Close up of Rescue Streamer showing international distress signal

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Marine Rescue Operational



Glenn Finniss
Commissioner, Marine Rescue NSW

With Marine Rescue NSW operational as of January 1, the excitement and enthusiasm has moved up a gear.

We now have 32 Units from the previous three organisations fully operational as Marine Rescue NSW and that number is continuing to rise.

If you have been out and about on our waterways with your marine radio

switched on you will have heard a growing number of other responsible skippers logging on and off with a Marine Rescue Radio Base using the Call Sign 'Marine Rescue'.

With some radio bases indicating a 400% increase in traffic, it is clear that the NSW boating public is supportive of a single volunteer marine rescue response throughout the state.

This prompted the decision to allow all NSW AVCGA Flotillas to also use the Marine Rescue call sign while negotiations continue with their National Board to help them secure their own assets here in NSW.

I state again, unequivocally, that these assets which include vessels, bank accounts and equipment that have been raised locally through the hard work and fundraising activities of the local volunteers themselves, will stay locally at those Units. Marine Rescue NSW will not move or touch those assets, or other future assets funded by local programs.

Furthermore, it is our intention through a better coordinated application process to State and Federal Grants, plus an expected increase in Government funding, corporate sponsorship and assisted local fundraising activities, that Marine Rescue NSW will in future provide the vessels that the local volunteers have previously worked so tirelessly to obtain.

On behalf of the Marine Rescue NSW members I thank the State Government for the recognition bestowed upon the marine rescue volunteers at the Australia Day festivities in Darling Harbour.

It was a pleasure to have a number of our volunteers representative of the original three organisations, introduced to Her Excellency, the Governor of NSW, Professor Marie Bashir, and the Premier of NSW, the Hon Kristina Keneally MP.

Continued on page 27



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Marine Rescue NSW honoured by State Government on Australia Day



A fleet of ten vessels representing Marine Rescue NSW put in a full day on Sydney Harbour assisting with management of the many Australia Day events that attract big crowds on the water.

Five of the fleet had the new Marine Rescue colours, one was still wearing existing Coastal Patrol livery pending its refit and four vessels were in Australian Volunteer Coast Guard colours.

One of the most important tasks on Australia Day is working with NSW Maritime and NSW Water Police to provide a moving exclusion zone between participants in the major events and the enthusiastic fleet of private boats that come to cheer them on.

The 'washing machine' conditions created during the Ferrython is a spectacular sight but can be hazardous for small boats. It was pleasing to see skippers of private boats handling their craft responsibly and observing the safety requirements in place.

This day is also used to demonstrate the volunteers' work on the harbour to invited VIPs who this year comprised the directors of Marine Rescue NSW. The directors enjoyed the hospitality and experience of the 52ft Arun *Encounter* from Ulladulla.

After the event-filled day on the harbour, Marine Rescue NSW was honoured by the State Government at the Australia Day Spectacular in Darling Harbour. Eight vessels and crews finished their long day with a sail-past in Cockle Bay before the Governor of NSW, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir, the Premier of NSW, the Hon Kristina Keneally and a crowd of some 150,000.

A dramatic rescue demonstration was staged for the crowd with Terry Joyce from Broken Bay unit "blowing up" his own boat with the driver, a NSW Water Police Diver, being thrown out of the boat into the water from where he was rescued by the Marine Rescue crew on *B554* from Middle Harbour.

A number of members of Marine Rescue NSW were also honoured at Cockle Bay where they were met by the Governor Professor Bashir and NSW Premier Keneally.



The sail-past fleet comprised 52ft *Encounter* from Ulladulla, 44ft Waveney *Stratheden* from Botany Bay, 34ft *Steber Rescue 1* from Port Macquarie, 28ft *Steber Peter E Weston* from Broken Bay and *B554* from Middle Harbour, all in Marine Rescue livery. They were supported by the 44ft Waveney *Rawalpindi* from MR Middle Harbour and *CG11* and *CG 12* from Coast Guard Birkenhead Point.

Regrettably one vessel, Broken Bay's RHIB *BB10* missed out on playing its part on the day due to mindless vandalism that left her with one un-inflatable sponson that had been slashed the previous weekend and unable to be serviced in time.

[More Australia Day images in the Photo Gallery on pp 20, 21](#)

'Time Out' saved from sinking off Camden Haven

After an overnight stop at Laurieton on December 3, the 7.5m sloop, 'Time Out', left the Camden Haven River to travel to Forster with father and son of Col and Aaron Purton as crew.

The experienced yachtsmen were sailing their newly purchased yacht from Trial Bay to Sydney for renovations prior to its future use as a family vessel on Sydney Harbour.

The yacht logged-on with Marine Rescue Camden Haven at 0615 hours and an Offshore Tracking Sheet (OTS) was raised. After crossing the bar safely the yacht travelled approximately 4nm before being hit by a large wave that caused the vessel to smash down heavily in the 3-4m seas. The yacht began taking water plus the rudder and outboard motor became tangled in rope that was dislodged by the wave.

"a large wave that caused the vessel to smash down heavily in the 3-4m seas"

At 0700 hours a desperate radio call was made to Marine Rescue Camden Haven, where Radio Operator Ron Neville learned that the yacht was taking water fast and in danger of sinking. The yacht gave its GPS position, from then no further voice contact could be made with the vessel.

By a stroke of luck, MR Camden Haven had two of its regular boat crew, Ken Rutledge and Al Stuart, carrying out some maintenance work on the unit's rescue vessel. Duty Skipper Ken Clancy was contacted and *Rescue 2* was on the way to the search area in quick time.

On arrival, the yacht was found to be taking water fast, with both father and son bailing and using the hand pump frantically. All radios plus two mobile phones and a laptop computer were out of action. The boat crew had to act quickly. They attached a towline to a bollard on the bow, there was no time to fit a bridle. With the big seas and no rudder or voice contact, the tow was fairly difficult with the yacht slewing all over the sea plus the tow line length had to be adjusted on several-occasions.

After approximately 45 minutes, the vessels reached the bar which was sheltered from a lot of the southerly wind and this assisted with the crossing. Once the yacht was towed back into the river, *Rescue 2* was able to use its remote bilge pump to assist with the bailing. Only then was it discovered that the main cause of the yacht taking so much water was a sink drain skin fitting that had broken off when the wave hit, creating a 50mm diameter hole below the waterline.



Boat Crew (L/R) Ken Rutledge, Al Stuart and Skipper Ken Clancy



Ron Neville on Radio Duty

Unknown to the rescue crew, the faster the yacht was towed, the more water came in (it is no wonder Col and Aaron were wet and tired when they surfaced from below deck). A wooden plug was forced into the hole as the yacht was towed to the Laurieton slipway.

Keith Charman from the Rescue Squad was contacted. He arranged for the slipway to be made available urgently. *Time Out* was assisted onto the slip where more substantial repairs were carried out. Both Col and Aaron praised the Camden Haven crew for all their assistance with their rescue.

Rescue 2 returned to base and signed off at 0915 hrs.

With repairs completed, *Time Out* sailed out of Camden Haven on December 4 to complete its journey to Sydney.

**Ken Rutledge
Camden Haven**

MR full ahead

Marine Rescue NSW began operations on New Year's Day following successful, last-minute, record-time completion of a mountain of essential administrative tasks.

"I would like to acknowledge the tremendous effort of the NSW Government, especially Emergency Services Minister, Steve Whan, and Ports & Waterways Minister, Paul McLeay, for helping ensure that WorkCover and insurance arrangements were in place for our more than 2,300 volunteer members," said Acting Commissioner Marine Rescue NSW Glenn Finniss.

"Our members were on the water on New Year's Day in their distinctive new, blue Marine Rescue NSW uniforms aboard an impressive number of rescue vessels already in the new Marine Rescue colours," said A/Commissioner Finniss. "This demonstrated a magnificent commitment by many existing units as they raced to get these boats finished in time for this busy holiday season."

Already the boating public is recognizing the value and logic of a single marine rescue organisation in NSW," said

A/Commissioner Finniss. "In the first four days of operations, the 24/7 Marine Rescue Sydney radio base handled a 400% increase in general radio traffic and extra radio operators have been on duty ever since. We now have more than 2,300 members and almost two-thirds of all existing NSW rescue units have made or will soon make the transition to Marine Rescue NSW."

Recent meetings with the Melbourne based National Office of the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association have confirmed the commitment of Marine Rescue NSW to achieving a resolution to assist local Coast Guard flotillas retain their assets which have been acquired through the hard work of local NSW volunteers, local NSW community support and Government funding.

The National AVCGA representatives reaffirmed their position, that they would not prevent Coast Guard members from joining MRNSW. A draft Interim Agreement has been provided to the



A/Commissioner Glenn Finniss

AVCGA to ensure that NSW Coast Guard members can use their vessels and other equipment under the Marine Rescue banner.

An agreement has already been established with Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol prior to legal transfer of their assets and a similar agreement is in place with the Volunteer Rescue Association Marine.

Marine Rescue recognizes the importance of past support and fund-raising efforts in local communities and ensured that the principle "***If it's raised local, it stays local***" is enshrined in its Constitution to protect existing local assets.

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Man saved in dramatic rescue off Minnie Water



On December 31, 2009 Marine Rescue Woolli responded to a Police call advising that a fisherman was clinging to his overturned vessel about 3nm due east of Minnie Water and 7nm from Woolli on the North Coast. Seas were 1.5m, and wind was from the south-east at 8-10 knots.

The 28-year-old South Grafton man was thrown into the water after trying to cut free his anchor rope that had fouled the propeller. This happened after his vessel had taken on a large amount of water that, due to the failure of the vessel's bilge pump, could not be pumped out.

At 1239 hours a MRNSW Woolli crew, Stephen Reading, Bruce Guttormsen and Marten Hutchings, aboard the high speed RHIB Category 2 rescue vessel, *JJ Ensbey* departed Woolli.

They reached the estimated position 7nm away in 29 minutes. The location had been plotted by the Marine Radio Base (MRB) operators Wayne Jubb and Jackie Taffs. There was no visual sign of the man at that spot, so the boat crew immediately commenced an expanding square search pattern. They first tracked to the north, at 1309hrs, and just before turning for the next leg the missing fisherman was spotted no more than 40m from the *JJ Ensbey*.

Search and Rescue Coordinator, Richard Taffs had driven to Minnie Headland in attempt to get a visual

sighting. He was hoping that the vessel with its skipper was still afloat and that he could coordinate the rescue vessel's search.

The exhausted fisherman was immediately brought on board the *JJ Ensbey* and checked for any medical problems. He had swallowed a lot of sea water in the rough conditions, and told his rescuers that he had almost lost the energy to keep himself afloat. The boat crew took the man back to Minnie Water to await an ambulance that was tasked to check his condition.

“The fisherman was able to dive under the vessel and retrieve his mobile phone”

What was amazing is that when the boat overturned the fisherman was able to dive under the vessel and retrieve his mobile phone that was secure inside a Pringles cracker tin. Sitting on top of the overturned vessel he called 000 for assistance and proceeded to give a very good approximation of his position. It was while talking to the 000 operator that the vessel sank beneath him and the mobile phone cut out. Had he not been able to get to his phone the outcome may well have been tragic.

The information that he gave to the Police VKG operator was relayed to Marine Rescue Woolli and enabled an effective search and rescue effort.

The Woolli radio operator sent out a May Day relay call that resulted in one vessel

Marine Rescue Woolli operates a 6.43m RHIB Category 2 rescue vessel, the ‘JJ Ensbey’.

The rescue boat (pictured above) is fitted with twin 70hp motors capable of over 30kn.

The boat in the background is the vessel that was close by (200-300m) when the capsized occurred. The people on board did not see anything but were quite confused about the capsized vessel ‘disappearing’ without them seeing it or hearing it pass.

They had begun a search of their own and only realised the man had been found after hearing this on their a marine radio.

People pictured are: Bruce Guttormsen, Richard Taffs (both with yellow shirts) and Marten Hutchings (in MRNSW uniform). The fourth person is the rescued man (name withheld).

Photo: Stephen Reading

12nm east of Minnie Water responding to assist with the search. Another vessel, that at one stage was only 200-300m from the stricken vessel, also began a search after realising that the nearby boat had disappeared suddenly, but it did not spot the overturned vessel or its skipper.

**Stephen Reading
Woolli**

Capsize danger at Forster

At Forster Tuncurry we have had a lot of things going on. For starters, Unit Commander, Graeme Parker suffered a heart attack early in February.

Graeme was rushed to Taree Base Hospital and admitted to intensive care. After about three days he was ready to go home, but the doctors did not agree and he was kept until the following Monday and then told to rest for a month.

We also got a call to Crowdy Head, (over an hour's steaming) to assist a boat in danger of going on the rocks and there was a big sea running.

When *Forster Rescue 20* arrived the crew tried, unsuccessfully, to pass a line. Conditions were difficult with the heavy seas and the rescue boat was in danger of capsizing. The skipper, Ray Mazurek moved the rescue boat out of danger and unfortunately the stricken vessel came to grief on the rocks.

Local Police were on hand to assist members of its crew to shore. The skipper was subsequently charged with high range PCA. The Police were full of praise for our boat and crew.

We also had a very long tow resulting from a call by the *Black Pearl* that was about 15nm off the coast when it lost power. *Forster Rescue 20* was dispatched and took the vessel under tow. It was a slow trip back to Cape Hawke Harbour as the *Black Pearl* outweighed the rescue vessel by about 4 to 1.

Crew training is going well under the guidance of Mike O'Halloran and Daryl Archibald. We are running Skipper 1,



Design concept for Forster-Tuncurry base signage

Marine Radio Operator and Marine Rescue Crew courses that are well attended and achieving good results.

We have received many positive comments about the new uniforms, particularly at the Tuncurry monthly markets where we raise much needed funds to keep the rescue boats maintained and ready for action.

Terry Jobson
Acting Unit Commander

A Bad Day at Black Rock

My Friday night shift started at 1800hrs and it appeared I was in for a quiet night- no vessels in transit, only two local boats out.

Both were due in at 2000hrs, conditions were perfect, even a full moon. School had resumed so the majority of holiday-makers had returned home and the headland looked free of party activities.

“In their haste to get on the water, someone forgot to put in the bungs”

At 1835hrs I received a VHF call, “Our boat has sunk at Black Rock can you please assist.” I was told that three people had been taken on board another vessel and there were no injuries. The capsized vessel was submerged and just barely floating bow up.

The rescue boat crew was tasked and Police authorisation obtained. *Trial Bay 30* departed the pontoon at 1856hrs. It would take the crew 45 minutes to reach Black Rock.

I then received a phone call from Sydney Water Police inquiring if I had a registration number for the sunken vessel because the RCC had an EPIRB signal from the South West Rocks area. The local vessel had registered all its details with Marine Rescue Trial Bay and this enabled a quick check. All details matched the RCC information. I was also told that a helicopter was on standby if it were required. Canberra was advised that all persons from the vessel were safe aboard *Trial Bay 30*, the vessel was in tow and that the EPIRB had been switched off.

The rescue outcome was positive and the story was that three young skin divers had steamed to Black Rock, then they all entered the water. When they surfaced they found their boat was completely submerged. In their haste to get on the water, someone forgot to put in the bungs.

The incident serves as a reminder to all boaties. Firstly it pays to register your



Marine Rescue Trial Bay's Marine Radio Base

details with your local Marine Rescue Unit and, secondly you should carry an EPIRB on board.

These young men were lucky, if the other vessel had not been in the vicinity and been able to alert the rescue service, the outcome could have been a different story.

I am pleased to say that the remainder of my duty shift was incident free.

Wendie O'Neill
Marine Rescue Trial Bay.

Ballina first aid exercises

Marine Rescue Ballina conducted a special first aid training exercise aboard their Rescue Vessel CG101 on Thursday January 14.

First Aid Officer, Lorraine Leuckel planned the exercise around the scenario of persons being run over and injured by a boat's propeller, the focus of NSW Maritime's campaign 'Take Care - Be Prop Aware'. The exercise included mock emergency services being included e.g. calls to the communications centre, ambulance, police and NSW Maritime.

The training was conducted in the Richmond River (Mobbs Bay) to determine if there was any deficiency in the crews' ability to attend to injuries.

Anthony Hensley and Caroline Woodhead acted as patients with crew members Deputy Commander Joan Hurley, Clare Gibson, Duncan Woodhead, Commander Norm Lannoy and Meg Luckie as observer.

Also taking an interest in the proceedings were reporters from our regional newspaper, The Northern Star.

The first run proved successful. It took just three minutes for the Rescue Boat to arrive in the area and only a further ten minutes to get back to the Fawcett Street wharf where a mock ambulance was waiting.

When it was found that it was a struggle to get one of the injured patients out of the water, the exercise was repeated.



This time a 'stokes litter' was used, with the patient being placed on the deck of the rescue vessel in fifteen seconds.

After the exercise a de-brief was undertaken and it was noted that all participating agreed it was a valuable experience. This type of continuous training is important preparation to meet the emergencies that can occur at sea.

Norm Lannoy
Ballina

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Minister McLeay visits Lake Macquarie

On January 11, the Hon. Paul McLeay MP, Minister for Ports and Waterways, and Acting Commissioner Glenn Finniss, visited Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie.

A fine group of Lake Macquarie's men and women members, resplendent in their brand new blue uniforms, turned out to meet and greet the Minister and the Acting Commissioner.

Robert Coombs MP, Member for Swansea, welcomed the Minister and the Commissioner. He spoke of the great work carried out previously by Coastal Patrol and Coast Guard in the Lake Macquarie area. The Minister thanked the members for the work they do as volunteers assisting the boating community.



He talked of the commitment that the State Government had in ensuring that Marine Rescue would get underway and the support it would have for the future. Commissioner Finniss told members how the organisation would develop and the challenges ahead.

The Minister toured the radio base and chatted with members. He was thanked for coming to Lake Macquarie and for his interest in Marine Rescue.

Jim Wright
Lake Macquarie.

The Snake Wrangler

Marine Rescue Cottage Point is called on to provide all manner of support to the boating community.

This ranges from simple tows, engine repairs, and vessel pump outs, to medical support and offshore Mayday calls. The call out on Saturday January 16 was certainly one for the books.

At around 0800 hours the crew's morning coffee ritual was interrupted by the appearance of a somewhat agitated lady seeking the team's urgent assistance.

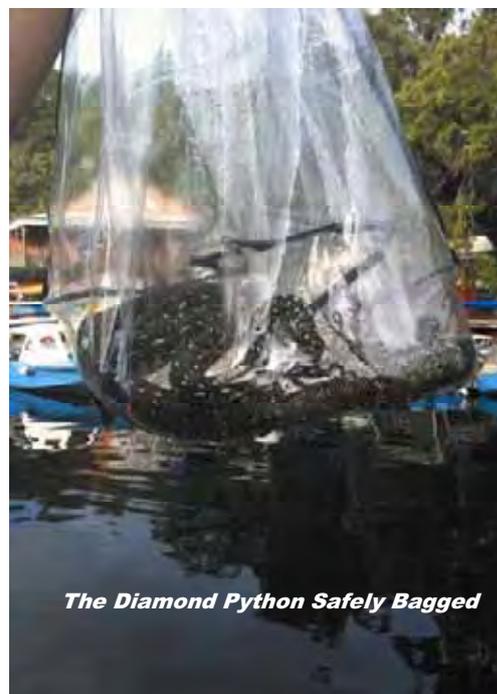
She and her family had spent the night alongside the wharf at the Ku-Ring-Gai Motor Yacht Club adjacent to the MR base. She had roused for breakfast and the reason for her distress became apparent. A large Diamond Python snake had somehow slithered onboard, and was found nuzzling up to her husband in the flybridge sleeping area. Upon investigation, a 2m snake was found coiled up between two stacked deck chairs on the flybridge.

The male owner remarked that he had been sleeping up there all night, likely with the snake, and that when he awoke he nearly 'had to change his underwear'.

The brave males in the rescue team were somewhat reluctant to personally handle the snake and were keen to put a call into WIRES to have a professional come down and remove the reptile. Kerry Blackwell had other ideas and immediately took charge. She commandeered the vessel's boat hook and a large bag from the vessel owner and went to work..

Tom and the vessel's owner were instructed to take one end of the bag each and stretch it out ready for the forthcoming manoeuvre. Both were quite hesitant to follow this instruction and reiterated that the WIRES team should be summoned.

This of course fell on deaf ears and Kerry's deft use of the boat hook soon had the serpent ensnared and secured safely in the bag. All were extremely relieved to have the creature under 'lock and key' and Kerry was thanked most profusely by a very grateful family. From Kerry's perspective it was all in a day's work and nothing special.



The Diamond Python Safely Bagged

But the four male members of the MR crew were left feeling a little emasculated. Kerry has earned the status of 'Chief Snake Wrangler' among the Marine Rescue Cottage Point volunteers and her bravery and focus will remain legendary for years to come. Well done Kerry.

David White
Ku-ring-hai

New Base opened at Sussex Inlet

At long last, it has happened: the new base at Sussex Inlet was handed over to Marine Rescue Sussex Inlet by the Shoalhaven City Council on Dec 2, 2009.

Marine Rescue NSW A/Commissioner, Glenn Finnis, was on hand to accept the building from the Mayor of Shoalhaven City Council, Cr Paul Green. Also present was unit patron, Joanna Gash MP, Federal Member for Gilmore and several Council members who had helped us along the way.

Over four years ago, Council Inspectors looked at the old base and decided to condemn the 75-year old building that was once the Hillpine Boathouse. For the past 28 years it has been the Coastal Patrol Sussex Inlet Base. The then Division Commander, Ron Ford, put a proposal to the Shoalhaven Council. The old base certainly needed repairs, every time a strong southerly wind blew the base leaned a little further to the north. It was full of asbestos and as it was over water a number of pylons needed replacing. Therefore, instead of spending money on the 'old shed' for the next 5 years or so it was suggested a new building be constructed.

After many meetings and lots of discussions the first step was agreed, Council and the Patrol would build a new base. The next step was supplied by Council; full architectural drawings and building specifications from the sketches and ideas that were provided by the Division. All that was needed now was costing, the development application, grant applications, and then approval to go ahead.

It was easier said than done. From the costing estimates supplied we looked at our budget. With fund raising and potential grants available at the time we thought we could do it. After many delays, meetings and procrastination the different authorities involved finally agreed to the proposals and the DA was eventually passed. However, it was not soon enough. The new Australian Government pulled the plug on the existing Regional Partnership Grant



**Below: Joanna Gash MP
Member for Gilmore**



scheme from which we had expected to get the majority of the funds. Therefore, the Unit had to look around and wait for an alternative. This came about when the Australian Government announced the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program.

Our application for a grant was successful and we received \$200,000 towards the project. Alas, since the beginning of the project, prices had risen and some specifications changed putting a bit of a dampener on the whole affair. Fundraising still went on and the Sussex Inlet community are to be congratulated for their continued support to the local Coastal Patrol unit. A further \$137,000 was made available from the Council's Strategic Projects reserve and with locally raised funds, the project was on.

The building contract was awarded to ABLOCK Builders Pty Ltd of Nowra and building was commenced on July 13. While construction was going on the Unit was still able to operate from the old base. When completed, Ron Ford, and his team had to complete the interior by fitting out the kitchen, painting, laying floor coverings, setting up the workshop, new furniture, getting the radio room operational and demolishing the old shed. A new Taperline Octagonal Mid Hinged



L/R: Ron Ford, John Lang , Paul Green

Column aerial mast, was installed. And maintenance will no longer need a crane or cherry picker.

We thank Ron Ford and his team for their dedication and determination to see this project to a successful conclusion.

Every time I walk into the new base, I see something else that has to be done, so the job isn't finished yet. Well done and thank you to everyone involved.

**John Lang
Sussex Inlet**



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PROUD TO SUPPORT MARINE RESCUE NEW SOUTH WALES

'Thank you Brunswick'

On November 21 my family was saved from a frightening situation at sea by Marine Rescue Brunswick Heads. From Cloud 9 to chaos in a blink of an eye, that's how quickly it all happened.

Here we were on the beginning of our voyage from Brisbane to Melbourne, sailing along in ideal conditions just off Cape Byron, a dozen dolphins playing off the bow when CRACK, the rudder broke and we completely lost all steerage of our 30ft yacht.

With my wife and two young kids on board, I was full of fear at the prospect of our predicament – drifting helplessly towards the cliffs and rocks along the Cape Byron coast. We had no choice but to radio for immediate and urgent assistance.

The sight of *Sea Rescue One* from Brunswick Heads was one of utter relief. I shudder to think what would have happened without their immediate response.

The rescue was extremely difficult and challenging, with conditions rapidly deteriorating as winds increased to over 30 knots and confused seas built to over three metres.

After an epic seven-hour tow operation, countless broken tow lines and contending with seasickness, tears and panic, the boat was secured to a mooring behind Julian Rocks in Byron Bay and the four of us transferred to the safety of the rescue boat.

It was a weird experience meeting our rescuers, Les Szabo, Atmo Kusseler and Michael Reina, for the first time. Through the ordeal we felt we had already developed a special bond with them, borne out of their courage and resolve to help us in a crisis situation.

How can you express enough gratitude for the efforts of Brunswick Marine Rescue? And there were those involved behind the scenes that we never even got to meet – manning the tower and operating the radio.

Their efforts and commitment to help others in trouble is worthy of praise but what amazes me is that it is not even their job – this is how they volunteer their time.

I think it is extremely important to acknowledge this because I'm sure their efforts, like so many other volunteer organisations, go unrecognised and unappreciated by the broader community. Following the rescue operation itself, the help we received didn't end there.

"CRACK, the rudder broke and we completely lost all steerage of our 30ft yacht"

The generous support we were given, particularly by those within the rescue squad, who drove us around, lent us cars and assisted with finding accommodation at Ferry Reserve Holiday Park was nothing short of incredible.

Brunswick Heads is a special community which, due to our misadventure, we were lucky to experience for the four weeks we were 'stuck' there. This community spirit which we were privileged to enjoy doesn't just happen by mysterious magic. It's generated by leaders behind the scenes who help because they want to and they care, not because they're seeking praise or recognition.

The experience has taught me that volunteer organisations such as Marine Rescue Brunswick are extremely valuable, not just in the service they provide but also in their contribution to the character and spirit of the community. It has taught me how strong communities really work.

On behalf of Jo, James and Jasmine, I'd also like to personally thank those who helped us and there were too many individuals to mention. But in particular, Atmo and Les, who both went to extraordinary lengths to help us.

Their generous support won't ever be forgotten and great friendships have come as a result.

Peter Hackett
Yacht *Bulletproof*



Peter Hackett, owner of the yacht, *Bulletproof*, sent this letter to the Byron Shire News on 31 December.

Yacht not so 'Bulletproof'

On Saturday November 21, at 1000 hours the Radio Operator on duty at Marine Rescue Cape Byron received a radio call from a yacht proceeding south in big trouble about 1nm off the Cape.

The vessel, *Bulletproof*, had a broken rudder and was unable to steer. The duty crew made a visual sighting and made a position bearing on the yacht. Radio Operators, Rob Asquith and David Morris then initiated rescue action through the NSW Police.

Duty radio operator Penny Fuller at the Brunswick Marine Radio Base was then called by Byron Bay Police. Pagers were immediately activated and *Sea Rescue One* was launched. Radio contact was poor and assistance was required from MR Cape Byron relaying messages. A change of shift at Brunswick had Otto Vornegger take over as radio operator.

A passing trawler responded to a flare from *Bulletproof* and stood by in the rough conditions until *Sea Rescue One* arrived. Because of the seas and strong wind the Brunswick rescue vessel experienced difficulty in spotting the yacht. Cape Byron was able to direct *Sea Rescue One* to the yacht by visual observations and radio contact.

The police had Marine Rescue at Ballina on notice in the event that their assistance could also be required.

The co-operation of the three Marine Rescue units was excellent. Cape Byron was able to relay radio communications between the Brunswick Rescue vessel and the yacht, as well as to Brunswick and Ballina..

Thanks to the efforts of the Brunswick Rescue boat crew, who had an extremely difficult task to accomplish due to the yacht's instability, the disabled vessel was eventually towed to a safe anchorage.

Peter Stynes
Byron Bay

Penny Fuller
Brunswick

DON'T RISK GOING WITHOUT A 406

Registration of 406 MHz distress beacons is mandatory. You can register online with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority. Registration is free.

www.amsa.gov.au/beacons
1800 406 406



Australian Government
Australian Maritime Safety Authority



From 1 February 2010, 121.5 MHz EPIRBs are no longer licensed for use. Any person found activating a 121.5 MHz EPIRB may find themselves liable for a fine.

DISTRESS BEACONS

The 'Shift to 406' in February 2009 saw the greatest change in global distress monitoring since the instigation of satellite monitoring of 121.5 MHz. For the first time in Australia, all boat owners, commercial or recreational, depending on their areas of activity were required to carry a registered 406 MHz Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon.

A year later, registration of new beacons continues at a steady rate but Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) staff believe that nearly 30% of distress beacons (EPIRBs, Personal Locator Beacons and Emergency Locator Transmitters) remain unregistered, placing their owners at risk.

Registering and updating your beacons' details is both free and easy. You can go online at any time to update your trip details, your emergency contacts and even the passengers you'll be taking out for the day. By having access to this key information, AMSA's Rescue Coordination Centre in Canberra can tailor the most appropriate response to assist you in an emergency.

Some boat owners elect to share their beacon amongst friends or co-owners. While this is not encouraged by AMSA or the state police, sharing a beacon requires careful attention to the registration details provided, and ensuring that the contact details reflect who will be carrying the beacon on the day. Using the "Comments" box to provide further particulars also provides essential information to rescuers.

Boat owners considering buying a new boat or EPIRB should be aware of the benefits of buying a GPS-fitted distress beacon. GPS beacons provide your location to the Rescue Coordination Centre much faster than a non-GPS beacon. Non-GPS beacons rely upon the signal from the beacon being picked up by a polar orbiting satellite which may take over an hour to occur. GPS beacons also provide your location to within an area of 120 metres, rather than the 5 kilometre area that a non-GPS beacon supplies. This difference in search area means that rescuers have a smaller area to search and can assist you much more rapidly.

Remember – GPS beacons give you the best chance of being found rapidly and to further enhance your 406 Beacon ensure that it is registered with current details of your contacts, vessels and your intended trip.

For more information on Distress Beacons or to update your details, please visit <http://beacons.amsa.gov.au/> or call 1800 406 406.



Hanging Out at Hanging Rock, Batemans Bay



Radio Operators John Shelton (rear) and Ray Ward



Our last call out as Coastal Patrol was received at the Hanging Rock Base at 1700hrs on New Year's Eve.

A family of five required a tow from Longbeach, up the Clyde River to Nelligen. They were very grateful for the assistance and also the fact that they would be the last boaters helped by the orange uniformed members of Coastal Patrol Batemans Bay. It was the end of an era in the Bay and the start of another exciting one, being part of a new state-wide professional, volunteer marine rescue organisation.

Friday January 1 was our first day as Marine Rescue Batemans Bay. In our new blue uniforms, the unit was kept busy with 31 boats logging on. Over the first three days of the New Year we logged on 114 vessels, provided assistance to seven, including one callout to search for an overdue vessel 'up river'. We towed two 10m yachts, five runabouts and located an upturned kayak at North Durras.

On Saturday our members were also busy, running bingo to raise funds as well as

preparing for our fund raising markets on Sunday. These monthly markets at Batehaven introduced Marine Rescue to the public with a favourable response to our new blue look.

Recently, Marine Rescue Batemans Bay has been involved in three separate unfortunate events, incidents at Pebbly Beach, Tuross Heads and Moruya, with four people losing their lives. Our hearts go out to the families involved.

We thank the efforts of our neighbouring MRNSW units at Ulladulla, Narooma and Kioloa along with the SLSA and the Water Police during those times, and we are thankful for the good working relationships we have with each other. A debrief with the Water Police was held at Narooma after the Tuross fishing boat incident. Some problems with onboard / land communications were identified and other useful lessons learned.

Batemans Bay is host to many visitors (over 90,000 tourists during summer) and a large number of boats have been flocking to the boat ramps. Touch wood... no serious ramp rage as yet.

The 196m, Bahamas flagged, cruise ship *The World* visited for a couple of days late in December. With her onboard shuttle boats coming and going at a constant rate,

the passengers had a good experience on our shores. From all accounts it was a tremendous success with many day tours injecting money into the South Coast region. We were on standby in case we were needed.

Another larger vessel to arrive soon is the *MS Volendam* which will anchor off the Tollgate Islands on March 16 as part of its circumnavigation of Australia. This ship is larger at 240m, carries up to 1432 passengers and 615 crew. Ship's boats will again bring the passengers ashore.

We have signed and inducted ten new members to the unit recently. We welcome them and their new enthusiasm. We plan to continue holding extra midweek training, both theoretical and practical for new and existing members to assist them gain their CBT competencies. There is a lot to cover and our thanks go to our Subject Matter Experts who share their knowledge and time.

We look forward to being a part of the new era of Marine Rescue New South Wales.

**Martin Richards
Batemans Bay**

Hawkesbury assists 'Merlin'

At 1530 hrs on Saturday January 2 duty Hawkesbury Skipper, Peter Moore received a phone call from the vessel 'Merlin'. Before the phone suddenly went dead the boat's skipper advised that it had broken down in America Bay. Peter had no further information about the boat, size, colour or registration.

The prevailing weather and sea conditions were a factor. It was one of the lowest tides of the year and there was a severe thunderstorm. After assessing the dangers Peter decided to proceed. He and his crew, Moyna Boulden, set out in limited visibility but that was down to almost zero by the time they reached Dangar Island due to increasingly heavy rain, 40 knots wind gusts and waves breaking over the bows of *Mooney Rescue*. The course from Brooklyn to Eleanor Bluffs was maintained using compass, radar and GPS. As the storm finally abated they located *Merlin*.

Peter then contacted the MR base at Cottage Point to seek confirmation of the radar indication that the storm activity had passed. Then, after several radio calls and text messages ensured that 'Mrs' *Merlin* would meet them at a mooring in Pittwater they began a long slow tow. The tow became complicated when *Merlin's* skipper noticed a crack its the inlet cooling pipe. They decided to keep going and pushed on to the Pittwater



Moyna Boulden on 'Mooney Rescue' with 'Merlin in tow

mooring. 'Mrs' *Merlin* was relieved and happy to see *Merlin* safely towed home by MR Hawkesbury. Peter and Moyna got back to Hawkesbury base at 2200hrs for a well earned dinner.

**Ken Anthonisz
Hawkesbury**

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Nothing is ever simple

Around 1745hrs on Wednesday Jan 13 the duty operator, Alan Howes, at the Point Clare base had a call for a quick job to do before dinner.

He sent his duty crew, Terry Reynolds and Dennis Byrne, aboard *Central Coast Lifeboat* to Gosford Boat Harbour where a 30ft yacht had run aground and needed help to get back into deep water. This task was completed by 1815hrs and the rescue boat was returning to its berth at Point Clare. The crew called the base to advise that their task was completed. It was then that the radio operator advised that he had received a 'Pan Pan' VHF radio call from a vessel in trouble in Broken Bay, about 1nm off Lion Island.

“Severe thunderstorm, lightning, heavy rain, squally winds...and seas very confused”

The 50' yacht had one person on board, its roller reefing gear had jammed with the foresail about 2/3rd rolled, and the engine would not start. The skipper provided a GPS position to assist the rescue crew go straight to the location. The wind was 30+ knots from the South East and gusting higher, the seas were 3m and rising. This yacht had a real problem. Police were notified and Marine Rescue Central Coast was tasked to assist.



Terry and his crew reached the yacht about 1850hrs. By then it was just ½ nm off Lion Island. Conditions had deteriorated with a severe thunderstorm, lightning, heavy rain and the squally winds making life unpleasant and seas very confused.

The rescue boat crew got a line aboard the yacht and began a tow south towards Pittwater to a mooring suggested by the Water Police. Progress was slow due to the strong southerly and the jammed sail. The yacht skipper and boat crew decided to head west to shelter under West Head so the owner could free the jammed sail. This was successful and it was then decided that the safest location would be Refuge Bay. The yacht was placed on a mooring in Refuge about 2130hrs.

The rescue boat and its weary crew finally got back to the Point Clare base about 2215; so much for a simple and quick job before dinner.

Ron Cole
Central Coast

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*A separate plotter/laptop is required to display the vessels information.

Helo Evacuation at Little Box

Marine Rescue Central Coast was involved with the medical evacuation of a worker from a dredge working on the bar at Little Box Head at the entrance to Broken Bay early on Saturday afternoon of December 12.

Around 1330 hours, radio operator Ron Jackson, had a call from the local Waterways Safety Officer seeking urgent assistance to transport NSW Ambulance paramedics from Ettalong Public Wharf to the tug, *Betts Bay*, at Little Box Head. A male worker on board was suffering severe chest pains and immediate medical assistance was required.

Rescue Vessel Skipper Terry Reynolds and his crew, Brent Malcolm and Gordon Ellis, on *Brisbane Water Lifeboat* collected the paramedics and transported them to the tug. Once on board the tug the paramedics decided that the man should be evacuated by helicopter. On arrival the helicopter pilot assessed the location. He asked that all vessels in the immediate vicinity be asked not to use radar or MF/HF radios while the helicopter was nearby due to possible interference with instruments. He also asked that the channel be closed while they landed a paramedic by long wire. Eventually the pilot decided they could not land on the dredge or tug due to the amount of equipment onboard, so the helicopter landed their doctor and another paramedic on nearby Lobster Beach. From there they were transported to the *Betts Bay* by the Waterways Rigid Hull Inflatable boat.

Once the patient was stabilised it was decided that the best evacuation plan was for *Brisbane Water Lifeboat* to transport him on a stretcher back to the ambulance waiting at Ettalong Public Wharf. The man was finally carried ashore about 1530hrs. and taken to Gosford Hospital. He was treated for gallstones and released two days later. He immediately returned to work. Dredging is now completed.



Helicopter crew assessed the possibility of landing a paramedic onto the dredge. He was landed on nearby Lobster Beach.

Photo: Terry Reynolds

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Raffles and Rescues at Coffs Harbour

December continued at the same hectic pace as the rest of the year.

The fundraising team provided a luncheon at the base for Coffs Harbour Health Campus Volunteers. Linda Jones organised the sale of tickets in the Rotary Club of Burwood Christmas Car Raffle and also raffled, in just over an hour, a framed photograph of 'St George Legends' donated by Club Marine Hot Current Game Fishing Tournament, raising over \$800.

Coffs Coast Freemasons generously donated a digital radar unit to be used on our rescue vessel CR2. The Freemasons were welcomed to the base for a morning tea and tour following the presentation.

A group of High School students from the RY Marine programme and the Ted Noffs Foundation also visited the base in December. The month finished on a social note with a Christmas Party at the Coffs Harbour Showground and New Year's Eve BBQ at the Beacon Hill base.

On January 1 we changed to Marine Rescue NSW. January also saw a change in leadership with CMDR Lindy Powells stepping down and replaced by Acting Unit Commander Chris Stratten. Lindy is not lost to the unit and is now our Administration Officer.



CR2 'bringing them back' at Coffs Harbour Jet

CR2 had a busy couple of months with tows and assists. Two of these occurred while on escort duty for the Coffs Coast Nation Offshore Outrigger races. The Christmas New Year period had the usual influx of holidaymakers to our region with a corresponding increase in logons and incidents. Quite a significant number also joined our MRSS register and made donations. We received major donations from local businesses Pacific Explorer, Spirit of Coffs Harbour, The Plastics Factory MNC District Women Bowlers Umpire Discussion Group, The Good Guys (LCD TV for overnight watch keepers) and Coffs Harbour Slipway along with Coffs Harbour Marine who assisted after our whale encounter.

The Beacon Hill Base was the chosen site for a Mayoral reception for the competitors in the Pittwater to Coffs Harbour Yacht Race. It was well attended by Coffs Harbour Mayor, Councillors, Local Member Andrew Fraser, and most of the Coffs Harbour yachting community.

Thanks to the local businesses, local community and volunteer whose support enables us to provide a high level of service.

Bill McCarron
Coffs Harbour

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Dennis Byrne (left) and Sherwin Hensby busy cooking at the MR Central Coast Christmas Fund Raising BBQ at Gosford Yacht Club for their twilight sailors.



Bruce Hale (left), Richard Amiss and Theo Arfaras (right) of Broken Bay in their new uniforms, trying out the new MR Lifejackets on board the Broken Bay Rescue Vessel.



Bryan Roberts, Eden Unit, receiving his National Medal from Andrew Constance MP, Member for Bega. Story p29



Port Macquarie's Rescue 1 and crew enjoying Sydney Harbour as part of the Marine Rescue NSW Australia Day fleet.



The final Meeting of Coastal Patrol Forster Tuncurry before its transformation to Marine Rescue NSW - Forster Tuncurry



Acting Commissioner of Marine Rescue NSW, Glenn Finniss, introducing Her Excellency The Governor of NSW, Professor Marie Bashir and the Premier of NSW, the Hon Kristina Keneally to Marine Rescue members on Australia Day.



View from stern of Ulladulla's Encounter in the 'washing machine' of the Ferrython.



Marine Rescue and NSW Maritime vessels forming part of an Exclusion Zone on Sydney Harbour during Australia Day events.



Vessels from Marine Rescue Ulladulla, Botany Bay, Port Macquarie and Broken Bay travelling line astern on duty on Australia Day.



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Hawkesbury arranges Bridge to Bridge ‘Safety Net’

Marine Rescue Hawkesbury was invited by the NSW Water Ski Federation to set up a safety network for the “FEROS Hotel Group Bridge to Bridge 2009 Ski Race” held over the weekend 21-22 November 2009.



Barry McGrath (above) from Hawkesbury at his waterside radio and check point for the Bridge to Bridge.



Ahoy there!

Did you know you need a Marine First Aid Kit?

Call St John 1300 360 455



Unit Operations Officer Peter Moore said “There were 300 Ski boats plus 1200 crew and skiers involved in this year’s event. With a network of 80 Check point boats including members and friends of Marine Rescue Hawkesbury, Cottage Point and Bar Point, SES, Rural Fire Service and St John Ambulance, this year’s event was a great success”. Peter went on, “Our duties included tracking 300 competitors, keeping the river clear of unauthorized vessels, clearing debris, reporting breakdowns and ensuring the safety of all competitors and crew and assisting broken-down boats at the conclusion.”

MR Hawkesbury also provided 6 water ambulance vessels assisted by teams from St John Ambulance, who have specialist training in emergency procedures involving on-water accidents.

Peter Moore commented, “Competitors in the Bridge to Bridge reach speeds of 160 km per hour and the Super-class boats complete the 110 km course in 40 minutes.”

This event would not be able to take place without the support of the volunteers.

**Ken Anthonisz
Hawkesbury**

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Special membership promotion! All new members who join Marine Rescue NSW before April 30 will automatically receive two entries in this draw. All existing members will also receive two entries automatically, there's nothing more to do.

Existing Member Bonus! All existing members can increase their chance of winning by introducing new members before 30 April. **You get two bonus entries for each new member!**

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The closing date for this promotion is 30 May to ensure that all new members will have time to join by 30 April 2010 and receive their membership number. All existing members will have time to encourage someone they know to join by April 30 and claim their bonus entries. Just include your own membership number AND the number/s of the new member/s you have introduced.

Remember, everyone who already has a Marine Rescue NSW membership is already automatically entered. Only members who have introduced one or more new members must enter here.

Go to the Marine Rescue website www.marinerescuensw.com.au find the link to **Harbour Cruise Membership Promotion** and complete the entry form. Please complete a separate entry form for each new member you have introduced.

You will need the **name** of the new member, the **unit** they have joined and their **membership number**.

Terms and Conditions. The prize must be chosen by the winner from the options stated above. Bareboat option is subject to assessment by charter operator of winner's boating ability. Prize is valid for 12 months from publication of winner announcement in Soundings Issue 3, June 2010 and may be taken any time mutually suitable to the winner and charter operator and excludes long weekends and public holidays including Easter, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Eve and Australia Day. This competition is conducted by and for Marine Rescue NSW, 239 Spit Road Mosman, NSW, 2088.

Merimbula visit to the RCC

On December 10, 2009, members of Marine Rescue Merimbula travelled to Canberra to tour the Australian Maritime Safety Authority's new Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC).

The group was met by the Officer of the Day, Dave Cole, along with Peter Welch, Senior Maritime Officer (SMO), and Darryl Coventry, SAR Officer. The RCC has recently moved its offices into a new state of the art facility in the heart of Canberra and Merimbula members were given a presentation detailing the RCC's role and the assets they have at their disposal.

During the visit, RCC staff quietly went about their tasks. One officer was handling the forced landing of a light plane in Geelong that resulted in the plane's locator beacon being activated and another was investigating an EPIRB signal in the heart of Sydney. (It was an accidental activation.)

Members also saw the Control Centre that looks after the HF DSC network. Of special interest was the live satellite display showing real-time coverage of the satellites relative to our location on earth. It was quickly evident to all members present that you must have a GPS enabled EPIRB, and you must register your EPIRB with AMSA. SMO Peter Welch said, 'Of the 135,000 EPIRBs sold last year only 100,000 have been registered with AMSA'. In the event of an activation that makes the RCC's job much more difficult to track down the owner of the device.

Peter also commended the Far South Coast Marine Rescue Units who worked together with a publicity drive to round up the old



L/R: Aaron Van Kampen, Merimbula, Daryl Coventry SAR Officer RCC, and Barry Harrison, Merimbula in the new AMSA Rescue Coordination Centre Canberra

121MHz EPIRBs. These units are now only detected by aircraft and continue to cause headaches at the RCC.

I recommend MRNSW members visit the RCC if you are in Canberra, you won't be disappointed.

Barry Harrison
Merimbula

An advertisement for Gerroa Boat Fishermen's Club. It features a scenic view of a bay with a boat in the foreground. The text reads: "Gerroa Boat Fishermen's Club", "The Club With The Million Dollar View", "Open Everyday for Lunch & Dinner", "Saturday 6pm Meat Market followed by Live Dance Band", "Monday Night Carpet Bowls", "Thursday 10am Bingo", "CROOKED RIVER ROAD, GERROA (02) 4234 1004". There is a circular logo on the right side.

An advertisement for WIREs. It features a large image of a white pelican with a long beak. The text reads: "Help our injured wildlife", "Every year thousands of marine birds and animals are injured by plastic bags, fishing line, hooks and sinkers. If you see an injured bird or marine animal please call WIREs on 13000 WIREs or Australian Seabird Rescue on 0428 862 852.", "WIREs", "Donate to WIREs at www.wires.org.au or to Australian Seabird Rescue at www.seabirdrescue.org." There is a small logo for WIREs at the bottom right.

An advertisement for Versa Dock. It features a large image of a yellow and black inflatable boat docked at a pier. The text reads: "VERSA DOCK", "Modular Drive-On Docking Solutions", "WALKWAYS - COMMERCIAL - BOATS - JETSKIS", "P: 0448 911 222 E: info@versadock.com.au W: www.versadock.com.au". There is a small logo for Versa Dock at the top left.

Sea of blue

The year 2009 ended with a highly-charged Christmas Party and Unit Awards Night that was our last as members of Coastal Patrol.

At the Unit Awards Night members' contributions to the success of Central Coast Division over its 38 years at Gosford were recognised when engraved champagne flutes were distributed by CMDR Patricia Fayers.



'Central Coast Lifeboat' with scouts whose Raft Race ended prematurely

Over the past three months our radio/phone contacts total 7745 and we have assisted 39 boats with 110 POB. We have participated in an instructive SAREX at Water Police MAC in Sydney, including a chance to go out on *Nemesis* which was a buzz for those involved. A contingent of members the annual Merchant Seamen's Service in December at Norah Head. The Unit provided safety vessels for the fireworks barge, towing it to its location on Brisbane Water for Radio Station 2GO on Dec 19 and for Gosford City Council on New Year's Eve. These many small services are appreciated by the community and are opportunities to enhance our community awareness.

The change to Marine Rescue NSW, as Central Coast Unit, was celebrated together with a New Year's Eve event, where we catered for a group of forty from a nearby retirement village. All enjoyed the 2100hrs fireworks display. In January our new blue uniforms and fluoro-yellow lifejackets were on display. On Australia Day our vessels led and escorted the annual Parade of Boats as well as providing a safety boat service for the Raft Race. A scouts' group raft came apart prematurely and required assistance. More barge towing and safety services were performed for the Lantern Parade and fireworks in Woy Woy Channel on Australia Day evening.

Central Coast Lifeboat was on duty for the 'Big Swim' from Palm Beach to Whale Beach along with other Marine Rescue vessels, our AVCG colleagues as well as private boats. The swimmers faced lumpy seas but all were well cared for.

A sea of blue uniforms was in place at our first MRNSW Mess Meeting on Feb 3. It was a contrast to our previous working rig. The amalgamation has already raised the profile of Marine Rescue on the Central Coast and has resulted in a surge of new members over the past couple of months. We look forward to integrating them into our Unit and, bringing the same dedication and professionalism to our tasks as in the past.

Patricia Fayers
Unit Commander

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'Lakeside Blues' at The Entrance

Our Marine Rescue uniforms have had a tremendous impact, Members are delighted to wear their new gear, there has been a lift in morale and we now present a very professional image.

The 'Lakeside Blues' is now a reference to the boys and girls in blue at Marine Rescue The Entrance. We like our new identity and believe it is well supported by our local community.

In the Tuggerah Lakes area, The Entrance Unit is a 'Training Mecca' for Marine Rescue, thanks to the dedication of Jim Davidson who conducts the training courses. Eight of our members are undertaking their Marine Radio Operator Certificate of Competency Course. There are also a couple of the more experienced people busy working to become Skippers; it's all go at The Entrance Unit.

Our Watch crews have also grown in numbers, so that each group has about five crew plus the Skipper. Each weekend all are involved in training and seamanship exercises to ensure our rescue crews' skill levels are up to marine rescue standard. The training also includes an eye on BBQ technique & lunch preparations.

All members are encouraged to bring their BBQ skills to 'The Plate', to ensure crews on watch are well fed.

Just before Christmas, we worked with the local TV Network (NBN Central Coast) to develop a 'Boating Tips' segment for their Web Site. We participated in a shoot where one of our members, Darrell Tompkins, covered various boating tips to ensure Smart Skippers are prepared for "Safety at Sea". Darrell did a great job and we look forward to working further with NBN and to establish a possible sponsorship in the future, for the web site boating tips.

On Christmas Eve and Australia Day, Dave Smith and John Adair provided on water safety support for the fireworks displays held at The Entrance and at Canton Beach.

The New Year's Eve fireworks were handled by Commander Stew Masters & his crew Vicki Buchanan.

They experienced the fireworks from a front row seat out on the lakes.



Darrell Thompson with Gavin Morris from NBN TV

In December a cabin cruiser with seven people on board was stranded in shallow water. Skipper Stew Masters and the rescue crew were called out at 0230hrs. The other incidents involved fishermen in runabouts. Both rescues were to assist two people on board and in each case the vessels were towed to safety.

**Denis O'Mara.
The Entrance**



The majority of boating fatalities each year are caused by drowning. Why?

People usually drown because they fail to, or do not get the chance to, wear a lifejacket.

You should wear your lifejacket at times of heightened risk such as:

- Boating in poor weather conditions
- When a squall or storm approaches
- Boating alone, away from immediate help
- Crossing surf bars.

Exposure to cold water and air temperatures can bring on life-threatening hypothermia. A lifejacket provides some insulation and helps to keep you afloat.

Encourage children on board, or people who are poor swimmers, to wear a correctly fitted lifejacket at all times. This is particularly important when they are in open areas of the boat where it is possible to fall directly overboard.

Remember: It won't save your life if you're not wearing it.

Info Line on 13 12 56 www.maritime.nsw.gov.au

NSW MARITIME



Peach WAT0763

Commissioner's Column

continued from page 3

This event gave us an excellent opportunity to showcase our new vessel livery which has been received with overwhelming support from all areas of the public and boating industry.

I would also like to congratulate those deserving volunteers who received National recognition in the Australia Day Honours List. These volunteers are recognised for their commitment and tireless effort toward volunteering in emergency services and marine rescue.

The Emergency Services Medal is a just acknowledgement of the dedication of Kevin Hill ESM and Peter Campton ESM with over 50 years of volunteer service between them.

Mike Stringer ESM AM, was recognised for 37 years of volunteer service and honoured as a Member (AM) in the Order of Australia.

Marine Rescue NSW has had a splendid start although there is still a way to go in bringing the other Units into the organisation.

We will soon receive a report from Emergency Management NSW through the State Rescue Board who will independently review and determine the needs of NSW for Marine Rescue assets along the NSW Coastline.

This will provide a blueprint of where Marine Rescue NSW Units, assets and radio bases should be located for the optimum safety of the NSW Boating Public.

Glenn Finniss
A/Commissioner
Marine Rescue NSW

Flag presented to Forster Tuncurry



L to R: CMDR Graeme Parker, John Turner MP, Tony Breen, Janet Christou, Dennis Travers and Terry Jobson

On Thursday Dec 17, 2009 Marine Rescue Forster Tuncurry had a visit from The Hon. John Turner MP, State member for the Myall Lakes electorate.

John Turner presented a one yard NSW State Flag to CMDR Graeme Parker for use at the Forster Tuncurry Base, to replace the previous flag that was stolen.

The flag is proudly flown both day and night, made possible because our base flag pole and its flag are floodlit at night

Rex Martin
Forster Tuncurry

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^^ Total cost over 12 months \$779.28

Changes at Port Stephens

The rollout of our new uniforms is underway, with over 75% of our 145 members now proudly wearing the Marine Rescue NSW kit.

Our local boating community, as well as the public, have had accolades for a single marine rescue service, with the 'not before time' comment being heard by our radio operators and from visitors to our control room every day.

Our Unit Commander Geoff Moore will stand down on March 1, after three years at the helm. He will be sadly missed as Commander, three years is a superb effort in a very demanding and time-consuming role.

Geoff's wife Louise will also reduce her workload as Centre Manager and Supply Officer. Geoff and Louise will still remain as committed members, so we won't lose their talents and knowledge.

Malcolm Milliken will replace Geoff in this demanding position. Malcolm has been Administration Officer, Patrol Education Officer and Senior Regional

Officer (Central), a position he will continue to hold.

There were no major incidents over the Christmas New Year period although a fisherman was swept off the rocks at the bottom of Tomaree Head on January 31.

Due to the quick thinking of a bystander who called the MR Base on his mobile, and following an 'All Ships' call, the fisherman was picked up by a nearby vessel and returned safely to land.

Another incident occurred at 1700hrs on February 3. A sailboarder was swept out to sea, and with severe sea and wind conditions, was unable to return. The Water Police tasked our rescue vessel and the Westpac helicopter. The board rider was plucked from the sea by the helicopter. His sailboard was recovered



L/R: Louise Moore, Geoff Moore and Malcolm Milliken

and returned to Port. The incident was over and our boat crew stood down at 1733hrs; a great co-ordinated effort.

In January we held a short training course on the new electronic Offshore Tracking System and we will commence a full trial once MRNSW gives authorisation.

We have installed an Automatic Identification System. The advantage is that it does not rely on the web based system and so locates all local AIS traffic.

Bob Young
PR Officer Port Stephens

Roseville Bridge Marina

rosevillemarina@bigpond.com



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The café ECHO on the marina will also tantalize your taste buds.

Busy at Eden

We have now got our tongues around our new call sign, Marine Rescue Eden, as have our boating community, well, most of them. Of course, there are still a few slips, but that's change for you.

The transition to Marine Rescue NSW coincided with the onset of our busy holiday period. Some statistics for December/January: 890 local log-ons with 3977 POB, 38 OTS originated and 98 vessels (other than day-run vessels) visited our Port. Fortunately, incidents remained low, with only three requiring Water Police assistance.

Our volunteers maintained a 24-hour radio watch at the base during the 2009 Sydney Hobart Yacht Race. The CYCA's Race Management Team monitored race entrants' positions with twice daily skeds. From our perspective, the 2009 race was uneventful. Yachts returning from Hobart, post race, were encouraged to use the OTS system to monitor their passages home.

At the end of November 2009, we ordered up some fine weather for a BBQ to welcome four new members, as an early farewell to Don McTackett (former DC) and Marg Sheaves, to thank our members for another year of volunteering and to celebrate the festive season. Don and Marg finished up at the end of December 2009 after 9 and 14 years respectively, and we thank them both for their years of service.

Australia Day organisers, the Eden Killer Whale Museum, invited our Unit to provide a flag party to raise the flag at the official opening of activities on January 26. Five members



Flag Party L-R: Cliff and Gail Truelove, Aileen Bowles, Glenda Wood, John Bowles.

formed the flag party, and it was a great opportunity to show our new uniforms as well as to participate in and support local community activities.

On February 2, we gathered at the Base for a special presentation ceremony for Bryan Roberts who was presented with his National Medal by Andrew Constance MP, Member for Bega. Bryan accrued his 15 years of eligible service in the Australian Navy, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade in Melbourne and, since August 2003, with RVCP/MRNSW. Andrew Constance praised and acknowledged the work of all volunteers in the local community. We congratulate Bryan on his attainment of this award. Members, past and present, joined Bryan to celebrate.

Glenda Wood
Unit Commander



Two major nautical successes recently have helped raise the profile of the popular life raft hiring arm of Great Circle Marine's business.

The company had a raft aboard trans-Tasman rower Shaun Quincey's boat when he became the first person to row solo from Australia to New Zealand. He completed his historic passage on March 14 after 54 days at sea and survived capsizing twice and bumping into a sperm whale. Shaun said he would not have undertaken the challenge without a life raft he could fully rely on.

Also, winner of the 2009 Sydney to Hobart, Two True had two Great Circle Oceanmaster life rafts aboard when it took handicap honours on the Derwent River.

Great Circle's managing director, Paul Montgomery said the company had hired rafts to a large proportion of boats in next week's Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht Race.

"Hiring rafts is a popular alternative for people who don't need a raft year-round and don't want to pay regular servicing fees," he said.

Mr Montgomery said the company had lost one hire raft in an emergency rescue off the New South Wales south coast but he was thankful two lives had been saved.

Two men were attempting to deliver the 9.14 metre (30-foot) steel yacht, Owlzat from northern Tasmania to Sydney when bad weather hit off Eden. The boat started broad-siding and was in danger of hitting rocks when the crew radioed for help.

They deployed the four-man Great Circle Life Raft they'd stored near the transom in the cock-pit and the rescue helicopter hauled them to safety from the raft. The raft was tied to the motor-sailor but neither had been sighted since that night.

"The rescue is a reminder that the unexpected can happen very quickly at sea and it's imperative that reliable safety equipment is kept handy," he said.

The company also sells rafts ranging from four to 12-person including commercial survey approved and Yachting Australia compliant rafts and others suitable for coastal cruising.

The rafts are available in canisters with stainless steel cradles or soft-pack valises and are very competitively priced. Other safety equipment available includes EPIRBs, locator beacons, hydrostatic release units, rescue streamers to make you highly visible in the water if you go overboard and immersion suits to decrease the risk of hypothermia.

Contact Great Circle Marine on 1300 306 381 or check out the website www.greatcircleliferafts.com.au <<http://www.greatcircleliferafts.com.au/>>

Terrey Hills Celebrations

January 19 was a big day at the Terrey Hills Radio Base.

Unit Commander Ron Woosey welcomed guests from Marine Rescue NSW, Federal and State Parliaments, Warringah and Pittwater Councils, and company representatives. They had gathered to acknowledge the change of name from Coastal Patrol – Terrey Hills Division, to Marine Rescue Terrey Hills.

Visitors came away very impressed after observing the busy complexities of the Radio Base and a demonstration of the sophisticated tracking system used.

Richard Griffiths, Manager of BIAS Boating at Lane Cove, who was accompanied by National Operations Manager Jeremy Hill, made a presentation of two mounted VHF radios and an EPIRB. Richard had learned that Terrey Hills PR Officer, Valerie McLean, had spoken at a local school about the work of the Terrey Hills Radio Base. Teaching young people safe boating practices is very close to Richard's heart and something he is already involved in, thus his help in this area.

Supplying educational aids for use with children will help them more fully understand the concept of a Radio Room and he believes it will be another step to ensure safe boating practices.

In thanking BIAS for its generosity, CMDR Ron Woosey made mention of other organisations that had also contributed financially to the Base. In particular he mentioned Hudson



Visitors in the radio room

Building Supplies for providing a computer to facilitate the new Electronic Offshore

Tracking System. Hudson's Chairman, Colin Ravenhall, became a member in December 2009 and had expressed his belief that the process should be computerised. He was pleased to direct funds for this purpose.

Valerie McLean
PRO Terrey Hills



Donation from BIAS Boating



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Ulladulla plans & prepares

During November and December an enormous effort went into the preparation of Encounter for Australia Day. The task of painting the superstructure became a succession of problems as humidity, rain, high winds and even a swarm of termites conspired to slow the work.

On one day we had to toss all the painting gear ashore before heading out to sea to one of two charter boats that needed assistance simultaneously. *Lewis Dunn*, our Category 2 vessel recovered the other boat in trouble.

In addition to the superstructure work, that was done by local contractor Breakwater Boats with substantial assistance from members, the upper deck was completely chipped, stripped and re-painted, the lower deck was patched and completely re-painted and the fly-bridge 'cockpit' was re-painted – all by members. Opinions on the appearance of the 'new' boat were somewhat mixed until the decals were

finally affixed and then all agreed that she is now looking magnificent. Our members also look smart in the new uniforms, which have attracted many favourable comments from the public.

We are continually amazed at the generosity of the Ulladulla people and businesses. We are grateful for their continuing support, without which we would be unable to keep the boats in such good condition and our radio room so well equipped. Takings at the January markets were a record, and our people manning the shop have worked their socks off raising funds during the busy holiday period. *Encounter's* equipment is now fully modernised and, barring the unexpected, expenses over the next few years should be restricted to just normal maintenance.

The Unit has a long term plan to replace *Encounter* with a completely new vessel, and it is well on track. The current cash position is now ahead of the business plan.

A busy fundraising period is coming up in the next couple of months, starting with the Milton Show, where the gates will be manned by an army of members over the

two days, and culminating in the annual Golf Day. This requires a great deal of planning and foot-slogging.

Thanks to the hard work of Boat Master Bill and his offsider Charlie, *Lewis Dunn* is in good shape. The change to MRNSW colours is partially completed. The e-Tec engines continue to perform well, so this workhorse has years of work ahead of her.

Ulladulla's Australia Day visit to Sydney was a resounding success. All who participated thoroughly enjoyed the experience including some newer crew-members who gained valuable sea time.

We enjoyed meeting members from all three of the former organisations, particularly the people from Terrey Hills.

On the way up to Sydney, *Encounter* participated in a successful radio exercise organised by Don Alexander and it was a pleasure to have an (albeit brief) visit by some of the 'voices' from 'Marine Rescue Sydney' – from our end you people sound very competent and professional.

Doug Musker
Ulladulla



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'James T. Lees' staying in Bermagui

Bermagui Unit has had an influx of six new members as a result of media coverage and general interest. Commander David Gelme believes that the new blue uniforms have also been a help.

David said "The uniforms give us a presence and a professional appearance. People look and wonder who we are. The uniforms are a great asset when we sell raffle tickets and at fundraisers. People now regard us as an emergency service". The new members have made training their priority. Just before Christmas, Skipper John Perry handed out certificates of attainment to crew trained by Education Officer Aaron van Kampen who is now in Merimbula. Long Service Awards were made to Barry Wisener, Sandy Livingstone and Dawn and Brian Kenyon. Members such as these are the mainstay of volunteer rescue organisations.

Bermagui members are very thankful that the rescue vessel, *James T. Lees*, is to remain in service in Bermagui. The boat, although old, is much loved by members and crew. John Perry when discussing the recent 'boat needs survey' said, "I would like a boat like the *James* but in fibreglass". This says a lot about the



The James T. Lees at Bermagui

suitability of the *James* for Bermagui conditions and the type of rescues done.

The crew are now working hard to achieve Skipper 3 level to ensure there are skippers for the boat. The *James* has had a few issues lately, but for a boat of her age is going well. Bermagui is indebted to Michael Jubb at the Bermagui slipway for his help with the vessel mooring and for assistance with repairs.

Recently we made community appeal seeking financial assistance to retain the *James*. It is believed that this also resulted in a number of people joining the Unit to become boat crew. The Saturday BBQ is still the mainstay of our fund raising.

Denise Page
PR Officer Bermagui

Fatal yacht crash inquiry blames GPS

An internal inquiry has found Australian yachting identities Andrew Short and Sally Gordon could have avoided deaths in a racing accident four months ago if they had kept a better lookout.

The 48-year-old veteran skipper and his 47-year-old navigator died when their maxi-yacht slammed into Flinders Islet during an overnight race between Sydney and Wollongong in October.

An inquiry by the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia has concluded it was "miraculous" that 15 other crew members managed to get to shore without serious injury. The inquiry's report says the grounding was a "genuine accident".

"The inquiry could not identify a single reason or cause of the accident but we have identified a series of errors in judgement, which by themselves could have been inconsequential, but combined are contributory factors to the tragic grounding," the report said.

The most significant factor was the general navigation [of the yacht].

The inquiry found the main reason for the crash was that the crew relied too heavily on an inaccurate GPS chart plotter that was out by at least 100 metres.

"If this is the case, the failure to lookout ahead and adjust the course to clear the islet and off lying dangers proved fatal," the report said.

The crew told the inquiry that Andrew Short was making frequent reference to the chart plotter.

The inquiry found the main reason for the crash was that the crew relied too heavily on an inaccurate GPS chart plotter that was out by at least 100 metres.

"What is difficult to understand is why a visual reference was not made to the islet," the report said.

The crew could see the whole islet including the low ledge to the north when one mile away. The inquiry cannot understand why the course was not adjusted to pass clear to the north and why with 18 people on board, somebody did

not draw attention to the fact the boat was heading straight for the rocks.

The inquiry also found the organisation of the boat was relaxed and informal, and the brunt of the workload fell on Andrew Short.

"He was on the helm for all but a few minutes - a total time of about seven hours," the report said.

The club has recommended all racing yachts be fitted with automatic identification transponders.

It also proposed that all crews in offshore yacht races be fitted with a GPS.

The inquiry has found an emergency management team should be dedicated for each race and all sailors should complete a sea safety survival course.

The report has been sent to the Water Police, who are finalising the official investigation into the accident.

Meet the Members

John Finn
IT Officer, Marine Rescue NSW
Coast Guard Cottage Point

When not engaged on MRNSW duties, I work in IT, specialising in telecommunications and related technologies. My roles are generally a combination of consultant, program manager and architect.



I joined the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard in January 1998 and am a member of Cottage Point Flotilla. I have been Deputy Flotilla Commander for five years, acting Flotilla Commander for two months, Vice Captain of IT for Sydney Squadron for eight years. I took on the role of IT Officer for Marine Rescue NSW in October 2009.

There is an often-quoted line from Kenneth Grahame's classic story, "Wind in the Willows", that captures perfectly the essence of boating: *"There is NOTHING - absolute nothing - half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats."*

I started messing about in boats when I joined the RANR in 1979. I enjoyed my time but as my civilian career progressed and marriage loomed, time got the better of me and I went inactive. Some ten years and three children later, I joined Coast Guard after being assured that it required "only one day a month". Yeah, right.

Apart from the messing about aspect, of course, I do feel that everyone should consider giving a bit back to the community. While the benefits to the community are fairly obvious, most people have no idea of the personal benefits and sense of satisfaction that community service provides. There are few things better than watching my crew perform well in difficult circumstances while giving assistance to someone who is having a very bad day. Volunteer Emergency Services is a pretty small community and the marine area is a subset of that. This engenders a very close knit, supportive environment which is just as well because when things get tough, everyone relies on the person standing next to them to do their job well.

You get to work with people from a staggering array of different "real" jobs, learn new skills, hone your existing skills, even pass on some of those skills to your colleagues - and have the opportunity to actually change someone's life for the better, all while you're simply messing about in boats.



Scouts Australia NSW
Level 1, Quad 3
102 Bennelong Rd
Sydney Olympic Park NSW 2127
PO Box 125
Lidcombe NSW 1825
Ph: (02) 9735 9000
Fax: (02) 9735 9001

What is Scouting?

Scouting is a worldwide movement that has shaped the development of youth and adults for 100 years. Scouts are in every part of our community, and Scouts is the biggest and most successful youth organisation in Australia. Nearly 20,000 boys and girls in New South Wales from wide cultural or religious backgrounds or with an intellectual or physical disability enjoy an almost unlimited range of activities.

The aim of Scouting is to encourage the physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual development of young people so they may play a constructive role in society as responsible citizens and as members of their local and international communities. This aim is achieved through a strong and active program that inspires young people to do their best and to always be prepared.

Scouting is fun!

Scouting is definitely fun, and it also prepares young people for life in the adult world by teaching responsibility for their own actions and progress. These achievements lay a solid foundation for the success of our future Australian leaders. But don't tell the kids they're learning...they think they're just having fun!

No matter the age of the participant, Scouts provides fun and exciting programs that promote active learning. Whether the young boys and girls are canoeing, camping, visiting museums or helping their local community, the activity is sure to teach them about themselves and the world around them.

Scouting is Adventurous!

Each year, all sections of Scouts learn to share responsibilities and to live with each other through adventures set in the outdoors. Camping, abseiling, caving, horseback riding, fishing, rock climbing and diving are just a few of the exciting experiences that a Scout may have achieved in his or her time as a youth member.

Scouting is Challenging!

Scouts challenge their minds as well as their bodies. Not everyone looks for the outdoor buzz all the time, so Scouts have challenging activities linked with the internet and amateur radio, performance arts such as singing, dancing, and acting and awards linked to citizenship, community service and personal spiritual development.

Scouting is Commitment!

Scouting makes a direct and positive impact on the community by teaching positive values and leadership skills to youth. Every year, Scouts and their leaders contribute thousands of volunteer hours to their local communities. Sharing time with the aged in the local community, helping with Clean Up Australia Day, and planting trees to help rescue the Murray River are just a few examples of the commitment Scouts make to their communities.

As a parent of a youth member, you are encouraged to contribute some of your time to the Group either through fundraising, working on the Group Committee or assisting with some of the activities.

For more information, please call 1800 SCOUTS (726887) or visit www.scouts.com.au

Terrey Hills takes on water

No, Terrey Hills was not flooded on January 25, nor moved closer to the shore, but there were 'takes' and plenty of them.

Unit Commander Ron Woosey and six Radio Operators from Terrey Hills accepted an invitation from David White and Elizabeth Watts to visit Marine Rescue Cottage Point.

After a warm welcome and generous hospitality, the group was taken on the Sailfish 8.7m rescue vessel to Patonga. On the return journey they took part in a rescue tow and medical situation, providing a greater understanding of what it is like for boat and crew and to realise the difficulties experienced in answering a marine radio in heavy weather. The exercise was an excellent 'Getting to know you' opportunity.

Australia Day strengthened relationships between Marine Rescue units from Middle Harbour, Botany Bay and Ulladulla. The Terrey Hills people were constantly 'jumping ship' between the Middle Harbour RHIB, two Waveneys, (from Middle Harbour and Botany Bay) and *Encounter* (from Ulladulla).



Terrey Hills members with David White (in white) on the Cottage Point vessel.

It seemed most appropriate to have been welcomed aboard *Encounter* by Unit Commander Doug Musker because a joint radio exercise had been carried out the day before between Terrey Hills and *Encounter* as it steamed from Ulladulla.

Effective transmission range was tested and the ship's position was tracked all the way from Ulladulla on DCN7 and VHF82.

Ron Woosey plans to make unit visits a more common practice to form good personal and working relationships. He extends an invitation to any members to visit the MR Radio Base at Terrey Hills.

Valerie McLean
PR Officer Terrey Hills



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Meet the Members

Simon Denneen
Marine Rescue Terrey Hills
Chair Communications Strategic Implementation Team
Member Volunteer Marine Rescue Council of NSW



I have worked in various fields including NSW Police and Department of Defence. Most recently I have been a full-time volunteer in the Coastal Patrol, now Marine Rescue NSW.

My interest in marine rescue began as a small boy living next door to the Coastal Patrol Broken Bay Division. In those days the members used their own boats and on weekends the marina filled with visiting boats carrying smartly dressed crews in their khaki uniforms.

At age nineteen I inquired about joining the Coast Guard Cottage Point Flotilla but weekend work commitments while at university prevented this.

Nine years ago I saw an article in the Manly Daily calling for volunteers to operate radios at Coastal Patrol Terrey Hills. By then I had held a Restricted Radio Operators Certificate of Proficiency (RROCP) for nearly ten years and I spent every waking hour (when not working) on or around boats.

Within a short time I was appointed Operations Officer. In 2004, I became Division Commander. I had a very dedicated team at Terrey Hills and we were able to make real progress in fundraising and improving infrastructure.

I was later appointed as the Patrol's Radio and Communications Officer. Perhaps the highlight of my career in marine rescue to date was my appointment in 2006 as the Patrol's Deputy Officer Commanding (North). I continued in that office until the commencement of Marine Rescue NSW on January 1, 2010.

I have had many memorable experiences during my time in marine rescue ranging from being able to respond effectively to several May Day calls to seeing a unified marine rescue service in NSW become a reality in 2010. My interest and involvement in radio communications has already enabled me to take part in helping develop a more comprehensive VHF radio network in NSW.

The past nine years have been extremely rewarding but it is the future that I feel holds the most exciting possibilities.

As a single agency we now have the critical mass and potential to work together to bring about great things, both for our organisation and, more importantly, for the delivery of rescue services to the NSW community.

I can hardly wait to see what the next nine years will bring.



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May Day Call

On December 5, Narooma received a May Day call from Moruya Base with a boat reported sunk about 3nm off Tuross, with two people rescued and two still missing.

Narooma's rescue vessel, *Strathmore*, left its berth at 0855hrs and by 0945 had arrived off the incident site. It found just the bow of the boat sticking out of the water and nothing in the immediate area. The crew started a search pattern down the current and wind lines. The expanding creeping line, single vessel search was continued downwind (SSW) for a distance of approximately 6.5nm.

By this time, SouthCare helicopter had arrived and it conducted sweeps along the shoreline, the Surf Rescue helicopter had also arrived, along with TV helicopters. We headed northwards back to the sunken vessel and were then directed to stand off as PolAir was attending with police divers aboard. Two additional vessels from Batemans Bay and a NSW Maritime boat from Narooma were to join the search and a four vessel grid search was scheduled to start at 1250.

As the grid search was about to commence a message was received that the two missing men had been located, deceased, in the bow of the boat.

We were about halfway home when called back to the scene to tow the vessel back to Narooma. At 1730, as the rescue boat discharged its tow, within metres of the jetty, the assisted vessel rolled and sank again. That night the crew was able to relax at a major unit fundraiser at the Narooma Services Club with 'Rock around the World' performing.

On January 2, at 1520hrs, we were tasked to assist a 5.5m vessel with engine troubles on the western side of Montague Island. There were six reasonably large males onboard, all wearing only shorts and singlets. They transferred to our rescue boat because of the rough conditions and during the return voyage three of the men

were put into the crew compartment because they were so cold and shivering.

One day in January, while we were painting the back cabin of the rescue boat, Steve Whan MP, Minister for Emergency Services, and his wife stopped to have a chat. We invited him to come for a trip on the Saturday during our training session.

It was too rough to go to Montague Island so we did the training at the entrance bar. Minister Whan was impressed, and said he really enjoyed his time onboard.

**Graham Brown
Narooma**



Steve Whan MP, Minister for Emergency Services, aboard the Narooma rescue vessel during training exercises. Note the angle of the horizon.

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Meet the Members

Owen Danvers
Unit Commander
Brunswick Marine Rescue



Owen Danvers on duty in the MR Brunswick Radio Room

Operational Area

Hastings Point in the North to Lennox Head in the South and 7nm to sea.

Rescue Vessel

7.4m Category 2, Mono Hull of fibreglass reinforced plastic construction with a 300hp Yanmar diesel motor. Accredited by NSW State Rescue Board.

Marine Radio Base

Fully equipped and accredited by NSW State Rescue Board, with an observation and listening watch over the Brunswick River entrance from 0600 to 1700 hours 7 days/week. We monitor channels 16, 22 and 73 on VHF and 88 and 90 on 27 MHz. Those who use the waters around us can be assured of our readiness for any emergency.

In 1997, my wife Andrea and I decided to retire to this area with a few acres to grow tropical fruit and breed cows. When this didn't fill the day we looked around to find out if we could do some volunteering in this community.

The local NSW Volunteer Rescue Association was looking for Radio Operators for their Marine Division in the newly built MRB. At the end of 2002 both of us passed our MROCP, then began training before going solo early in 2003.

The association was looking for a Coordinator to take over the day to day management of the MRB from the Boat Captain, Rob Goodacre, who was doing both jobs. I understudied him until September 2003 when I was elected.

I have continued in this position and will soon be handing over to my replacement. Like me, he will be able to depend on a great team here at Brunswick. They deserve full credit for their quick response to whatever is asked of them, from normal radio duties, emergencies, training, and fundraising to public relations.

I encourage anyone who is looking for a rewarding and absorbing interest to come and join us in Marine Rescue NSW.

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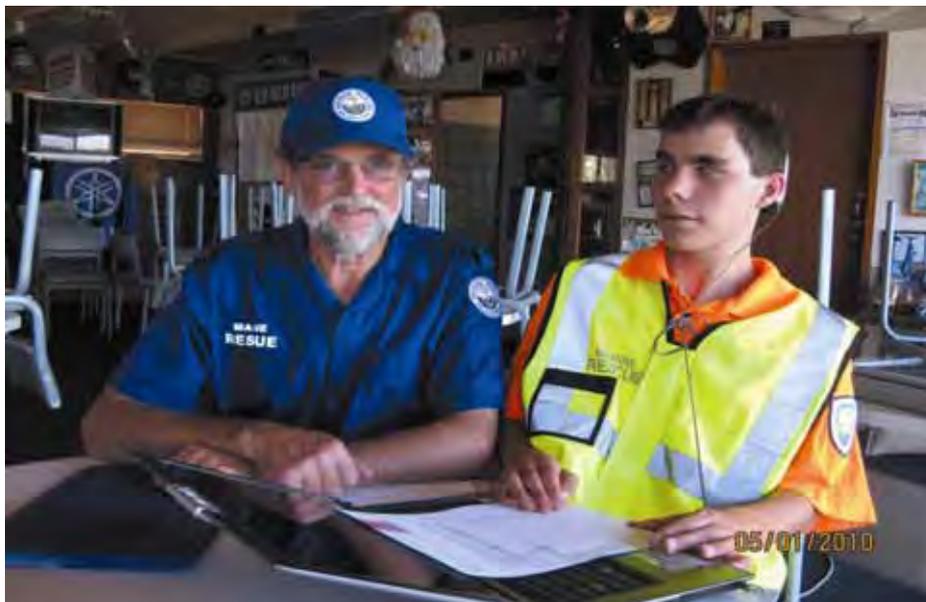
Enthusiasm for the job is never short on supply when young Jesse Edwards is on duty at the Merimbula Unit.

Jesse, who is visually impaired, joined Marine Rescue NSW in late December of 2009 when Commissioner Glenn Finnis accepted his membership application just prior to his 18th birthday.

Jesse first visited the then Coastal Patrol over 12 months ago wanting to join up as a member and undertake his Marine Radio Operators Certificate of Proficiency. The Commander, Charles Divers, guided him through his MROCP and Jesse was on his way. From then on, every Sunday he would religiously rock up to the base to assist the on-duty Radio Operator.

Jesse is not unaccustomed to speaking on the radio, as he is the host of his own radio show on the local community radio station, so moving across to the Marine Radio band was not too difficult for him.

Now a Probationary Member, Jesse decided he could help by arranging a fund raiser for the Unit. He conceived the idea to hold a Trivia Night. Jesse collected prizes from the people and merchants of Merimbula, arranged the Function Room at the



Jeff Hinde & Jesse Edwards planning for the Trivia Night.

local RSL club for Friday January 22 and pulled together a committee of members and non-members to help him.

Unit Commander Barry Harrison said, "Jesse did a terrific job of arranging this fundraiser. Close to 200 locals attended the evening and well over \$2000 was raised on the night. Jesse is clearly part of the Marine Rescue family here in Merimbula and we are all very proud of his participation as a volunteer. Jesse never lets his visual disability get in his way; he is one very determined young man".

**Barry Harrison
Merimbula.**

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Meet the Members

W. John Thompson, Life Member ESM JP
Marine Rescue Port Stephens



August this year will mark 42 years of my service in marine rescue. This began in August 1968 with Coastal Patrol Broken Bay Division, where I was allocated to the crew of *Valikin*, a 38ft single diesel cruiser.

In those days all vessels used were privately owned by members, you called your skipper "Sir" and you saluted the Officer Commanding, who was then H.W.G. Nobbs, a founding member of the Patrol. I followed this practice with my own boats, *Contessa*, a 38ft twin diesel cruiser which I built, and then the 48ft *Pamela*.

I became Division Commander of Broken Bay and was skipper of *Kiwi* the first Patrol-owned vessel, an ex RAAF recovery vessel presented by the New Zealand Insurance Company.

In 1981, my wife, Monica, and I moved to Port Stephens where I was instrumental in forming the Port Stephens Division of the RVCP, which I am proud to say it is now one of the finest marine rescue units in Australia.

When we acquired *Girralong*, in 1988 she cast a spell over many members including me and the present OC of the Patrol, Peter Phillipson. I was appointed skipper of *Girralong* after returning from Swain Reef, 280 miles off Gladstone in Queensland. On Australia Day 1995, she transported HRH the Prince of Wales to Darling Harbour. I had the privilege of being among all the Senior Officers who were presented to HRH.

In 1995 Port Stephens DivCom Rod Reeson and I went to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution in Poole UK to buy the Arun class Lifeboat that has been our Port Stephens flagship, *Danial Thain*, ever since.

I have held many positions within the Patrol including Division Commander, Regional Captain, Deputy Officer Commanding, Deputy Chairman of the Board and Officer Commanding when the Patrol had 50 Divisions; 27 in NSW 4 in Victoria, 4 in South Australia, 14 in Tasmania and 1 in Queensland.

At the time of changeover to Volunteer Marine Rescue NSW, I was Lifeboat Inspector and Patrol Search Master. I have been honoured for my work with Life Membership, the ESM and a Bronze Albatross. I look forward to the challenges ahead.

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Dear Ron Cole

After receiving issue 1 of Soundings I was compelled to write for two reasons. Firstly, congratulations to all involved with the development of Soundings with its catching incorporation of the Marine Rescue NSW badge within the name and the rings representing soundings, well done.

Secondly but not least, I would like to publicly thank Peter Phillipson for his informative update of Marine Rescue NSW at Batemans Bay recently. Peter has put his heart and soul into the establishment of Marine Rescue NSW while still functioning effectively as OC of the RVCP. It is for the dedication of Peter and others like him why Marine Rescue NSW will be a success. Keep up your good work Peter it is well appreciated.

Wido Melis
Kioloa

To whom it may concern at Marine Rescue NSW

I am writing to relay a brave act I observed last Wednesday evening (Jan 13) in Broken Bay. Silly as it may sound, I was on a headland walking my dog during a severe storm and noticed a rescue boat coming out of Brisbane Water to assist a large yacht that was heading towards Lion Island. The seas were quite ferocious with wind that must have been at least 50km an hour. It was raining and as light faded, lightning was everywhere. The people on the rescue boat should be thanked at the very least for being brave enough to go out in that type of sea, and from what I saw, there was no hesitation by the driver as he or she left the confines of Brisbane Water into what must have been like being in a washing machine to them.

As I watched I noticed the yacht could not get its front sail all the way down which must have made it difficult for the rescue boat to tow. The rescue boat then got the yacht out of the wind near West Head where the sail was removed.

I am not sure where the yacht was towed, perhaps the Hawkesbury or one of the various bays down the creek? Outstanding effort.

Ms Gayle Royce (See story on page 17 - Editor)
Email address supplied

Hi Ron

Just received "Soundings" – Looks Good – Reads well – Fresh & Crisp – What more can I say but - well done!

Let the show begin.

Rob Smith
Central Coast

Greetings

This my first chance to send in a comment about the new magazine as we have been very busy over the Christmas New Year period. All I can say is what an excellent publication. Having been involved in previous years doing work on the Coast Guard magazine this is well done and is a tribute to the new organisation. I am looking forward to future editions.

Rob James
Coast Guard Sydney (member for 30 years.)

Letters or emails to the Editor are welcome, with praise or criticism. Please keep your messages short and to the point. Members please include your Name and Unit and others please include a return address.

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