

SOUNDINGS



Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW | Issue 5 Dec 2010

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Cover photo

Shoalhaven's rescue vessel entering the Crookwell River. Built by Seatamer, the vessel is 9.2m LOA, Beam 3.2m, draft 0.8m, twin Cummins 210HP diesels, 1500 litre fuel. Range about 400nm. 2 x 27Mhz, 2 x VHF and MF/HF Radios, Seatrak, Furuno Radar, Mobilert MOB system. Min crew 2 (usual crew 3/4).

Editorial

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From the Editor's Desk



Ron Cole

At the end of December, Marine Rescue NSW will have completed its first full year of Operations.

Though much has been accomplished during the twelve months and finally the Coast Guard Bases have officially 'come onboard', there is still much more to do.

During December, MRNSW will hold its first Annual General Meeting. The Original Board of Directors who have steered the company during its early course and will give way to Directors elected by the members. We thank the Original Directors for their sterling efforts on our behalf. Their work has been done in the background with little or no acknowledgement.

The new elected Directors have responsibility for the future of the company, and we wish them well in their deliberations.

If you look back through *Soundings*, the stories have highlighted not only the variety and complexity of the tasks undertaken by our marine volunteers, but the diversity of the Units that now comprise Marine Rescue in NSW.

It has also become very clear that each of our waterways has its own peculiarities, and the local knowledge of our rescue crews is vital, not only for their safety, but for the safety of those they set out to assist, especially when weather conditions are less than ideal.

Just as there are unique features of some waterways, so there is a need for special training and maybe even special rescue vessels for those conditions. One size will not always 'fit all' and our planning and training must always be flexible to allow for the environmental differences.

The core training must always be consistent and relevant to the tasks we are asked to undertake.

Another challenge that is becoming clear is the rapid need to adopt new technology for our radio bases and rescue vessels. New equipment involves not only acquisition and installation costs, but training and running costs as well.

The more we come to rely on technology, now largely computer based, the greater is our dependence on electric power to operate the equipment. As each base becomes better equipped, it will need to plan on what to do in the event of a power failure or blackout.

Knowing how to protect equipment and recover after a power failure is just as important as knowing how to use the equipment in the first place.

I hope you enjoy the current edition and look forward to your comments. Above all, I wish each reader of *Soundings* a very happy Christmas, and a safe, healthy and prosperous New Year.

Ron Cole
Editor



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From the Commissioner

It's that time of year...

It's that time of year when the workload of our volunteers increases exponentially, whether it is manning the radios, working on the boats, training or on fundraising activities. This year, the effects of La Niña will see an increase in rain and most probably a greater number of storms off our coast, so we need to be prepared, not only for responding to vessels in distress, but also to assist our fellow volunteer emergency services, the SES and RFS, if called upon. As you may have seen in recent Notices, orders have been placed for vessels which should start to arrive in early January. These vessels will be fitted out with state of the art equipment which includes night vision and heart defibrillators.

It is also the time of year where the members vote for the Directors of the Board of Marine Rescue NSW. Our Directors oversee the activities of our organisation and set our strategic direction. Marine Rescue NSW has come a long way in a short time, and this has been achieved through the actions of your current and previous Board members. These volunteers have worked hard for you and deserve our highest accolades for the role they performed, firstly in their role as Facilitation Group Members, and secondly in their role as the Original Board.

These committed volunteers are Kay Cottee AO and Dianne Beamer MP, as co-Chairs, Jim Glissan QC, Michael Stringer AM ESM, Frank Robards ESM, Peter Phillipson ESM, Bill Carter, Richard Taffs, Elizabeth Watts, Neil McCartney, Michael Seale, Sharyn Gillings ESM and Simon Denneen. On your behalf, I thank them sincerely for playing an important role in the development of MRNSW, and I look forward to



working with the newly elected members of the Board into the future.

This 'Boating Season' we will introduce the CompassNet system (Radio Club, MRSS, Associates membership database) and the CompassTrack system, that will give us an Online Tracking System (OTS) to monitor Log Ons/ Log Offs and assist us in monitoring transiting vessels along our coastline. This later system has been eagerly awaited by the boating public and will enhance marine safety in NSW. As these are new systems, it is anticipated that there may be some minor issues, so please bear with us in their development. I thank you for your understanding.

With Christmas rapidly approaching, I extend a heartfelt thank you, to you the volunteers and your families, as you support the boating public, through dedication and commitment in providing a marine rescue and communication services for New South Wales. I also wish you all the best for the Christmas period and a safe and enjoyable New Year. I look forward to working with you in further developing MRNSW into a nationally recognised professional marine rescue service.

Merry Christmas
Glenn Finniss

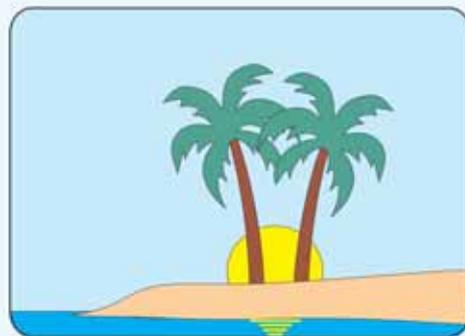


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From the Deputy Commissioner

The last two months have been particularly busy, interesting and I believe, very productive for MRNSW. As Deputy Commissioner, my primary aim over that time was to meet as many Unit Commanders, Unit Staff and MR Members as possible, with the view to familiarising myself with each Unit's operating environment, infrastructure and equipment. The visits also provided me with the opportunity to brief members on the key concepts and initiatives that will be introduced to guide the operations of MRNSW over the next few years. Importantly, I had the opportunity to hear first-hand the Units' positions and concerns, as well as their suggestions on how the functioning of the organisation as a whole could be improved.

Since July, I have visited all Units in the Monaro, Illawarra, Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers Regions, most of the Units in the Hunter Central Coast Region and a couple in the Sydney Region. I apologise to those Units I have not yet visited but give my assurance that they are not forgotten. I will visit the remaining Hunter Central Coast and Sydney Region Units within the next two months.

I thank all members of the Units I visited for taking the time to meet me. I am extremely heartened by the dedication, professionalism and enthusiasm demonstrated, and the positive attitude of the members who simply want to 'get on with the job'.

It is clear to me that MRNSW has a long way to go in helping guide and support the Units in the areas of Operations, Administrative (including Finances), Training and Communication Support. Progressively, my focus will be directed towards introducing the important policies, guidelines and other support measures that will enable Units to go about their business as smoothly as possible.

Operationally, MRNSW is making progress. In terms of vessels, the first orders have been placed with Steber, Gemini and Kevlacat. The roll-out of these vessels is expected early in the New Year. They will come fully equipped with state of the art electronics and communication equipment. Radio bases are also being refurbished with particular focus on replacing antenna arrays and in some cases the towers to which they are connected.



Heinz Mueller

CompassNet and CompassTrack have commenced operations at Terrey Hills, Swansea and Port Stephens. The systems will be progressively introduced into other Regions and Units as familiarisation training is conducted and the systems are installed.

MRNSW is reviewing and either re-drafting or developing its Operating Procedures. This will be a process of continuous improvement and Units will be advised of new or revised SOPs as they are posted.

With Christmas around the corner and the busiest time of year for our members fast approaching, I congratulate the members (and their families) for their continued commitment to providing an essential and professional rescue service in NSW. I wish all an enjoyable festive season. Merry Christmas and please... keep safe!

Heinz Mueller
Deputy Commissioner





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Doubtless III: A rescue update

Lost at sea, rescued and capsized all in one afternoon made for the experience of a lifetime for two divers and their companions. Now, four years later, their unique experience has been brought to a close by yet another of life's quirky coincidences.

The past – December 2006: Two divers were stranded over Pimpernel Rock, a submerged pinnacle 4nm east of Sandon Bluffs (North Coast NSW), on the afternoon of Saturday December 23, 2006. Their accompanying dive boat, *Doubtless III*, with three companions onboard, had drifted away from the pinnacle while they were below decompressing. On surfacing they found themselves alone in typical north coast summer conditions, strong nor'easter of 25-30 knots, choppy seas, a southerly current running at two knots and sunset approaching, hardly encouraging. *Doubtless III* had commenced searching with rescue vessels from Woolli and Woolgoolga with Iluka/Yamba also tasked. The NSW Water Police vessel, *Fearless*, from Coffs Harbour and the Westpac Helicopter from Lismore joined the search at 1635 hours.

Crews, radio operators and families became increasingly concerned as daylight faded into summer evening light that all hoped would last long enough for a successful conclusion to the search. In response to the "All Ships" radio calls by the Woolli on-scene coordinator for urgent assistance, the chemical freighter, *Sea Cat*, which was passing through the area, diverted to join the search. At 109 metres, its height provided the increased visibility needed in the worsening choppy conditions and the drifting divers' Safety Sausage was spotted by her crew. During this time one of the divers had used his underwater camera to take a photo record of the rescue from the victim's point of view.

After being retrieved from the water by *Sea Cat* the divers were reunited with their diving companions onboard *Doubtless III* for the return trip to Woolli. Relief was short lived, however, as the Woolli entrance bar prepared to claim yet another victim. Crossing at the bottom of the ebb tide in a short and jumbled sea, *Doubtless III* broached and capsized, tipping the crew and the rescued divers once more into the sea. *Woolli Sea Rescue* again responded and gave assistance. Some of the victims had clambered onto the training wall and the others swam south to Jones Beach.

After four and a half hours lost at sea the two divers were once again unexpectedly in the briny. The underwater camera so carefully safeguarded by its owner throughout the ordeal was now lost overboard. Peculiarly, only one or two pieces of gear lost from *Doubtless* were washed ashore in the following weeks.

Fast forward to August 2010: Lismore-based fisherman, Steve Campbell, was walking on Woolli beach when he noticed an odd squarish object on the sand reflecting the morning sunlight. Examination revealed it to be an underwater camera in excellent condition looking as if it had just been dropped. Closer examination showed that the seals were intact and probably the photos too. Upon getting the camera to a professional photographer, it was revealed that the photographs were undamaged and were spectacular to say the least.

The photographic story recorded on film revealed the ordeal of the two lost divers. The owner had taken a series of photos whilst diving Pimpernel Rock and whilst drifting lost with his companion. The gems of them all were the photos of each other as they spotted first *Sea Cat* then the searching helicopter



and it was clear that they had been located. Little did they know then their story was not yet finished!

The camera had spent four years submerged in the sea probably covered in sand thus minimising any external damage and was most likely uncovered and washed onto the beach by the recent large seas.

The rescued divers are now reliving their past through the remarkable photographic record of their hours of despair, followed by elation when they realised they were to be saved, followed by the memories of fate frowning on them for the second time in one afternoon on the Woolli bar. It was so close to the end of one catastrophe when the second so unfairly arrived. We can only imagine the emotions these photos are reviving for the people involved and hope this will finally lay to rest the memories of just six distressing hours, one afternoon off Woolli.

Stephen Reading
Regional Coordinator - Northern Rivers

Port Stephens - Three months - Three MAYDAYS



Rescue vessel 'Danial Thain' in her new Marine Rescue livery

Marine Rescue bases are usually busiest when the weather warms up and more people take to the water. At Port Stephens we tend to spend the quieter winter months getting our rescue vessels and bases 'ship shape', but always we have to expect the unexpected.

Over the past three months we have checked, serviced and updated our radio room and its equipment. We have concentrated on our training programmes so that our crews are well prepared for the summer season. We have also been busy with twenty-three incidents, including three Maydays, a number of boats blown onshore due to gale force winds and some overdue transiting vessels.

The first Mayday call was received from a cruiser that went onto rocks at Fingal Bay. Luckily, the water police were in the vicinity and within sixteen minutes they had the single POB safely onto the police vessel. Our second Mayday was for two young people who capsized their catamaran in rough conditions off Soldiers Point. *Codi-K* was tasked and following an 'All Ships' call from the Base one of the local ferries also responded and was first on the scene. It recovered the young couple from the water. *Codi-K* spent some time searching for the Cat, but in the extreme conditions and failing light had to return to the dock without success. When searching the bays opposite Soldiers Point during the following day the Cat was found secured to a remote mooring in North Arm Cove where it was recovered and returned to its grateful owners.

Then lastly, one of our fishing fleet vessels, with a crew of three onboard, made a Mayday call when sinking off Point Stephens. *Danial Thain* was tasked as well as the Water Police, both

responding quickly to the emergency. The Water Police retrieved the crew, who were in their liferaft but, unfortunately, the vessel could not be recovered. It now provides an underwater haven for the fish it spent its time catching!

Our assists were varied, but mainly were the usual breakdowns or vessels having difficulty in adverse conditions navigating into the safe waters of Port Stephens. One stands out: a call was received from Marine Rescue Foster Tuncurry, whose vessel had lost its steering while towing a whale carcass from a beach near Seal Rocks. *Danial Thain* was tasked, however, a Water Police boat en route to Forster took the job and our crew was stood down without having to leave the dock.

Our rescue vessels are looking smart in their new Marine Rescue livery. During October the Port Stephens annual 'Festival of the Sea' took place and *Danial Thain* was open to the public with display units on the dock where we could explain just who we are and what we do. Over the three days we estimate almost 3,000 people took the opportunity to look over our rescue boat. We had many questions and quite a few membership enquiries.

Our training continues at a great pace in all aspects from MROCP, Watchkeepers, Navigation, Meteorology and First Aid. Our boat crews have also completed their annual Survival Training. After rigorous testing, two new Skipper 3s have been appointed. In addition, our current Skipper 3s have undergone re-accreditation testing and were assessed competent.

Now the summer boating season is almost upon us. We wonder what awaits us over the coming months.

Bob Young,
PR Officer, Port Stephens

Hectic off-season at Ulladulla

A "Mayday", seven call-outs in a five-day period, and a full-on training and maintenance schedule gave Ulladulla a hectic off-season.

The normally quiet winter period was buzzing, with rescues, repairs and recruiting running the members ragged. High on the scale was the Mayday, unresolved but now a suspected hoax that entailed a full-scale search involving three Marine Rescue vessels, a Water Police unit and a fixed-wing aircraft.

It was a telling exercise in terms of cash and resources, but beneficial in effect by putting diverse rescue units through a "real" SAR operation. The hunt, stretching 20 miles to sea, swung into action soon after the Ulladulla radio officer heard the Mayday call about 1300 hours on October 17.

He responded, seeking information, but heard no reply. Then another call was received saying the vessel was "sinking fast and needing urgent assistance". Again the radio officer replied, seeking a location for the distressed vessel. When there was no response, he alerted the Unit's Search Master and Duty Officer.

An "all ships" alert was broadcast on marine channels VHF 16 and 27 MHz 88 asking all vessels in the area to be on the lookout for a boat in trouble. Several responded, but with negative results. Water Police were alerted and search procedures began.

Ulladulla's rescue vessel, *Encounter*, and Port Kembla Water Police craft, *Vanguard*, were taking part in a previously-planned search and rescue exercise off Crookhaven Heads at the time. The exercise was immediately abandoned and the vessels headed towards Ulladulla conducting a search pattern. They were joined a short time later by the Sussex Inlet Marine Rescue unit while the Ulladulla rapid response vessel, *Lewis Dunn*, headed further south towards Crampton Island.

Around 1630 hours, with the four rescue vessels running a search pattern, the Bendigo Bank Aerial Patrol aircraft from Albion Park joined the hunt, flying at 1500 feet and 20 miles out to sea. All worked until darkness forced them to abandon the search without finding any trace of a vessel in trouble.

Fortunately most of the other calls were more "routine", with the exception of the rescue of a steel ketch later in the month. Heavy seas and a big swell resulted in a pitching mast crashing into the canopy on *Encounter's* fly-bridge and causing other minor damage to the Arun Class rescue vessel.

There were a few other dramas with the rescue vessel. Unit engineers spotted a suspect cylinder head during planned



'Encounter's' engineering crew hard at work in the vessel's engine bay, L/R Peter Owen, John Culley, Phil Levy (WesTrac) and Charlie Younger.

maintenance. Their skills and many volunteer hours saved a huge repair bill, with the lads stripping the engine, removing the head and having a crane lift it from the engine room and on to a truck for shipping for expert examination and repair. Thanks to great service from WesTrac, stalwart supporters of the Ulladulla unit, the problem was rectified and the vessel was quickly back in service. New "modern" props have been installed on *Encounter* when no original replacements could be found. The "old" ones have been retained as spares.

There were some novel and profitable, community fund-raising projects, with members catering for a Girl Guide weekend Jamboree near Milton. Then followed another weekend where we acted as marshals and catering crew for the Kidgeeridge musical festival at Lake Conjola. Members earned high praise and a generous donation for their work.

Training and recruiting efforts have been bearing fruit with two new Cat 2 and one new Cat 3 skippers adding to the unit's operational strength. The local video club has almost completed a training video for crew members. Once edited it will become part of the seamanship course.

Recruiting efforts have resulted in an encouraging flow of enquiries and new members in recent months – particularly in younger age groups. Apart from a small and welcome team of juniors, the unit has been getting more interest from "youngsters" in the 30 to 50 age group.

School groups have been showing a lot of interest in our work, and tours of the radio room and *Encounter* have proven popular with tomorrow's members.

Jamie Roberts
PR Officer Ulladulla



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Drama on the high seas, well, on the Parramatta River, anyway!



David Bornstein's Hovercraft

On Wednesday September, David Bornstein, of Marine Rescue Terrey Hills decided to take his hovercraft out for a test run as he had just completed a major overhaul.

David is a backyard mechanic with little experience, and parts rotate at high speed on this type of craft. He had just changed the drive belt, a job which required 3/4 of the craft to be dismantled, so it was with some considerable trepidation that he set out on the river.

Hovercraft have no brakes and don't even actually sit on the water when running. It is said that they behave like sea anchors rather than boats when in the water at rest. The vessel was launched at the Silverwater Bridge ramp in the Parramatta River as this craft needs to be moving at least 8 knots to remain airborne, and there is no speed limit in this area.

Amazingly, all was going well and David was having fun in and out of the mangroves and the mud flats, as well as going around the rotting hulks of two vessels in Homebush Bay, scaring the wildlife and generally polluting the planet! However, his inexperience showed up when he landed on a tiny beach but jammed the hovercraft against a mangrove. After a major tussle, he managed to get free and just as he got back midstream he suddenly lost all power despite a roaring engine! A major bolt had worked loose and the resulting vibration had caused the flexible coupling between engine and drive to overheat and melt. Lots of plastic spider webs all over the engine! Out came the paddle, but other than spinning him round and round, not much directional progress was made. At this time, the wind came up from the wrong direction (naturally) and he was being blown towards Sydney Harbour.

As a trainee at Marine Rescue Terrey Hills, he immediately knew what to do, and was just about to call for help when he spotted a large tinny with a mob of fishos travelling at high speed in the opposite direction up the river. He commented that his act of on-water semaphores, signalling his need of help was in the finest tradition of the seas.

This could have been a rescue 'with a difference' for Marine Rescue.

Valerie McLean
Terrey Hills

Thank Heavens for the Phonetic Alphabet

At 0940 hours on Monday August 4 I arrived at Coffs Harbour Base. It was a miserable morning, with heavy rain and gale force winds that almost obliterated views of the harbour. An occasional break in the weather revealed 3-4 m waves both in the harbour and breaking at the harbour entrance.

I met Lindy Powells who was doing some administration duties as well as acting as backup Watch-keeper. I thought I would be there for about thirty minutes to sign cheques. Bob Ford was in the Radio Room finishing a quiet 0700-1000 watch. As we started the admin work we could hear Bob handing over the watch to Alan Hawkins who had just been blown in.

At 0956 hrs, Bob was ready to leave when 'MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY' on VHF Ch16 filled the Room. In the frisson of silence that followed there was a collective intake of breath before Bob, Lindy and Alan were galvanised into action. The call was from a cargo vessel, *Mimasaka*, 127.7 m LOA with a 19.6 m beam. She had eighteen crew onboard.

The vessel's position was immediately established by lat/long as 20 nm off Sandon Shoals. In very broken "English" *Mimasaka* reported her deck cargo had slipped and she was listing at 40 degrees. Much use of the phonetic alphabet was needed to ensure details were accurate.

Phone calls were made to Water Police, AUSSAR, RCC Canberra, the Unit Commander and Deputy Unit Commander/ Incident Coordinator. *Mimasaka* was contacted for more information and to advise her that a cargo vessel coming to their assistance was 8nm away. Vessels *Sea Harmony* and *Seen Feruga* had changed course to assist the stricken ship.

At 1032, in the middle of the unfolding drama with *Mimasaka*, a phone call came through from the yacht, *Lavinda* (ex Brisbane en route to New Zealand. She had turned back because of the bad weather) and was seeking assistance to enter Coffs Harbour on arrival as she had lost all power. *Lavinda's* position supplied by lat/long was approximately 9nm NE of Coffs (about an hour away). Water Police tasked *Coffs Rescue 20* to assist with *Lavinda*, and her skipper was advised to contact Marine Rescue Coffs Harbour when she was 1nm off the harbour entrance where *CR2* would be ready to take her in tow.

At 1104 *Mimasaka* updated her situation, she was back to 10° list and a rescue helicopter was now above. *Lavinda* advised she was 2nm off harbour.

At 1149 *Mimasaka* called to advise all OK, now proceeding to Singapore.

At 1157 *Lavinda* advised 1nm off harbour, and indicates she will enter the harbour under her own steam (powered by a jib the size of a bikini bottom). Under the conditions *CR2* would not have been able to take her under tow at sea. Even in the harbour, Greg Taylor, Graeme King and Bob Ford found it difficult to get a tow line on board safely.

At 1246 *Lavinda* advised she was safe in the Marina.



Coffs Harbour's Rescue Vessel, 'CR2' in the harbour on a better day than described in the story, with DC Heinz Mueller aboard.

As Lindy, Alan and I watched *Coffs Rescue 20* perform a very risky assist, we heard one of the cargo ships that had come to *Mimasaka's* assistance make a frantic series of radio calls to the second ship nearby. It appeared the two ships standing by could not change course fast enough and were in danger of colliding. Not a word was said between the three of us as we listened and held our breaths. Could this be another MAYDAY?

Thankfully, a collision was avoided.

All of this was interspersed by a great many faxes from the BOM reminding us just how bad the weather was!

All credit must go to Bob Ford who conducted the potentially life-threatening MAYDAY operation in a calm and professional manner, using for the most part the phonetic alphabet (not to mention several muttered expletives). Bob went from a 0700 - 1000 watch, to handling a very serious Mayday Call, to crewing on a very difficult assist.

Credit too to 'scribe' Alan Hawkins who at the end must have had RSI as he maintained the radio log, and to Lindy Powells whose calmness and knowledge kept everyone on an even keel (no pun intended).

As I observed these scenarios unfold and everyone pull together as a team, it made me feel very proud of what we do as Marine Rescue Volunteers.

I watched *Coffs Rescue 20* go out in those conditions and my heart was in my mouth at times for its safety. It brought home, not just what we all do, but the realisation that our boat crews in particular do sometimes, even under strict guidelines, work in extreme conditions.

Andy Taylor
Temporary Tea and Coffee Lady



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PROUD TO SUPPORT MARINE RESCUE NEW SOUTH WALES

Fathers Day Workout for MR Volunteers

Crews from Marine Rescue units were working during the Father's Day weekend's appalling conditions. Marine radios had an unprecedented number of calls for help, reports of vessels adrift from moorings and grounded vessels.

The popular Pittwater-Broken Bay-Brisbane Water and Hawkesbury region proved to be very risky for many who ventured out, including several houseboats that experienced very rough conditions. UC David White from Cottage Point said, "I have not seen wind conditions in Broken Bay of this magnitude in over 45 years of boating in the area. They were infrequently less than 30 knots during this period and exceeded 55 knots at the peak with a short sharp seas in Broken Bay and even in the most sheltered bays."

Andrew Ward from Marine Rescue Hawkesbury said "Conditions were as bad as I've ever seen them."

The calls began at 0220 on Saturday morning with Marine Rescue Hawkesbury searching for a dinghy with two POB missing from a houseboat in America Bay. [\(See story page 13\).](#)

Sunday was the busiest day. At 0315, the Cottage Point crew were called to the aid of an 18ft cruiser that was only just being kept from breaking up on rocks by four tired, cold and wet young men. They and their boat were taken to the Akuna Bay fuel wharf. Immediately after this came a race to prevent a 53ft yacht from going aground in Coal and Candle Creek. A fouled propeller had left it with no engine power. The Cottage Point team towed this 12 tonner to join the cruiser at the Akuna Bay wharf.

While at Akuna Bay they noticed a 42ft yacht had broken all but one mooring line in its berth and was smashing into a smaller boat next to it. They secured this vessel intending to come back later in the morning to retrieve the lines they had used. They returned to Cottage Point base by 0630 where they barely had time for a coffee when a call for help at 0800 sent them to America Bay where a 43ft yacht had lost its mooring, fouled its propeller and was close to grounding. This resulted in a demanding tow job back to Bayview through extremely choppy seas and winds gusting to 55kts.

There was barely time to place this yacht on a spare mooring near Scotland Island when an urgent call from Marine Rescue Hawkesbury seeking assistance with a houseboat with ten people on board and one motor out of action, in danger of going ashore at Hungry Beach back on the other side of West Head. A second houseboat nearby was heading for Lion Island but was advised by the Hawkesbury crew to go back to less dangerous waters. This boat took the advice, but the first and much larger houseboat was making no progress and it was too large for the Hawkesbury rescue vessel to tow.

The Hawkesbury skipper coached the houseboat skipper by marine radio and he was able to stay off the rocks until the larger, more powerful Cottage Point vessel arrived. A tow line was attached with extreme skill in the difficult conditions and the houseboat taken back at barely 3kts to safety at Parsley Bay.

After returning to the base for a late lunch, the Cottage Point crew had barely taken a couple of mouthfuls before they were



Yacht under tow in Pittwater heading for Bayview in winds gusting to 55 knots

again called for assistance. This time it was three kayakers in Smiths Creek who were unable to make way against the very strong winds and needed help to get back to Apple Tree Bay.

Then, a few minutes after returning to base, a call for help was received from a private houseboat in Mooney Mooney Bay. This vessel had broken from its mooring when its deck cleat and supporting deck had been ripped from the vessel and it had been driven ashore. The Cottage Point team secured a line to the bow of the houseboat and dragged it safely back to its mooring. Commander White said, "Full credit goes to the sturdy and capable vessels CG31 and CG32 which performed faultlessly in



Stock photo of CG31 (on a good day) in AVCG livery

these extreme conditions.

But my greatest admiration goes to the team on the day, Joanne Dickson, Terry Watai, Peter Liccioni and John Bensley whose professionalism, calmness and 'can do' attitude made me a very proud team leader."

**David White
Cottage Point**

Busy October at Lake Macquarie

Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie had a busy month in October, with its new vessel being commissioned and its annual Open Day.

Lake Mac's new vessel, *Lake Macquarie 11*, was commissioned by Kay Cottee and Glenn Finnis on October 9. Despite a grey and dreary day with rain the turnout was great and we were very pleased to make the new vessel officially part of our fleet.



Kay Cottee presents a piece of 'First Lady' to Unit Commander Jim Wright

At the commissioning, Co Chair of the MRNSW Board, Kay Cottee, presented Unit Commander Jim Wright with a small piece of *First Lady*, the vessel Cottee sailed around the globe in 1987/88, to be mounted in the boat as a good luck charm.

At the end of October we held our annual Gala Open Day in the park next to our base. This time the weather looked more kindly upon us and provided us with a nice sunny day. Entertainment on the day included local school bands, a local rock band, a pipe and drum band, and a Zumba demonstration.



L/R Unit Commander Jim Wright (behind lectern), Kay Cottee, Commissioner Glenn Finnis, Unit Chaplain Richard Wrightson. (Two members in yellow wet weather gear are holding up umbrellas)

The Open Day further featured a good selection of market stalls, displays by other emergency services organisations, our barbeque and drinks stand, kids' entertainment, and a surf ski race that has become an annual event.

Visitors were encouraged to have a look around our radio base to learn more about what we do.

It was a very successful day with plenty of visitors, and we're already looking forward to next year!

Marine Tylee
PR Officer – Lake Macquarie

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Hawkesbury search for two missing persons

At 0220 hours on Saturday September 4, radio operator Moyna Boylan on duty at Marine Rescue Hawkesbury received a call from a houseboat located in America Bay, north of Sydney.

The caller reported that two persons had just been blown away in a tender from another houseboat moored nearby. Those in the dinghy were struggling to make headway against the wind and tide. The caller was concerned for their safety, and said they were now out of sight.



L/R Peter Moore, Moyna Boylan and Andrew Ward

Broken Bay Water Police were contacted and they tasked Hawkesbury to assist. Peter Moore and Andrew Ward were despatched hastily to conduct a search in America Bay. The weather was unkind with wind gusts of 30 knots and visibility reduced in the driving rain. The first house boat was located and then a search conducted along the shore area assisted by the use of the rescue boat's radar.

Two French students and their dinghy were finally located. They were very wet and very cold. They were transported, together with their tender back to their houseboat. The ten other persons on board were unaware that their friends were missing or of their misadventure.

Peter and Andrew returned to the base at Mooney Mooney at 0415 hours on Saturday morning, wet and hungry and wondering if the rest of the Fathers Day weekend would continue in the same way. It did. *(See story page 11)*

Ken Anthonisz
PR Officer Hawkesbury

Kayak search at Woolgoolga

It has been quiet at Woolgoolga for the last 3 months.

We had two assists in August and one in October. We searched for two lost kayakers on Oct 15. The kayakers left Woolgoolga in rough seas. They were reported as 'in trouble' and had disappeared. Water Police tasked us to search north of Coffs Harbour while the Police searched from Coffs Harbour to the south. The Westpac Rescue Helicopter was also involved. It was raining and the seas were very rough with waves to 2.0m on a large swell. An hour later we received a call that the kayakers had been found safe on the beach in Coffs Harbour.

Ken Heath - Woolgoolga

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Does this qualify as a Dark and Stormy Night?

Monday 8 November, 1300 hours: Having a little more than a passing interest in meteorology, I watched the formation of clouds to the west of Sydney. There was a bit of everything - Cirrus, Alto, Stratus and most impressive of all, towering Cumulonimbus.

The Cumulonimbus also had Mamma formations in its base. Mamma? Ask your Meteorology Instructor. Sydney was in for an interesting afternoon and evening. The storm hit the western areas of Sydney around 1600, but appeared to reach stage three (ask your Met. Instructor) in the Sydney Northern Beaches area.

1935 hours: Just sat down with a nice glass of red and the phone rings. If this is our Treasurer telling me how little money we have, I think I will pretend it is a wrong number. No, it's Marine Area Command - there is a prawn trawler in Broken Bay that has broken down and is drifting towards the rocks, the skipper is very agitated. Can we help? Without really thinking, I respond. "Of course we can". We can be underway in around forty minutes if the trawler skipper makes further contact tell him to put an anchor down and that we are on our way.

The CEO Domestic Affairs says, "Why do you have to go?"

The response of, "It is what we do and it's why they pay us the big money" does not seem to cut much ice. The call out list comes into play. Fortunately for the trawler the first two on the list are available and are on their way to the Base within minutes.

2010 hours: There is a Radio Licence Course underway in the Base as we invade with wet weather gear, grab keys and depart without the usual pleasantries. These students are going to be able to observe a real life situation at no extra charge as our Education Officer agreed to handle the radios in the base.

2020 hours: The pride of Broken Bay Unit, *Peter E Weston*, is underway in deceptively calm but very dark conditions. We have scant information on the position of the trawler. He is north of a prominent point in the Bay and drifting south. This is strange as we have a southerly wind, which is starting to pick up.

2040 hours: After a number of confusing position reports the trawler is sighted and with very little fuss is taken in tow, much to the relief of the skipper as they were literally metres from the hard stuff and it would appear he did not have an anchor. We set a course for his mooring.

The weather Gods now decided to test both vessel and crew. The wind reportedly gusted to fifty knots, the rain went horizontal and the lightning did everything it could to destroy our night vision. It was about this time when the First Officer asked, "Does this qualify as a dark and stormy night?" "My oath it



Stock photo of the 'Peter E Weston' Broken Bay's Cat 2 rescue vessel, a Steber 28, on duty on Pittwater

does" was all I could manage while trying to pick out prominent features, as the radar picture was a mess due to the heavy rain.

Thor must have decided that we had passed the test, as lightning became our ally as it lit the vessels and moorings as we entered the trawler's bay. The wind however had other ideas. The trawler's Skipper tried to help by giving directions to his mooring. These consisted of turn left when he meant right. He obviously had become disorientated due to the conditions. However, as a great man (Clint Eastwood) once said "You adapt, you overcome".

With the trawler safely on its mooring and recovering from an hard close quartering exercise the trawler Skipper came aboard to help complete the paper work. There is a move, which I can understand, to recruit younger members. Neither the Skipper or trawler crew commented on our greying temples or chin stubble. In fact, their only comment was "That was a bloody good job as this mooring is difficult enough in daylight". Some people just do not have a sense of humour, as he did not get the "that's what they pay us the big dollars for" either.

We conducted our debrief on the voyage back to our mooring. It consisted of "A good job boys, we have saved the vessel and the crew are safe. We managed not to bend, break or destroy any persons or property".

1100 hours: Arrive home after putting *Peter E Weston* to bed, completing the logs, faxing and filing forms. The CEO Domestic Affairs is tucked up in bed with a book. The glass of red is nowhere to be seen. Was it drunk or disposed of? That I still have not been able to determine.

Vic Lawrence
Broken Bay

Whoopee! Sea Rescue One is back in the water!

It's been a difficult time for the past six months because our vessel, Sea Rescue One, has been out of action since June 20. Damage was sustained during a bar crossing on a training exercise.

It's been a frustrating process, but *Sea Rescue One* is back in the water. We're just waiting for re-accreditation and a few minor things to be completed and she'll be ready, just in time for the warmer months when it gets busier.

Our thanks go to Jimmy Keogh of Emergency Surf Rescue, and Craig Reid, of Brunswick Surf Club, for their assistance while our rescue boat has been out of action. Thank you also to the three local vessels (approved by Water Police) that have been on standby for rescues during this time. *Kareela*, a fishing charter vessel, skippered by Chris Facey or Rob Goodacre, *Windarra*, a LFB, skippered by Mono Stewart and *Starlight* also a LFB skippered by Craig Wraight. *Kareela* has performed three rescues during this time. We were concerned for boat owners' safety, with the rescue vessel not available. It has been comforting to know that if anyone gets into trouble, these three vessels and Surf Rescue are available.

How opportune, that the day we got the standby Skippers together for a photo shoot, we had a visit from Heinz Mueller, Deputy Commissioner and Steve Reading, Northern Region Coordinator. They thanked the Skippers, Brunswick Surf Club Captain and Surf Rescue for their assistance. They also visited our Radio Base and had a quick cuppa with training officer Ed Reid and some of our Management committee.

We are very concerned that a surfer will be run over or a vessel will flounder on the bar due to surfers on the bar. Surfers should know that a vessel entering or leaving the narrow Brunswick Bar



has a very small window of opportunity to cross; it is very dangerous when they also have to try to avoid surfers. In a recent incident, the whale watching vessel, *Sensational*, had to abort her efforts to cross the bar and disappointed the twenty-nine people on board due to surfers right across the bar. If other units have the same problem, do you have any suggestions?

We are fortunate enough to have nineteen new members in training for both boat crew and radio operators. Hopefully their training will be completed prior to the Christmas/New Year season when Brunswick Heads is full of holiday makers.

Penny Fuller
Brunswick Heads

ITIM Systems

ITIM Systems is a small Australian business enterprise that specialises in the manufacturing of marine alarm monitoring and control modules. Since founding the company in 1983, directors and brothers, Graeme and David Scott, have worked to develop and improve their product range, so that they continue to meet and exceed the exceptional standard expected by their client base.

These products are Australian made, using a high level of technology and attention to detail. The range includes fire alarms, tank level monitoring and display, bilge alarm and bilge pump control systems, gas and fume detection, nav light monitor and trim tab controllers. All ITIM's systems feature marine hardened modules, with plug in terminals for ship's wiring on the rear, and touch switch controls and LED backlit system status displays on the front of each flush mount module.

ITIM are pleased to announce the release of the first of their Next Generation of system modules. Designated the FA1-V2 and the FA2-V4. These two new fire alarm controller modules have benefitted from a full technology and program upgrade, while extending the high standard of function with reliability that ITIM modules are reknown for.

ITIM continues to expand as a business and now supplies system kit sets to boat builders and owners both in Australia and internationally. The company's first export sale was in 1986 to a Taiwanese Patrol boat builder and since then they have successfully entered the international marketplace through exports to New Zealand, Taiwan, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, USA and countries across Europe, Africa, and South America.

These strong international relations have strengthened since obtaining Type Approval Certificates from Chinese Register of Shipping following extensive environmental and EMC testing of ITIM's fire alarm monitoring and control systems.

As a long-term member of Marine Queensland and AIMEX, ITIM Systems has been provided with strong and essential industry networking and has influential Australian representation at all international boat shows.

(See advertisement on page 3)



'CompassNet' a new safety network



Marine Rescue NSW has introduced CompassNet, a new safety network with significantly enhanced benefits for recreational boating for the 2010-2011 season.

In addition to the lifesaving value of a Marine Rescue unit knowing that a boat is out and due back at a specified time, *CompassNet* will provide other benefits. These included a dedicated website with news, information and offers, newsletter, discounts for Marine Education Courses and, through the support of the boating industry, exclusive discounts and special offers.

CompassNet Members' fees, currently set at \$50 per year, will go directly to the local MR unit to help ensure that the volunteers are trained and equipped to assist in an emergency. *CompassNet* members and their families will have peace of mind knowing that they will not be left to fend for themselves should something go wrong.

All existing 12,500 MRSS, Radio Club, Boat Club and Associate Members of Marine Rescue units will be contacted about *CompassNet*. Existing arrangements will remain in place to honour the commitments made between units and members. MRNSW is confident that the benefits of *CompassNet* will be become evident to users. All boaters are invited to join. Go to the MRNSW website www.marinerescuensw.com.au and follow the link for *CompassNet*.

Some core system support *CompassNet*. The Member Management System will ensure secure storage and management of members' data. *CompassTrack* Online Tracking System will log on, track and log off vessels on day trips or coastal passages. The system of faxing OTS sheets from base to base is replaced by the new system. The system enables any base within radio range to assist members seamlessly. *CompassTrack* provides radio operators with automatic prompts for vessels overdue or failing to log off. It has the ability to help a transiting vessel update its progress; as well it has access via the Internet and a web browser with central support. It is supported by the Standard Operating Procedures used by MRNSW, Police and other agencies.

CompassTrack is built using an architecture that can grow to support long term plans to introduce further initiatives, such as online lodgement of a voyage plan, automatic interface to tracking systems, mobile applications for close inshore journeys that allow for user initiated position reporting using mobile phone GPS, "Loved ones" peace of mind with the ability, through a secure password-protected website, for those at home to follow the voyage progress, and an SMS gateway that can send prompts to overdue vessels and accept incoming position reports.

On November 15, *CompassNet* went live from Port Hacking to Port Stephens. Vessels were electronically logged on and off between Sydney, Swansea, Norah Head and Port Stephens bases. On November 18 at 1000 hours, a Thursday so not a big boating day, sixteen vessels were listed on the screen at the Terrey Hills base.

As more radio operators are trained, the system will be phased in along the entire NSW coast from Eden to Point Danger providing an improved Safety-Net for users.

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Presentation of Awards at Swansea



At the Swansea unit monthly meeting on September 14, twenty nine awards and ratings were presented by Mrs Kay Fraser, Deputy Mayor of Lake Macquarie.

Included in the awards were ten shipboard safety certificates, seven radio operator certificates, two radio officer, six coxswain certificates and a ten year service award.

It was pleasing to the unit when Mrs Fraser presented Peter Skinner with his National Medal for fifteen years service to volunteer marine rescue and a clasp to (Mrs) Jen Suttie for her National Medal for twenty-five years service.

Fourth from the right is Kay Fraser, Deputy Mayor of Lake Macquarie, who presented the National Medal awards to Peter Skinner and Jen Suttie (both to her right)

With close to 100 members, training both for radio and seamanship continues to have major emphasis. Following the announcement regarding the agreement for Coast Guard units to transfer to Marine Rescue we look forward to implementing the joint discussions we have undertaken with Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie regarding the potential merger of the two groups.

John Hatton
Unit Commander



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Great Circle Life Rafts were the chosen hire rafts for high-flying achievers this year in the Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht Race.

Bill Donnelly and Gary Saxby's, *Boss Racing*, won line honours in this year's multihull division of the race with a Great Circle Oceanmaster Life Raft aboard.

OMR and PRS division winner, Phil Day's *Rhythmic* and Bruce Absolon's Volvo 60, *Nikon Spirit of the Maid* that came in second of the monohulls also chose Great Circle Life Rafts.

The company's managing director, Paul Montgomery said about 20 of their rafts were hired for this year's race.

And in last year's Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, Andrew Saies's handicap winner, *Two True*, had two Oceanmasters aboard, as did many others in the race fleet.

"Hiring rafts is a popular alternative for racing people and delivery crews who don't need a raft year-round and don't want to pay regular servicing fees," he said. Montgomery said the high profile successes had helped raise awareness of the company's hiring arm as well as its competitive prices for purchases.

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Contact Great Circle Marine on 1300 306 381 or check out the website.
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Launching and Retrieving Woolgoolga's Rescue Vessel from the Beach

Marine Rescue at Woolgoolga launches and retrieves its rescue vessel 'off the beach', an activity with which most MR Units would not be familiar. Ken Heath describes the procedure used with words and pictures.

All the pre-departure checks are done on shore prior to the boat launch. Engine oil is checked, the radar mast and radio aerials are erected. The tractor is connected up to the boat trailer and the boat towed down to the water's edge and backed into the water. Once there is enough water under the hull the engine is started and the jet set in reverse.

As the boat begins to move backwards, the tractor drives forward. The boat is then spun around and heads to sea.



1. Tow rescue vessel 'WR12' down the ramp



2. At the bottom of the ramp onto the beach

While this is happening you have to watch the wave sequence and get the timing exactly right, or you end up with the boat back on the beach. A hazard for the jet boat is sea weed. If you launch and suck sea weed into the water intake it reduces or stops the water going through the jet and you have either reduced or no power and end up back on the beach.

When retrieving the rescue vessel from Woolgoolga Beach, the tow hook is connected to the front of the boat and as it is pulled out of the water the trailer is pulled under at the same time and the boat rolls up onto the rollers on the trailer. The boat is hooked to the front of the trailer and taken back to the shed where it is washed down, refuelled and backed into the shed ready for the next rescue.

Ken Heath
Woolgoolga



3. Reverse into the water with the boat crew onboard



4. Back into deeper water, start the engine when there is enough water under the boat, then back off trailer as the tractor drives forward. Spin the boat to the sea and avoid sea weed



Marine Rescue Sydney's Radio Base at Terrey Hills in operation. The busy Terrey Hills Base operates 24/7. The Operators 'on watch' are (left to right) Robert Elvin, John Foster, Pam Henry-May, Peter Watson, Marguerite Mason and standing Andrew Topp.



Compassnet went 'live' at 0700 hours on Nov 15 at the Terrey Hills Radio Base. (story page 17)



Heinz Mueller, Graeme King, Andrew Cox, Mark Halling and John Lang aboard Coffs Rescue 1 at the marina in Coffs Harbour.



Whales have been seen all along the coast during the last three months, the pics on left and right were sent from Shoalhaven Unit, the pic on the far right, mother and calf was taken in Twofold Bay at Eden.





Yacht stranded on the mud at Saratoga being assisted by Central Coast Lifeboat. The vessel was gently laid over until the keel was freed from the mud and it was able to move to deep water.



The MR group that participated in the third annual Rescue Sunday Service celebrated at Newport Anglican Church on August 29.



'Codi-K' from Port Stephens 'rescues' a MOB during the Oct 10 SAREX held off Newcastle.



Doubtless 111 capsized on the bar at Wooli after its divers had been recovered offshore. See story on page 5



Bob Baldwin MP, presenting Cmdr Malcolm Milliken of Port Stephens with a new flag for the Nelson Bay Radio Base.

The heart of the Jervis Bay Base at Huskisson is its radio room with operators, Des Owen (left) and Paul Ommundson recording the log.

MR starts work on inland NSW waterways

Two units from Marine Rescue NSW were active in the main Snowy Mountains waterways on the weekend of October 30-31 for the start of the Snowy Mountains Trout Festival.

Two vessels and crews were involved with a 5.7 metre RIB (rigid inflatable boat) from Batemans Bay positioned at Lake Jindabyne (see story page 31) and a 6.1 metre Naiad Diesel powered Jet boat from Tuross Heads at Lake Eucumbene.

Bob Herbert, Marine Rescue NSW Regional Coordinator for Monaro, said "The crews were there to assist boat owners from 0600 to 1800 hours each day, handing out emergency 'check-list' stickers to keep on board, helping some to get their vessels into the water. They advised boaters of the new lifejacket rules applicable to all NSW Waterways from November 1. Hopefully we saved some skippers a considerable fine – more importantly, the new regulations will certainly save lives."

Some boat owners commented, "It was nice to see someone in uniform that didn't want to book you!" Marine Rescue members explained that with the new contribution from all boat licences and registrations going direct to Marine Rescue NSW, the organisation is now able to extend its services to assist boat owners in NSW inland waterways.

Bob Herbert said, "While no-one had to be rescued, the Marine Rescue crews were ready to assist in any way from a battery pack jump start to a tow." He added, "It was good to see so many



The Tuross Heads 6.1m Naiad jet boat used at Lake Eucumbene

vessels in such good condition. The owners are to be congratulated on the care and maintenance that was obvious in their boats. Regrettably, we don't always see the same standard so consistently on the coast. But it is improving as owners start to understand that over 70% of our rescue work is as a direct result of mechanical breakdowns that can be avoided with a simple, effective maintenance program."

Ken McManus
PR and Marketing MR NSW

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Glenn Finniss
Commissioner,
Marine Rescue NSW



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Melbourne Cup at Camden Haven

On October 17 the 2010 Emirates Melbourne Cup visited Camden Haven as part of a national tour.



With the Melbourne Cup onboard 'Rescue 2' are l/r Ken Smith, Joe Perecker and Len Rutledge

The iconic trophy has hit the road visiting 32 country towns across Australia. How lucky were we in Camden Haven to be part of this historic tour and to be one of the towns selected to be visited. Local residents had a chance to see the Cup up close and personal.

The event was held at the Laurieton monthly markets held on the foreshores of the Camden Haven River adjacent to the Marine Rescue base. The Unit took the opportunity to have a unique 'Melbourne Cup Photo' taken on board our rescue boat *Rescue 2*.

Ron Neville
PR Officer Camden Haven

Terrey Hills seeking a Honey Pot

The following novel treatment was suggested during a scenario for an unconscious casualty suffering from hypoglycaemia and who appeared to be deteriorating rapidly came from Astrid King, (a Nurse and Marine Rescue Trainee) while attending the First Aid Course held on August 29. You will understand why it created much laughter and many comical suggestions.



Astrid suggested that the First-Aider use a syringe (without the needle attached) to draw up some honey and insert it in the rectum of the person, using some lubricant. The mucosal lining of the bowel would readily absorb the honey and improve the casualty's medical condition.

Another Trainee suggested that from now on we should be wary of honey, and people 'double-dipping'!

Valerie McLean
Terrey Hills



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Training and more at The Entrance

It looks like it could be another busy summer ahead. During the first two weeks of November we carried out four rescues of vessels with mechanical problems.

The assists gave us a good opportunity to remind boaties about the new lifejacket regulations, as in one of the rescues there were four young girls without lifejackets.

We have a tight-knit team of members responsible for our raffles, and we are grateful to Ken and Lorraine Lawry who do the organising. It's a tough gig to be out there doing the hard yards and we thank the regular "Rafflers" John Adair, Dave Smith, Darrell Tompkins, Steve and Ruth Anderson, Geoff Phillips, Col Lewis, Ronda Keenahan and Ray Zahra. Their contribution is much appreciated. New members Gabbie Barrie, Kerry Smith and Bob Williams have also joined in to help and, with the return from leave of Goff and Ann Morgan, the work load should be spread a little wider. Ray Zahra has transferred to the Norah Head Unit for some 'Offshore Action'. We wish him well and thank him for his efforts over the past few years.

Our new Versa-Dock was 'officially' opened, with members of the Freemason Lodges (pictured right) who donated the funds (Wyong, Tuggerah, Lake Haven Daylight Lodge & Karagi Court) enjoying morning tea in the company of Deputy Commissioner Heinz Mueller, who made time from the SAREX Conference in Newcastle to express his thanks.

Our Cat was launched and docked in a demonstration by skipper Col Lewis and his crew, to show the guests how quickly our rescue vessel can be deployed in response to a call for help. As timely as can be, just at the end of the demonstration, the vessel was required for an assist.



At the end of September, we had a had a 'Members Open Day' at the Base. We offered a little additional time to members who wished to attend. Training needs were discussed, as was membership, future planning and all other activities. Some maintenance was undertaken on CP39. A review of the previous week's activity was undertaken to ensure that all the paper work was up to date. The group held a training session on knots and caught up with training schedules. It was a great success.

Denis O'Mara.
Public Relations Officer - The Entrance

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Middle Harbour gears up for the season

During winter, Middle Harbour has been gearing up for the summer boating season. Our workhorse, the Atlantic 21 RIB, has been fitted with a DSC VHF radio and a chart plotter which is proving useful, particularly on night security patrols when our LED 'reds and blues' advertise our presence.

We have also had the RIB's livery updated so that the boat is more easily identified from a distance. Waveney 44-007 had a bit of a shock finding herself repainted in MRNSW colours. More significantly the unit has acquired a handheld FLIR (forward looking infra red camera) for navigation and search and rescue use. Middle Harbour Marine Watch assisted with the purchase. The FLIR is valuable to avoid vessels and moorings during night patrols in the dark bays of Middle Harbour.



AVCG Flotillas in the Sydney, at the initiative of Mike Carew of Port Jackson Unit (*above, handing over the AED*), started a programme to equip rescue vessels with Automatic External Defibrillators (AED) and Oxygen Therapy kits. As a result of combined fund-raising at the recent Sydney International Boat Show, we became the proud owner of this valuable piece of emergency equipment, together with a training AED as well.

After much work, two new Skipper 3s have been accredited. One day they will be able to reminisce that 'I used to drive a Waveney – it was made of steel'.

For the last few months we have had a Broadbill Cat 'resting' at our Base before its deployment to Newcastle. With the approval of HQ we have used it as a training vessel, mainly for towing and rafting. This has enabled our members to learn new skills in a training environment rather than doing so on-the-job. Winter is the time we use to gain further qualifications, ensuring operational crews for the summer.

We participate in meetings of Middle Harbour Users' Group and Middle Harbour Marine Watch to be involved in our local area. The two-way flow of information is very welcome.

Peter Steigrad
Middle Harbour

SOUNDINGS

Soundings is the Quarterly Journal of Marine Rescue NSW

Volunteer Marine Rescue NSW was incorporated in 2009, combining the three NSW volunteer marine rescue groups – Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association, Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol and the Volunteer Rescue Association (Marine) into a single entity to provide a marine radio coastal network and search and rescue services for the NSW boating community.



- A4 Format
- Full 4-colour reproduction throughout
- Distribution is by mail direct to members and to those of influence in industry and government
- Covers the NSW coast from Point Danger to Eden

SOUNDINGS continues in the tradition of **BEAM ENDS**, the quarterly journal of Coastal Patrol that was published regularly from 1939 until 2009.

Spring Time in Forster Tuncurry

The coming of spring saw an increase in activities at Marine Rescue Forster Tuncurry, with many locals getting their boats out for the new season.

Radio room traffic has increased and our rescue boat crews have been busy. There were three assists in August, nine in September and three more in October. There is a concern that ethanol blended petrol may be the cause of some of the engine failures.

On the social side, we maintained our presence at and by organising, the monthly Tuncurry Markets (our main regular fund raiser). Fund Raising Officer, Carol Parker, has been very busy organising other fund raising events. One was a well attended bus trip with over seventy members and guests visiting Long Point Winery, Bago Winery and enjoying lunch at Wauchope. Whilst on the buses Carol had arranged "lucky door" prizes, one of which was a pair of fluffy pink handcuffs won by one of our male members. A very enjoyable day was had by all.

Another local outing had eighty-four members and friends aboard the *MV Amaroo*, in perfect weather, to see the southern migration of whales and their calves. On the day the whales were accompanied by an escort of Forster/Tuncurry dolphins.

Our well renowned "BBQ Team" has kept its name up in lights displaying cooking skills at various functions such as Tuncurry Markets, Bunnings and a number of Golf Days.

All aspects of the unit are going great guns with training for radio operators and boat crew progressing well. We have enrolled ten new members, and that has increased Unit membership to 110.

Eric Armstrong
PR Officer Forster Tuncurry



Above
The Forster
Tuncurry BBQ
team



Left
Information
stall at the
monthly
Tuncurry
Markets

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Massive Rescue effort off Port Macquarie

Anyone on the Port Macquarie foreshores on September 26 would have seen forty Search and Rescue crew aboard four rescue vessels, including the 110ft Police launch 'Nemesis' steaming out through the Port Macquarie bar, shadowed by 'Medusa', the Navy's Augusta 109 Helicopter.

A search and rescue operation was underway, searching for two survivors from a vessel that sank during the night. Fortunately in this instance it was just an exercise. The full weekend SAREX was conducted by Water Police Marine Area Command. As an inter-agency exercise it involved members from MR Units from Woolgoolga, Coffs Harbour, Trial Bay, Port Macquarie and Camden Haven, MAC Sydney and Coffs Harbour, LAC Police, AMSA's Rescue Coordination Centre, Emergency Management Port Macquarie and 723 Squadron HMS Albatross Nowra. Also involved were Regional Coordinator, Linda Jones, DC Heinz Mueller and Commissioner Glenn Finnis.

This large scale exercise provided training and education on the details of planning and enacting a real live search and rescue. Day 1 was in the classroom with training provided by MAC, RCC and the Navy. It involved understanding the roles and responsibilities of the various search and rescue organisations. Training provided included planning SAR and the impact of currents, drift and wind.

After a heavy theory day we watched *Nemesis* come through the heads, before dinner. Thanks to Water Police for their hospitality. It was a great opportunity to socialise with many of the people involved.

It all came together on Sunday, beginning with a briefing about the exercise while the Navy's 109 Augusta Helicopter dropped rescue dummies (Jolly and Roger) and life jackets into the sea within the planned search area. MR has purchased realistic rescue dummies for our region. They weigh 40kg dry and 80kg when in the water, simulating a real person.

MAC took the lead by providing radio communications from the MR Port Macquarie radio base. On-scene coordination was provided by *Nemesis*, a state of the art, purpose-built 110ft SAR and Police Operations vessel. An opportunity was given to a limited number of MR crew to join *Nemesis* for the exercise. Also providing support was 6.8m RIB that is launched from within the *Nemesis*.

MR units provided three vessels. The 38ft Category 3 *Rescue 1* and the 4.0m RIB both were from Port Macquarie. Camden Haven provided its 22ft Shark Cat. The Navy provided air support, with three crew from HMS Albatross. While the four rescue vessels performed a parallel track search pattern, the Navy Helo provided assistance from the air. The experience of searching for a person in water from various size vessels, as well as from the air, provided an understanding of the variations likely success rates across all the vessels.

The weekend was topped off for five lucky people who had the opportunity to take a flight in the chopper with the Navy. All were kitted up with the chopper comms helmet and then "up up and away" for an awesome view of the Port Macquarie coast.

The whole weekend was a unique experience, but one that we hope we won't have to be involved in for real.

Russ Holland
PR Officer (and SAREX participant)
Coffs Harbour Unit



(Above) 'Medusa', the Navy's Augusta 109 Helicopter from 723 Squadron based at HMAS Albatross in Nowra, Jonathan Gordon from MR Coffs Harbour is seated in the doorway and (left) he is suited up with the helo's comms helmet ready for his opportunity to fly.



View from the deck of the 'Nemesis' as it returned to the dock in Port Macquarie after the SAR Exercises.



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Merimbula's new boat has arrived!

Merimbula's new and long awaited purpose-built boat was delivered on October 28 by road transport from Queensland and launched at the Eden wharf.



'Sapphire Rescue 111 at Merimbula and being readied for service

It was an exciting time at the Merimbula Unit. The new vessel will be named *Sapphire Rescue III*, continuing a tradition of the naming of Merimbula's rescue vessels. With the new rescue vessel now ready for service intensive training for all boat crews has commenced, The public can expect to see a lot of this magnificent new vessel.

The state of the art craft utilises the latest technology and will greatly enhance Unit capabilities and response times. The new vessel is a 10.0m Naiad design, built by Woody Marine in Brisbane at a cost around \$300,000. The technology includes FLIR night vision cameras that will assist for night time search and rescue operations, two 250hp Yamaha outboards and the latest Furuno navigation systems. The boating community can look forward to many years of service from this new vessel.

Unit Commander Barry Harrison said, "We are very proud of the new vessel, and have worked closely with Woody Marine's Dave Green and Stephen Plummer for the past couple of years to deliver what we believe to be one of the finest vessels of its type in Australia. It's an awesome machine". Cmdr Harrison spent time with the WA Water Police, WA Maritime and Albany Sea Rescue. He is convinced that this design is the right choice for the NSW coast. "Albany Sea Rescue have used an 8.5m Naiad for around ten years now, and they would not have any other vessel for fast response rescue" said Cmdr Harrison.

Apart from a \$100,000 Federal Government Grant, the rest of the funds were raised from the local community through weekly bingo. The Unit is grateful for the support of the Merimbula RSL Club. Our thanks go to Nik's Crane Hire, NSW Maritime and the Eden Harbour Master for their valuable assistance during the launch of *Sapphire Rescue III*. *Sapphire Rescue II* will be transferred to Marine Rescue Narooma as a temporary replacement, as its rescue vessel is out of service.

Ted Young

PR Officer Merimbula

Australian Search and Rescue Award 2010

Heroism is not only in the man, but in the occasion.

Calvin Coolidge

The Australian Search and Rescue Award is presented by the National Search and Rescue (SAR) Council. The National SAR Council presents this award to not only give recognition to those involved in search and rescue in Australia but will raise community awareness about their efforts.

The award for 2010 was presented in Darwin on 14 October as part of the 34th Annual Meeting of the National SAR Council. The Council is chaired by AMSA's General Manager Emergency Response Division and has a permanent membership of senior members from state and territory police services and the Australian Defence Force. The 2010 meeting was the first occasion that the Chairman of the National Volunteer Marine Search and Rescue Committee was invited to attend as an observer.

Nominations are called for annually and this year ten nominations were received from around the country. This was one of the strongest contingents of nominations received in recent times. All of the groups and individuals nominated have played, and continue to play, key roles in helping SAR in Australia.

After careful consideration by the National SAR Council, Bob Kent and David Dodge from Esperance, Western Australia were chosen as the recipients of the 2010 National Search and Rescue Award.

Bob, the owner and pilot of Esperance Helitours Helicopters and David, a local SES volunteer, assisted in the rescue of two people off the coast of Esperance in August 2009. The two men (Dan and Mark Scullin) were thrown into the water approximately two kilometres offshore when a king wave capsized their boat. Bob and David were tasked by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority's (AMSA) Rescue Coordination Centre - Australia to provide assistance after the Scullins' 406 MHz distress beacon was detected.

The rescue was notable in that it was the first time the local SES had used flotation grenades which provided vital extra buoyancy to the two men in the water. In his acceptance speech Bob highlighted the benefit of these new items. "They were lucky they had the 406, we found them quickly, we got them extra buoyancy with the flotation grenade, we dropped them a drink of water and just encouraged them to keep swimming and directed them to the right way to go," he said.

After landing the helicopter on the beach, Bob and David entered the water to assist the two men and also removed their own clothing to support the survivors who were suffering from hypothermia.

Nominations

This prestigious award is in recognition of 'Outstanding contribution to search and rescue' within the Australian region. The successful nominee will have made a significant contribution to Australia's search and rescue ability or to the saving of a human life.

The award is open to any individual or organisation and may relate to a particular event or a sustained contribution over a period of time.

Any person or organisation can nominate candidates for the SAR Award.

Nominations should be completed using an [official nomination form](http://natsar.amsa.gov.au/SAR_Award/) (available at http://natsar.amsa.gov.au/SAR_Award/) and forwarded by Friday, 29 July 2011 to:

The Secretary
National SAR Council
GPO Box 2181
Canberra City ACT 2601

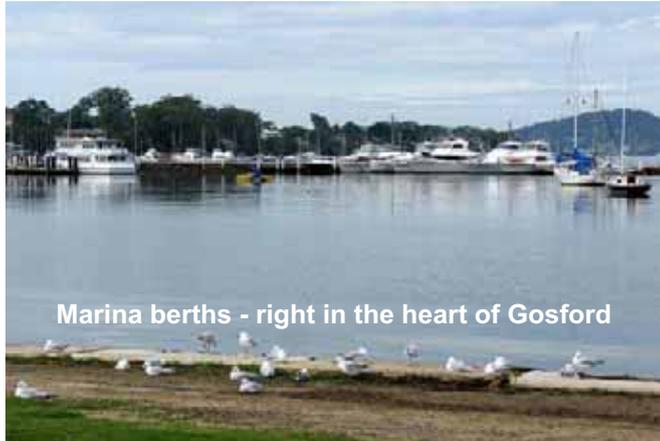
Any questions can be directed to the National SAR Council Secretary on (02) 6279 5743

Below: Julie and Bob Kent, David Dodge and George Barnes





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Memories, fundraising and generous gifts

Last month a Memorial Service was held at the Point Clare Base of Central Coast Unit for two of our members who had crossed the bar during the year.

Plaques were unveiled on the Base Memorial Stone and blessed by Unit Chaplain, Rev Canon Jim Doust. Close to eighty family, friends and members attended, testimony to the high regard in which both Brian O'Connell and Ken McLachlan were held.



With the help of a financial grant from the NSW State Government arranged by Marie Andrews MP, Central Coast unit commissioned a 2.1 kW photovoltaic Solar System at the Point Clare Base on October 8. The Photovoltaic Solar System was supplied and installed by Tuggerah based SolarSave, who gave a generous discount. The System consists of twelve photovoltaic panels installed on the Base roof (*shown above*), linked to an inverter that feeds 240v power back to the electricity grid for purchase by Energy Australia.

Our power use is consistently growing as new technology is introduced and consequently electricity costs are constantly rising. The Unit's management is hopeful that the new Solar System will help us contain electricity costs into the future.

Our major fundraising event for the year drew to a close on October 31, with the winning ticket in our Annual Boat Raffle being drawn by our Patron, Marie Andrews MP. The winner received a Quintrex 350 Explorer, plus trailer and all safety gear. We raised just over thirty thousand dollars from this raffle.

Considerable activity is taking place at both our Terrigal Radio Base and our Point Clare Radio Base, to upgrade radios, antennas and install a lot of new equipment. This is to enable better radio reception at Terrigal for both 27MHz and VHF radios, as well as extend the hours of radio coverage provided at Terrigal by seamlessly transferring radio calls to our main base at Point Clare. Central Coast Freemasons graciously donated \$5,800 to enable the upgrade of all our computer hardware and the purchase of a 106cm TV screen for the radio room. This will provide operators with improved access to weather information, logons, AIS, OTSs and, in the future, video images from remote cameras.

Finally, we have just had an intake of eight new members to boost our ranks and we welcome the new members onboard.

Ian Gallard
Central Coast

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Weekend at Lake Jindabyne

On October 29, a team from MR Bateman's Bay journeyed to Jindabyne for the Annual Trout Festival, to assist the boating public and introduce Marine Rescue.



Michael Bennett and Tom Czarnik towed our RIB. Glen Sullivan and Carol O'Regan met Bob Herbert, Regional Coordinator for Monaro, at Cobargo and journeyed with him in his 4WD. We received a call from the MR Tuross crew who were on the way to Lake Eucumbene. They were in Bega to check their vehicle's thermostat as the temperature gauge had gone into the red. They changed the thermostat and we then followed them. Just before Brown Mountain their 4WD boiled again. Bob came to the rescue. The Tuross crew unhooked their boat and Bob towed it up the mountain to Lake Eucumbene where it was parked just below their cabin in the caravan park. We said our goodbyes and headed for Jindabyne.

We finally pulled into Jindabyne Police Barracks where we were accommodated in two self-contained units with separate rooms with double beds, bathrooms and separate loos. Both units are well appointed and there is an outside BBQ area that we used on Sunday night.

Carol and Glen did the Saturday morning shift from 0600 to 1200 hours. Michael and Tom took the later shift in the afternoon. The morning shift had a female SES member who came out on the boat. She was conversant with the area and took us to every nook and cranny on the Lake. The weather was tempestuous on Saturday night but it cleared to a good day on Sunday, when Carol and Glen were very thankful for their wet weather gear as the wind was up and we learned just how rough it can be on Lake Jindabyne.

While Tom and Michael were busy, Bob, Carol and Glen went to Mt. Wambrook to see the transmitters on the mountain. Bob carried out a comms check and the Tuross boat boomed back at us almost instantly. We picked up Lake Jindabyne, but did not get them as clearly as Eucumbene. All crews handed out MR pamphlets on boating safety, and another flyer with directions on how to call us during the weekend. We met quite a few locals from Bermagui up to try their luck with the trout. It was a worthwhile experience to promote MRNSW on the lakes and we received many favourable comments during our visit.

Carol O'Regan
Batemans Bay

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First Aid Training at Marine Rescue Jervis Bay

Members of Jervis Bay Unit gathered for First Aid training in the meeting room of the Huskisson Base.

On August 2 fourteen members of the Jervis Bay unit completed their senior First Aid training. The group included new members completing the course for the first time, and other members renewing their first aid and CPR certificates.

This was the first course held under the Marine Rescue banner, and it was well received by the members. The course had emphasis on marine First Aid situations and was presented by Mike Jones of Risk Response Rescue.

The morning session was mostly theory, getting to understand the basics and our responsibilities in applying first aid. The legal side was discussed, and there was a practical session. The scenarios were held outside the Base, with members pairing up to perform CPR using the training resuscitation manikins supplied.

For lunch, our obliging Commander, Greg Atkinson, cooked up a great sausage sizzle. In the afternoon members formed groups and were given a specific emergency scenario. These included drowning, heart attack, snake bite, stroke, fractures and so on. Each group had to react to the emergency and make correct decisions in their response.

The most realistic was the heart attack, simulated by one of our long time members Bob Morgan, who shook the foundations with his loud impersonation of a heart attack victim. You weren't sure if it was real or not but it certainly was an Oscar-winning performance.



John Gallimore (left) and Trevor Clayton undertaking CPR on the training resuscitation using the manikin outside the Marine Rescue Radio Base in Voyager Memorial Park Huskisson Jervis bay

At the end of the day much had been gained by the members from a well-presented course and all finished the day with an excellent understanding of First Aid procedures.

Lester Shute - Jervis Bay

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Meet the Members

Wayne Walker

Marine Rescue Jervis Bay

Wayne Walker joined Jervis Bay Division of Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol on November 19, 1991.

He undertook the training necessary to qualify as a Skipper, Search Master, Watch-keeper, Marine Radio Operator and Coxswain Examiner. He also became an Australian Communications and Media Authority Invigilator (for marine radio licence tests), a boat licence tester for NSW Maritime and an inspector of bases for safety equipment under the State



Rescue Board. In 1999 he was appointed Division Commander. At that time the number of operational members varied between 10 and 20. In November 1999, the Division acquired the Category 3 vessel, *Colin Woods*, still an iconic vessel on Jervis Bay.

Under Wayne's command there was a period of expansion. The Division had new responsibilities involved in funding and the crewing of the bigger vessel with its extended operational range to 15 nautical miles offshore. In 2005 a 6.0 m vessel, *Ian E Bates*, was added to the rescue fleet as a Category 1 vessel for inshore use. Wayne was instrumental in gathering support from the Shoalhaven Council and the Australian Government for the construction of the Unit's new two-storey radio base located at Huskisson at the entrance of Currembene Creek.

Wayne still carries out rostered duties as a skipper and has participated in a large number of search and rescue operations over nearly twenty years. One of these was a life saving rescue in the Bay itself, when two sailors were found just before midnight on March 30, 2000. The sailors were rescued after spending five hours drifting on their overturned catamaran.

For ten years seven days a week Wayne maintained after hours radio coverage from his home. This has now been reduced to weekends, as our neighbours at Marine Rescue Shoalhaven cover the calls midweek.

Wayne has an excellent relationship with the Navy and the RAAF. The Unit has regular joint Search and Rescue Exercises (SAREX) at sea off Jervis Bay. SAREX operations provide invaluable training for the RAAF pilots and crew in all weather conditions, and require excellent communications and seamanship abilities. This is great training for our newer members. There is nothing like getting out in the *Colin Woods* with a 3.0 m swell, blowing like crazy and a thundering Air Force transporter dropping flares around you. It gets your adrenalin pumping.

Wayne continues to assist in a full range of activities, including boat maintenance and fund raising. He has the respect of all members of Marine Rescue Jervis Bay. He has overcome difficulties in recent years caused by declining health and increased family responsibilities. His sense of public duty remains very high and he is always prepared to respond to calls from the boating public who need assistance.

Lester Shute
Jervis Bay.

Cooperation on the South Coast

While we are without a boat, our crews have been travelling to Bermagui and Merimbula Units to keep up their training.

During one training session recently there was a call-out. Our crew drove from Merimbula, where they were training, to Bermagui, to use their lifeboat for the rescue. It was a long tow, of a 40ft steel ketch from Tathra and took about 4.5 hours. This was a good example of units working together and we were proud of them.

We hope to have a replacement boat before Christmas. There have been lots of visitors around town since the October long weekend. It could be a busy summer in Narooma and we hope we don't have too many people in trouble while we are boatless.

Our membership continues to swell. It is very encouraging to see more ladies joining the Unit. The girls are having a good time with each other and having the occasional lunch. Kay Swarbrick, Gail Cox, Bonnie Hibbett, Judy Naumoski joined as auxiliary members and Clare Hooper as a radio operator. Judy is organising our Christmas party (the Commander and his wife are looking forward to having a rest).

Eric Hibbett has taken on the task of Meteorological Officer, Stan Swarbrick is responsible for Workplace Health and Safety, and Judy and Kay are backstops for the Admin officer.

Our boat ramp sausage sizzles are a resounding success with Illya Naumoski planning to expand to Saturdays and Sundays during January. His dedicated team is his wife Judy, Kay and Stan Swarbrick, Dick Rosewarne, and some others who help out from time to time. What a great team they are.

Ian Noormets is kept busy with a steady stream of trainees for the radio course. Ian has also assembled some Power Point shows that he uses with local social groups, such as Probus and Laurels. These sessions have been well received.

Caleb Rooke represents Marine Rescue at the local markets once a month, and at other local markets and fete days. We have a great display of literature and freebies usually supplied by the Customs Department. Caleb often brings new members our way. He also doubles as a great Santa.

The local nursing home sent us an SOS for volunteers to help out with their annual fete. Without hesitation, several of our people put their hands up to help.

We had a luncheon at a local club during September. There was a good roll up. We had meal together and shared lots of conversation and laughs. One member's wife (Shirley pictured) even won \$20 in the membership draw. It was a good time and we are looking forward to more similar outings in the future.

Wendy Brown
Admin Officer Narooma





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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

Marine Rescue vessels assist at Shoalhaven River crash

Two vessels from Marine Rescue Shoalhaven assisted Police, Ambulance and Fire Brigade officers at the scene of a fatal motor vehicle crash that occurred around 1900 hours on Sunday September 12.



Following a collision between two motor vehicles at the northern end of the Nowra Bridge over the Shoalhaven River one of the vehicles catapulted into the river, trapping the driver inside the vehicle. A female passenger was rescued from the river by members of the public.

Lengthy searches were conducted of the river in the vicinity for others who may have been in the river. Water Police from Port Kembla arrived and a comprehensive search of the river was carried out using two marine rescue vessels and the Port Kembla Water Police RIB.



Police divers attended the scene and Shoalhaven's rescue vessel SA 24 was used as a platform for the divers (shown above). The body of the deceased driver was removed from the vehicle by the divers and it was ascertained that there were no further occupants in the vehicle.

A plan to raise the vehicle with air bags and tow it to shore using SA24 was abandoned owing to technical difficulties. The vehicle was recovered on Monday morning when further equipment arrives on scene. Marine Rescue volunteers were stood down at 0400 hours Monday morning.

Endeavour at Eden

The warmer weather has seen an influx of visitors to the Eden area there has been a number of inexperienced operators requiring a "helping hand" whilst not necessarily being rescued.

Quite often an innocent call to Marine Rescue has resulted in the declaration of a full blown emergency as the vessel operator has not appreciated the seriousness of the situation. The skipper has responsibility to declare an emergency not the Marine Rescue operator, so we have taken steps to help educate skippers in the correct use of marine radios on their first contact with Eden, especially those that are on their maiden visit to the area from interstate or are joining our MRSS.

Cruise ships have been visitors to Eden have been with their passengers experiencing Australian fauna and flora in Ben Boyd National Park, Aboriginal culture, and some of the sites and buildings used by early pioneers in the whaling industry. At the Marine Rescue base we have had close encounters with Megaptera Novaeangliae, the humpback whale. This whale watching season has been spectacular with whales coming into Twofold Bay and frolicking just off the Radio Base. One of the radio operators initiated action with a disentanglement team from the National Parks and Wildlife Service when a visiting boat reported a whale calf entangled in fishing nets off the entrance to Twofold Bay. Despite the best efforts of the NSW Water Police, NPWS, and a visiting Pacific Whale Foundation research vessel, the calf and its mother disappeared south without the nets being removed. Reports were that the calf was swimming strongly and when last seen part of the nets had come adrift. We hope that the nets come free, and that the calf and mother have a safe journey back to colder climes.



Cliff Truelove working at Eden - 'I wonder where this goes?'

We ended this period with new Marine Rescue signage on the building and a Base working bee and BBQ. The working bee removed extraneous fittings and equipment from the roof and rust from guard rails and other permanent fittings. This is in preparation for a communications upgrade due shortly to replace the power supply to the radio system. A new aerial tower is planned, and together with new radio control equipment, will provide Eden with the high standard of performance and radio propagation needed for this strategic location along the far south coastline and into Victorian waters.

The festive season is fast approaching, and on behalf of the Eden members I wish all a safe and Happy Christmas and a prosperous 2011.

John Steele
Unit Commander, Eden

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^^ Total cost over 12 months \$779.28

Inaugural Ballina Boat and Leisure Show

Marine Rescue Ballina held the inaugural Ballina Boat and Leisure Show at the Kingsford Smith Park Rugby League ground on October 9-10 and did not let the wet weather put a dampener on its efforts.



Show organisers, (R/L) Bill and Jo Blundell and Duncan Woodhead

An organiser, Bill Blundell, said there had been great interest in the event, with a fishing competition held on the weekend expected to bring in an extra couple of hundred people. Another of the organisers, Jo Blundell, said the idea for a boat show came about as the rescue group wanted something to benefit the community, but also as a fundraiser for the appeal to build the

new radio base tower on North Wall at the Ballina Bar. Preliminary designs for the proposed new tower have been completed, and the Ballina Shire Council has committed \$1.7 million to the project which is estimated to cost about \$2 million. She said, "Previously the rescue group had run a raffle, with the major prize being a boat, but so many have been supporting us, this way a lot more in the community can benefit."

Local businesses supported the event; they said a boat show hadn't been held in Ballina since the 1980s. While boats were the feature of the show, there were also exhibits of surfboards, surf skis, Hobie cats, kayaks and fishing gear. There were talks on marine radio techniques, bar crossing tips, survival at sea and the latest in navigation equipment. Most importantly, the wet weather didn't put off the forty exhibitors who supported the event; many of whom had previously been involved in the now defunct Rivafest. The Rotary Club of Ballina held its annual duck race on the weekend, and Australian Seabird Rescue had a display.

About 700 people passed through the gates on the Saturday to check out the variety of boats, boating and leisure products. There was a fair amount of sympathy from the public for Marine Rescue Ballina; with many saying it was just bad luck the October spring weather turned sour on the weekend. On the Sunday, as the weather worsened, few people went along, and it was decided to close the event early.

The rescue service expects to make something in the order of \$5,000 from the event. "We are quite pleased with the outcome," Mr Blundell said as he thanked the community and sponsors for their support of the inaugural boat and leisure show.

*Jo Hurley
Deputy Commander - Ballina*

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Leaning Tower in Ballina



For some years now the Marine Rescue communications tower located on the northern break wall at Ballina has been developing a lean. Due to the foundation arrangements the degree of the lean has gradually increased as time has passed. The tower is partly on the rock supporting the north wall and partly on sand. The migration of sand into the voids within the rock wall has resulted in the structural movement of the tower. To reduce the risk of this recurring with a future building and to reduce foundation costs it is proposed to locate a new tower further to the east. Ballina Shire is committed to the project.

Community cooperation at Sussex Inlet

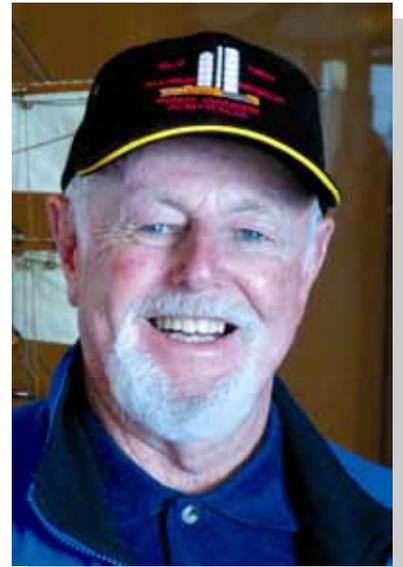


An example of cooperation within the community was on the October long weekend when the Sussex Inlet Lions Club conducted its annual Country Fair. Sussex unit was asked to provide a display of Marine Rescue NSW paraphernalia and 'fly the flag' as the saying goes. The unit took the opportunity to raise funds by selling pies, sausage rolls and soft drinks, conduct boat races and lucky dips for the little ones as well as providing a safety vessel on the water for the Dragon Boat club demonstrations. A great day was had by all, especially by those members who manned the stall and provided information to members of the public.

John Lang
Cmdr Sussex Inlet

Meet the Members

Bernie Gabriel
Unit Commander,
Foundation Member
and Life Member,
Marine Rescue Point
Danger



"I had a boat hire and boat building business on the Tweed River from 1960 to 1972" said Bernie Gabriel, "volunteer marine rescue in northern NSW and South East Queensland started in 1962 when a couple of my customers turned to port instead of starboard and made for the sign that said "DANGER-BAR". That is why they were tipped out at Tweed Heads Bar instead staying afloat on the calm waters of the river where they thought they were going."

Bernie Gabriel recounts this story with a combination of both alarm and affection. Alarm at the ease with which a simple human error turned into a life-threatening emergency. Affection because this was the event that prompted friend and local businessman, Jack Evans, who swam out to rescue the two people, to say "What we need is a rescue service here."

"Several of us got together as a committee," said Bernie, "Me, Bob and Jim Thompson, Ron Hay and Albie Benstead. We got the interest of the local Junior Chamber of Commerce as well as the Chambers in Murwillumbah and Southport. Despite a lot of enthusiasm and actually acquiring a new twin outboard 17ft Seafarer, the project didn't get off the ground and on to the water for two years."

The boat languished in the yard of the local police station while others debated how to start and operate the service. There was a lot of talk and not much action. Interest declined.

In 1964 the original proponents resurrected the project. *Tweed Coast Air Sea Rescue* began more than four decades of service to the local NSW and Queensland boating community.

"We were the first marine unit in the NSW VRA. Our volunteers shared their experience with Brunswick Heads to help that unit be established. I've been involved right from that first discussion 48 years ago," said Bernie. "I am really keen to see Marine Rescue NSW continue and improve on the standards we have set".

"I've had every job you can have in a volunteer marine rescue unit," said Bernie. He believes there three important tasks ahead. First is to reassure the community that Marine Rescue will actually provide a better service for both boaters and volunteers.

Second is to ensure that the community understands that Marine Rescue NSW is still a volunteer organisation and not a NSW government takeover. MRNSW is receiving more funding which is coming direct from the boating community but it is not fully funded and around 50% of operating costs will still come from fundraising and from local generosity.

Continued on page 39

MR Safety-Net around the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic

The Hawkesbury Canoe Classic is a fun paddle with a serious purpose. Each year around 600 paddlers travel the 111 km of the Hawkesbury River with its twists and turns, to raise money for the Arrow Bone Marrow Transplant Foundation.

This year the canoe classic was held over the weekend of October 22-23. It is run overnight, to use the cooler parts of the day and to avoid river traffic. The weather was not the best, with wind driven waves and rain. Night visibility was reduced and some events were restricted. Canoes that had not left Spencer by 0900 hours on Sunday were stopped as there is no other extraction point before the finish. Safety of the competitors and hypothermia raised concerns within MR, as there were many capsize. Ten canoes and paddlers were assisted in the Bar Point and Milson Island area.

MR Hawkesbury had responsibility for Checkpoints and Safety, Chase boats, Ferry Gate control, Safety controller, Radio Land communications, Communication Centre and Land Finish Control. Hawkesbury arranged a BBQ to feed the hungry participants and many spectators at Land Finish. By Sunday mid-morning, all entrants were accounted for and the tired land finish and safety vessel crews stood down. The last jobs for the day were to pack up wet and soggy tents, all BBQ and communication equipment for transport back to the MR base.

Garth Mooney, Land Finish Supervisor, complimented the crews who finished, and some who did not. He also noted that 'under the very trying circumstances, everyone in MR and other private boat volunteers did a good job'. Compliments were extended to



Steve Murphy and Roy Hewitt cooking for the tired and hungry

Tony Zeitsch from Active Hire, Great Western Caravan Rentals and Trevor Pickett from the Scouts group for their support.

We were not alone. Barry McGrath acknowledged our colleagues from SES, RFS, Wicen, Red Cross Pink First Aid Team, Senior Scouts and the Sports Physiotherapy Association for their assistance and cooperation. MR Controller for the event, Andrew Ward, added that a fund-raising record was set for the event with over \$300K being available for distribution to the Arrow Bone Marrow Transplant Foundation.

Ken Anthonisz
PR Officer Hawkesbury



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In Memoriam



Genevieve Darch

18/12/1962 - 10/10/2010

Genevieve joined the Camden Haven Sea Rescue unit in 2007 as a volunteer radio operator, she soon became more involved in the running of the unit and was appointed secretary not long after joining. Gen, held that position until Jan 2010.

When the Camden Haven Unit unified with Marine Rescue NSW Gen was Administration Officer until her untimely death.

Genevieve was a driving force within our unit during the formation of the Unit to Marine Rescue NSW and was the right hand to our Unit Commander George Tedds. Although Gen only spent a short time with Marine Rescue her hard work will not be forgotten. Genevieve is sadly missed by her family all those who knew her.

Rest in Peace Gen.

Ron Neville
PR Officer Camden Haven

William (Bill) Frederick Rowley

1/01/1926 - 4/09/2010

Bill Rowley joined Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol – Ulladulla Division on September 1, 1985. He saw the need to establish a base at Kioloa, as rescue response time for the area was about an hour and thirty minutes from either Ulladulla or Batemans Bay. Bill convinced the Patrol that not only was a base needed, but that the villages of Kioloa and Bawley Point could provide the volunteers required to maintain a Division. His dream was achieved when, on September 26, 1992 the Division was officially founded, with a radio communications room operating from a garage at the rear of his premises at 6 Butler Street, Kioloa, and the leasing of his vessel, *Dylam II*, as the first “rescue” vessel.

Bill undertook the training necessary to qualify as a Search Master and held this post until RVCP amalgamated with other NSW marine rescue organisations to become Volunteer Marine Rescue NSW in January, 2010.

During his 25 years’ service to the boating fraternity, Bill undertook weekly radio duties, was a Category 2 skipper and acted as boat crew when required. On September 25, 1995 Kioloa opened its permanent base incorporating a boat shed, radio room, and mess room. Bill often said his greatest achievement was his appointment as Kioloa’s Commander.

Bill worked stand-by radio duties up until three weeks before his passing on September 4. In these final days he expressed his pride in the current volunteers who not only maintained his high ideals but expanded his dream by extending the building to its current size.

Joan Noble



Rescue Sunday at Newport Anglican Church



The third annual Rescue Sunday Service, celebrated at Newport Anglican Church on August 29, was conducted by Rev Jason Ramsay. The Service celebrates and acknowledge the contributions of various rescue agencies and their volunteer members who often put their lives at risk in order to help others. Groups attending included Marine Rescue, the Rural Fire Service and Surf Life Saving.

Deputy Commissioner Heinz Mueller and Unit Commanders from Marine Rescue Terrey Hills, Cottage Point and Broken Bay represented their Units and Members.

After the Service David White from Cottage Point said, “I enjoyed Minister’s analogy, where he likened the generosity of the Christian Faith to the generosity of volunteers’ services. I had never thought of it that way, but it is really quite logical”.

Valerie McLean
Terrey Hills

Continued from page 37

Meet the Members

Bernie Gabriel - MR Point Danger

Understanding this will help arrest a decline in financial contributions that is being experienced from previously strong supporters in South East Queensland, home of at least half the boaters served by Point Danger.

Third is to start planning now for the expected increase of recreational boating in these waters. The developments already in planning indicate at least 15,000 extra boats in these waters in the next 5-10 years.

“We’re currently handling an average of around 3,000 vessels a month logging on from the Tweed Coast and the Gold Coast,” said Bernie. “And I reckon that’s only about half of all who use these waters. Being part of a single, large organisation will help the development of long term plans and enable the local units to best handle that growth, attract new members and continue to deliver the most efficient boating safety service to the boating community.”

“My personal conviction,” said Bernie, “is that each unit knows its own operating area best and should always have a strong input into decisions that affect their area.

Let us not forget that the strength of Marine Rescue NSW is its volunteers. They are the human capital of the new organisation on which the organisation will depend, and must be given at all times a feeling of being part of the operational and decision-making process”.

SOUNDINGS



Soundings is the quarterly journal of Volunteer Marine Rescue NSW.

Statewide Magazines is proud to be associated with Marine Rescue NSW. Thousands

of recreational boating and fishing enthusiasts have, over the years, depended on the support and safety back-up provided by volunteer marine rescue services while on the water.

Established in July 2009, Marine Rescue NSW has been operational in NSW waters since January 2010. The organisation is an integration of units from the three former marine rescue organisations serving NSW – Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol, Australian Volunteer Coast Guard and Volunteer Rescue Association (Marine). All units in NSW have now adopted the radio call sign of Marine Rescue for radio communications. This has helped the NSW boating public understand that Marine Rescue NSW is now the only name they need to know for assistance in marine emergencies. There are over 2,600 members of Marine Rescue NSW – this is more than the combined total of the three foundation organisations. Units provide a continuous safety net for boating along the entire NSW coast between the Queensland and Victorian borders. Subject to increased funding, plans are in place for a significant vessel replacement program and expansion of VHF marine radio services as well as increased boating safety education into inland waters such as the Murray River and NSW's boating lakes and dams.

Soundings is great reading for everyone concerned about the safety of life at sea. It keeps everyone – volunteers, supporters, boating and fishing enthusiasts, suppliers to the boating industry and those just interested in 'messing around in boats' – up to date with what's happening around the various Marine Rescue NSW Units. Apart from being a genuine "What's What", there is also much great reading – the news and stories from the waterfront, boating safety tips, snips from many units and much, much more.

In short, **Soundings** in its attractive A4 colour format, provides a valuable marketing medium for any product or service in any way directly related to safer boating. The added bonus for advertisers is that they are – **and are seen to be** – actively supporting a wonderful organisation of largely "unsung heroes" while at the same time, communicating effectively with existing and potential customers.

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We welcome
your Email



Hi Ron
Soundings is great! Keep up the great job!
Regards,
Lindy Powells
Admin Officer Coffs Harbour

Hi Ron
Just read your forward to the latest Soundings and couldn't agree more with your comments. Why are the Board meeting outcomes not widely promulgated, doesn't need to be the full stuff, just the main points so we can see our hierarchy is working for the good of us all, particularly those who are getting paid for the privilege. Keep up the good work.

Regards
Kevin King
Coxswain Shoalhaven

In response to "G'day Ron (W Melis issue 4) This is the first and hopefully the last potentially divisive comment that I have seen in Soundings. With a little research Wido would have found out that there is a sound, if very unfortunate, reason that many Ex Coastguard members have not changed over to the MRNSW uniform. At this time NSW Coastguard members are still in limbo regarding the ownership of the various assets of their units. Until this situation is finally resolved we are not in a position to become fully active units of MRNSW. I can assure Wido that every NSW Coastguard member that I have been in contact with of late will be rejoicing on the day they can full join the ranks of MRNSW and proudly wear their new uniforms.

As for my unit we are hoping to have a BBQ on that day, and it won't be just timber that gets thrown on the fire.

Mike Crossley
Training Officer Iluka Yamba Flotilla Unit

Hi Ron,
I liked your editorial ! Cheers
Tony Whybrow
UC Middle Harbour Unit

Ron
As Editor I would have hoped you would have edited the email from Wido Melis Kioloa unit as I'm sure you would know that it is ill informed. Coast Guard members are still Coast Guard and not Marine Rescue at this point in time, and even though they are individually members of MRNSW they operate and are insured as Coast Guard. As such members are prohibited from wearing the new uniform. This situation will continue until MRNSW sorts out the mess.

Roger Evans
Coast Guard Swansea

Dear Ron,
Congratulations on what has become a fine publication. One point I would like to make is that the word "Mayday" is just that, one word. As I'm sure you're aware, it is derived from the French "m'aider" - help me. Our great reference, the "Marine Radio Operators Handbook" will confirm.

Peter McKee
Radio Operator - South Head Unit

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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On July 18 Coast Guard Sydney responded to a medical emergency off South Head Sydney after passenger on board a fishing charter vessel had suffered a sudden cardiac arrest. The other passengers and crew were performing CPR on the patient while speeding to meet with NSW Water Police and Paramedics at Rosebay Wharf. Marine Rescue NF1 intercepted the speeding vessel to assist as they were carrying an emergency backpack with oxygen and a Zoll automatic defibrillator. The patient survived after being defibrillated 4 times over a 16 minutes period prior to being

handed over to the waiting Ambulance. "These Automatic Defibrillators are so easy to use and only work when someone is in cardiac arrest so they are extremely safe. There is no doubt that without the defibrillator on board the patient would not have survived".

Commander Michael Carew

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